

Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)

Statement of Commitment to the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty

General section

1. Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) hereby voluntarily joins the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty and states its dedication to pursue the Alliance's mission, objectives and principles, as expressed in the Global Alliance's Terms of Reference and Governance Framework, and to collaborate with other members to achieve lasting solutions to poverty and hunger worldwide, as expressed below.

PAHO:

2. *Recognizes* that hunger and malnutrition are the perverse manifestations of persistent, structural poverty and inequality, and recognizes the need to end poverty and hunger in all their forms and dimensions and to fully and effectively implement the 2030 Agenda.
3. *Acknowledges* the alarming growth in the number of people facing food insecurity and poverty in recent years, noting that, despite all significant past and current efforts, the world is not on track to meet SDG 1 and 2 targets, inequality is also on the rise (SDG 10), and a significant increase in collective ambition, as well as improvement in collective alignment and coordination for the fight against hunger and poverty, is urgently needed.
4. To that effect, *endorses* the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty and its mission to *support and accelerate efforts to eradicate hunger and poverty (SDGs 1 and 2) while reducing inequalities (SDG 10), contributing to revitalize global partnerships for sustainable development (SDG 17) and to the achievement of other interlinked SDGs, and championing sustainable, inclusive and just transitions.*
5. *Notes* that it is crucial for the world to unite behind large-scale, integrated approaches combining international, regional, national, and local levels, that recognize the interconnected nature of challenges and solutions to hunger and poverty and pair social protection with access to goods and services that can help the poor and vulnerable populations to overcome structural barriers and drive responsible investment in their productive capacity. These complementary services include but are not limited to interventions for poverty reduction, food security and nutrition, early childhood support, education and skills development, employment services, health and care services, as well as family farmers and smallholders' access to finance, extension services, research and/or agricultural inputs, in line with international commitments and obligations.
6. *Particularly recognizes* the high value and positive impact of quality implementation of national and local country-owned, inclusive policy instruments and programmes, focused on the poorest and most vulnerable, in the fields of poverty reduction, social protection, food security and nutrition, gender equality, decent work in the agri-food sector, skills development, family farming and smallholder agriculture, food systems transformation, health and care services and resilience building.

7. Also *acknowledges* the Global Alliance's reference basket of such policies as a collectively built, ongoing collection of examples with robust evidence to reduce hunger and poverty, and as a useful basis to guide joint action and increase alignment of the international community at country level. This acknowledgement is applicable to the policy basket approach as a general guide to action and does not imply endorsement of any specific policy instrument or programme contained in the basket.
8. Therefore, by joining the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty, *commits* to do its best efforts, in its own field of action, and according to its own mandate, capacities, priorities, preferences, procedures, and legal arrangements and framework, to support the implementation of policy instruments and programmes at country level as appropriate, including by the promotion of shared learning and the mobilization of resources, public and private, at scale.

In particular:

Financial support commitments

PAHO:

Informs and commits to implementing the following actions, programmes, and other activities in support of SDGs 1 and 2 and the Global Alliance's objectives:

Announces it will contribute financially to the Global Alliance Support Mechanism by providing a secondment to the Alliance's Secretariat Mechanism based in the Region of the Americas and with institutional and in-kind contributions.

Commits to make its best efforts to improve the destination, allocation and alignment of the use of its resources, including through coordination and cooperation facilitated by the Global Alliance, to support member countries to implement, improve, or scale-up the implementation of select programmes or policy instruments in the Alliance's reference basket to drive the fight against hunger and poverty, in line with sustainable country-led financing and implementation strategies.

Knowledge support commitments

PAHO:

Commits to make its best efforts to co-create and provide technical assistance, capacity building and strengthening, training and/or knowledge-sharing on voluntary and mutually agreed terms in response to requests by Global Alliance member countries that choose to implement policy instruments and programmes in the Alliance's policy basket that are compatible with its areas of expertise.

Commits to make its best efforts to improve the alignment of its actions, including through the Global Alliance's coordination mechanisms, leveraging, and partnering with other actors to better support large scale, country-owned implementation of policies and programmes in the reference basket by Global Alliance member countries, aiming at enhancing country-level outcomes.

Commits to collaborate with other Alliance members to develop innovative solutions and share good practices in learning and knowledge exchange and dissemination on voluntary and mutually agreed terms, data collection and analysis, including by leveraging existing local, national, and international knowledge networks, coalitions, communities and other fora related to aspects relevant to the fight against hunger and poverty.

PAHO informs its capacity and readiness to support Alliance member governments in implementing, improving or scaling-up the following policy instrument types, referenced in the Global Alliance's basket of policy instruments:

(i) Primary Health Care

Under this Policy Instrument, PAHO commits to continue implementing the following initiatives in the Region of the Americas and share with the Alliance Members related good practices and lessons-learned of such initiatives in support of the Global Alliance's objectives:

1) **Elimination Initiative** - ending more than 30 diseases and related conditions by 2030 in the Region of the Americas - <https://www.paho.org/en/elimination-initiative>

More than one billion people globally experienced catastrophic out-of-pocket health spending payments. But even small expenditures in absolute terms can be devastating for low-income families; approximately 1.3 billion individuals were pushed or further pushed into poverty by such payments, including 300 million people who were already living in extreme poverty. Investing in disease elimination boosts well-being and the economy. For every dollar invested in eliminating neglected diseases, there is a net benefit of around US\$25. That's a 30% annualized rate of return. Eliminating Tuberculosis, and Chagas disease isn't just about health; it's about economics, US\$16.6 billion in benefits for 2021-2030, plus US\$10.4 billion less in out-of-pocket expenses.

The Elimination Initiative is an innovative policy that promotes an integrated, sustainable approach to accelerate progress towards elimination in the Region of the Americas.

Diseases and conditions that can be eliminated:

- a. Diseases preventable by vaccination.
- b. Neglected infectious diseases including zoonoses.
- c. Some vector-borne diseases including Malaria, Lymphatic Filariasis and Onchocerciasis
- d. Sexually transmitted infections and viral hepatitis.
- e. Diseases transmitted from mother to child including HIV, Syphilis and Chagas Diseases.
- f. Other priority diseases and conditions: cervical cancer, cholera and tuberculosis.

The Elimination Initiative has an innovative and forward-thinking approach that prioritizes four essential pillars to achieve elimination goals:

1. Strengthening and integration of health systems and service delivery.
2. Strengthening health surveillance and information systems.
3. Addressing the environmental and social determinants of health.
4. Strengthening governance, stewardship, and finance.

The Region of Americas is considered both an incubator of innovative public health practices and a worldwide leader in elimination practices. But more work lies ahead. It can only be achieved through local, national, and regional cooperation, to ensure an acceleration of motion towards meeting the goal of eliminating 30+ communicable diseases by 2030.

2) **Alliance for Primary Health Care in the Americas** - <https://www.paho.org/en/alliance-primary-health-care-americas> PAHO, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the World

Bank (WB), launched the Alliance for Primary Health Care (PHC) in the Americas. This Alliance for Primary Health Care aims to support the acceleration of PHC in all countries of the Americas through improved investment, innovation and implementation.

The three organizations collaborate in engaging countries in the assessment of the performance of their health systems, in policy dialogues and in the collaboration with those countries for the development of their investments plans to support the expansion and development of resilient health systems, based on the foundation of PHC. The goal is to increase, improve and make more efficient health investments, leveraging innovation and supporting country implementation, enabling collaboration amongst countries in health systems strengthening based on PHC. The Alliance for Primary Health Care acknowledges financial hardship due to direct, out-of-pocket spending continues to worsen and undermine efforts to eradicate poverty globally. Evidence shows that in the Region of the Americas an estimated 102 million people (12.3%) were pushed further into poverty in 2000, while in 2019 the estimate rose to 134 million people (13.3%). Meanwhile, those who were not poor and whose out-of-pocket health spending brought them below the relative poverty line amounted to 8 million in 2000 (0.9%) and reached 13 million in 2019 (1.2%). Breaking this vicious cycle and addressing inequalities requires comprehensive policies and substantial public investment in building resilient health systems based on PHC.

3) Better Care for Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) Initiative

As part of PAHO's commitment to support the strengthening of PHC in the region, the Better Care for NCDs Initiative aims at expanding equitable access of integrated and comprehensive NCD services within Primary Health Care in the Americas.

The total number of deaths increased by 31% from 2000 to 2019 in the Americas – a larger percentage increase than in any other World Health Organization (WHO) region. Overall, NCDs dominated as the leading cause of death in the region, with a mortality rate of 412 per 100,000 in 2019.

In low-resource settings, health-care costs for NCDs quickly drain household resources. The exorbitant costs of NCDs, including treatment, which is often lengthy and expensive, combined with loss of income, force millions of people into poverty annually and stifle development.

The Better Care for NCDs Initiative seeks to strengthen comprehensive care for NCDs in primary health care in the Americas region.

Its objectives are:

1. improve the capacity of health systems to plan and implement integrated NCD services;
2. increase the capacity of primary care services to perform quality diagnosis, treatment and ongoing monitoring; and
3. strengthen data collection and monitoring of results in NCD care.

PAHO also informs and commits to implementing the following actions, programmes, and other activities in support of the Global Alliance's objectives:

Commits to collaborate with other Alliance members to develop innovative solutions and share good practices in learning and knowledge exchange and dissemination on voluntary and

mutually agreed terms, data collection and analysis, including by leveraging existing regional knowledge networks related to aspects relevant to the fight against hunger and poverty.

Commits to make its best efforts to co-create and provide technical assistance, capacity building, training, and knowledge-sharing to strengthen the connections between achieving SDG 3 and addressing poverty, hunger, food insecurity, and promoting socioeconomic inclusion.

Commits to produce evidence-based research in nutrition to support the decision-making process in the Region of the Americas and share information with other members countries of the Alliance.

Maintains its commitment to continue collaborating with FAO, IFAD, WFP and UNICEF to annually publish and disseminate the Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition.

Commits to produce, adapt and disseminate evidence-based information that supports national policy implementation in the Region of the Americas aligned with the objectives of the Alliance, with particular emphasis on policies to reduce and replace out-of-pocket spending and design and implement policies to enhance financial protection.

Commits to advocate with PAHO's Collaborating Centers for their participation as international knowledge institutions at Alliance's Steering Committee.

PAHO has a long experience in supporting and participating in evidence-based research projects to support decision-making. Since 1967, the Latin American and Caribbean Center on Health Sciences Information (BIREME), focuses on technical cooperation in health scientific information.

Through BIREME, PAHO informs its capacity to contribute to increasing the visibility, access to, and use of scientific and technical information related to the Decade of Action on Nutrition, namely by sharing and implementing in the Region of the Americas:

- (i) Evidence Map on the management and treatment of Malnutrition in the context of Primary Health Care;
- (ii) Window of Knowledge on Food and Nutrition in Public Health; and
- (iii) infometric study of scientific production in Latin America related to the Decade of Action on Nutrition.

These products contribute to the translation of knowledge in nutrition and have great potential to inform and support national food and nutrition policies, as well as strengthen the actions developed in the countries' health systems.

General acknowledgments

PAHO

Recognizes the possibility to, including through the mechanisms available to Global Alliance members, coordinate, partner with and/or seek support from the Global Alliance's other members, within their respective capacities, availability, and fields of activity, to carry out the present commitments with greater effectiveness.

While recognizing that the above commitments are voluntary and non-legally binding, being subject to and carried out under its own capacities, regulations, priorities, and modalities, as well as to the availability of appropriate resourcing, *strives* to seriously consider, as appropriate, and according to its own legal frameworks and governance process, to review its procedures and priorities as found necessary to better deliver on the present commitments, enhance synergies and joint efforts with other entities and initiatives, and improve outcomes on the collective fight against hunger and poverty.