

Public Health Institutes of the World



# 2023 IANPHI LATIN AMERICAN NETWORK ANNUAL MEETING

The International Association of National Public Health Institutes (IANPHI)

-

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# CONTENTS

SUMMARY .....	3
SYNTHESIS OF COMMITMENTS AND AGREEMENTS.....	4
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	5
PROGRAM .....	6
DAY 1: MONDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2023 – THE ROLE OF THE NPHIS IN FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY.....	6
DAY 2: TUESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2023 – POST-PANDEMIC MENTAL HEALTH AND THE ROLE OF THE NPHIS: SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES .....	6
DAY 3: WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2023 .....	7
OPENING CEREMONY .....	8
DAY 1: THE ROLE OF THE NPHIS IN FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY.....	9
PRESENTATION OF THE VENEZUELAN FOOD BANK EXPERIENCE .....	12
PRESENTATION OF THE NUTRITIONAL STATUS OF SCHOOL CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC .....	12
PRESENTATION OF FOOD SECURITY AND THE FIGHT AGAINST HUNGER IN PERU.....	13
PRESENTATION ON FOOD SECURITY AND HEALTH EQUITY IN ECUADOR.....	14
AGREEMENTS .....	15
DAY 2: POST-PANDEMIC MENTAL HEALTH AND THE ROLE OF THE NPHIS: SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES.....	17
PANEL DISCUSSION: CONTRIBUTIONS OF NPHI-BASED EPIDEMIOLOGY PROGRAMS TO HEALTH SYSTEMS .....	18
POST- PANDEMIC MENTAL HEALTH AND FOOD SECURITY: LESSONS LEARNED AND CHALLENGES IN ARGENTINA .....	18
FETP EL SALVADOR PROGRAM.....	19
PANEL DISCUSSION: THE ROLE OF NPHIS WITH RESPECT TO MENTAL HEALTH .....	19
CHRONIC DISEASES: RESULTS FROM MEXICO’S NATIONAL HEALTH SURVEY .....	20
THE ROLE OF NPHIS IN CLIMATE CHANGE .....	21
DAY 3 .....	22
PERSPECTIVES AND CHALLENGES FOR (SUB-)REGIONAL NETWORKS OF NPHIS.....	22
PETRÓPOLIS HEALTH INEQUITIES WORKSHOP PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT .....	25
NEXT NPHI MEETING VENUE .....	27

# SUMMARY

The National Health Institute (INS) of El Salvador hosted the second on-site Annual Meeting of the IANPHI Latin American Regional Network from October 16-18 with a focus on the role of National Public Health Institutes (NPHIs) in mental health and in fighting hunger and malnutrition. Directors of the NPHIs of Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Peru and Venezuela were joined by representatives of the Central America Integration System – Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana (SICA–COMISCA), participants from the IANPHI Office hosted at Emory Global Health Institute, United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (U.S. CDC), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), as well as from Health Research Technical Commissions (CTIS) of Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic. The meeting delved into hunger issues, particularly focusing on Central America's policies and regulations. Participants stressed the importance of adopting multi-sectoral approaches, highlighting evidence-based interventions and fostering collaboration across different sectors. Recommendations included conducting research, providing training, establishing advisory groups, developing territorialized food guides, and disseminating publications to address regional food security challenges effectively, with the aim of improving policy formulation and implementation. Moreover, there was an emphasis on learning from global experiences and enhancing regional cooperation to combat hunger and malnutrition more efficiently. Further, Dr. Xochitl Sandoval, director of the INS of El Salvador, presented the country's first National Mental Health Survey, aiming to establish a baseline for mental health indicators in the country. Recommendations from the survey included prioritizing early childhood education, integrating psychologists into the NPHIs, and collaborating with organizations like UNICEF to address mental health as a social issue. However, challenges such as conducting community-based studies and garnering political support were identified. During a panel discussion, the importance of epidemiology programs in strengthening health systems and addressing mental health post-pandemic was underscored. Lessons from Argentina highlighted efforts to integrate mental health into primary care and combat food insecurity. Additionally, Field Epidemiology Training Programs (FETPs) were highlighted as crucial for enhancing epidemiological surveillance and response capabilities. Looking ahead, there are plans to address hunger, climate change, and health access disparities and to study the determinants of mental health. This includes establishing a regional metagenomics network and a health inequities observatory, training, developing research agendas and sharing methodologies to better understand and address regional health challenges. IANPHI covered airplane costs for some participants as well as expenses linked to meals and the social dinner. Organizations and entities such as the Ibero-American Organization, the Spanish International Cooperation Agency (AECID), the Host Institute, Fundação Oswaldo Cruz (Fiocruz) and PAHO also contributed with funding.

# SYNTHESIS OF COMMITMENTS AND AGREEMENTS

- On the role of NPHIs in relation to mental health, it has been proposed that NPHIs identify an advisory group on mental health conditions to help to develop a webinar and implement other actions.
- It has been proposed to develop a research agenda on mental health. Surveys can be included in a potential webinar, including a critical analysis of the criteria of "normality" in mental health related to symptoms and signs.
- On the topic of food and nutrition security, the NPHI of Mexico and Fiocruz will develop an agenda that includes a training module for decision makers and technical staff. Issues for advocacy and research will also be identified.
- The NPHIs will share the methodologies for the elaboration of food guides. In this sense, Dr. César Cabezas committed to share those that Peru has developed in order to elaborate other guidelines by reviewing its methodology. Prof. Gerardo Merino talked during the meeting about the experience of the Institute of Nutrition of Central America and Panama (INCAP) and will make the institute's methodology available in the repository of the INCAP site, and also mentioned that the institute is currently incorporating other elements, such as the regulation of ultra-processed food, in their existing methodology.
- The capabilities of the laboratories of the institutes were highlighted, and in which way they can support the development of guidelines based on analysis and consultation of the population about these guidelines.
- In order to share methodologies and systematize them, it has been proposed to organize a seminar to identify best practices and methodologies to elaborate guides. It has been proposed to hold a webinar on guide methodologies in the second half of 2024.
- There is a need to explore the consequences of hunger and malnutrition in the population, especially for children and adolescents, and the relationship between hunger and mental health. IANPHI should promote the creation of knowledge by learning from experiences what has worked and what has not and why.
- There has been a consensus that surveys are important and open spaces for specific studies, but they do not tell the whole story. Based on the collected data, it is necessary to generate evidence that does not respond to the medicalization of hunger and mental health, but rather to the recognition of people's life circumstances.
- The social, environmental, territorial and economic determinants of mental health should be studied and evidence should be generated for public policy decision-making. Interventions and methodologies should be evaluated.
- There is a need to train and educate professionals and populations to understand these problems from various angles and not only from the clinical point of view.
- It has been proposed to create a repository of research and data on these issues within the Latin American Region, to analyze experiences, create groups of experts and generate human talent capable of understanding and developing responses.

- Related to the role of the Latin American Network in preparing for climate change, it has been proposed to hold face-to-face and virtual meetings and to promote online courses and field visits. It also has been proposed that a group of advisors and experts should be formed and that the NPHIs exchange national emergency plans.
- It has been proposed to elaborate a Plan for the Response to Climate Change and its impact on health from the NPHIs taking into account the necessary inputs for the diagnosis of diseases derived from climate change.
- It has been proposed to generate a training program in entomological surveillance.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

All those present at the 2023 IANPHI Latin American Network Annual Meeting express their special thanks to the authorities and personnel of the INS of El Salvador. Likewise, those present thank IANPHI, the Ibero-American General Secretariat, AECID, Fiocruz, PAHO, the Executive Secretariat of COMISCA (SE-COMISCA), U.S. CDC and Health Canada, whose support and funding made this meeting possible.



# PROGRAM

## DAY 1: MONDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2023 – THE ROLE OF THE NPHIs IN FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY

8.30 – 9.30 a.m.	Opening ceremony
9.30 – 10.00 a.m.	Coffee Break and meeting room set-up
10.00 – 10.15 a.m.	Presentation of the participants and of the program of the day
10.15 – 11.15 a.m.	Introduction: The role of the NPHIs in food and nutrition security
11.15 – 12.00 a.m.	The role of the NPHIs in the global food crisis
12:00 – 12:30 p.m.	Tour of the National Simulation Center Area
12:30 – 1:30 p.m.	Lunch
1.30 – 2.00 p.m.	The current and potential role of NPHIs in combating food and nutrition insecurity
2.30 – 3.00 p.m.	Coffee Break
3.00 – 3.30 p.m.	Nutritional status of schoolchildren and adolescents in the Dominican Republic
3.30 – 4.30 p.m.	Food security and health equity
4.30 p.m.	Closing session
7.30 – 9.00 p.m.	Social Dinner

## DAY 2: TUESDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2023 – POST-PANDEMIC MENTAL HEALTH AND THE ROLE OF THE NPHIs: SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

8.45 – 9.45 a.m.	Roundtable: Post-pandemic mental health and the role of the NPHIs: successes and challenges
9.45 – 10.15 a.m.	Coffee Break
10.15 – 10.45 a.m.	Mental health survey in El Salvador
10.45 – 11.15 a.m.	Mental health in the Americas (PAHO)
11.15 – 12.00 a.m.	Panel discussion: Contributions of NPHIs-based epidemiology programs to health systems
12.00 – 12.30 p.m.	Tour of the ECHO Project
12:30 – 1:30 p.m.	Lunch
1.30 – 2.00 p.m.	Post-pandemic mental health and food security: lessons learned and challenges in Argentina
2.00 – 2.30 p.m.	FETP El Salvador Program
2.30 – 3.00 p.m.	Panel discussion: The role of NPHIs with respect to mental health
3.00 – 3.15 p.m.	Coffee Break
3.15 – 3.45 p.m.	Chronic diseases: Results from Mexico's National Health Survey
3.45 – 4.15 p.m.	The role of NPHIs in climate change
4.15 – 4.45 p.m.	Challenges for NPHIs in mental health
5 p.m.	Closing session

## DAY 3: WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2023

8.30-9.00 a.m.	Registration and presentation of the program of the day
9.00- 10.30 a.m.	Perspectives and challenges for (sub-)regional networks of NPHIs
10.30-11.00 a.m.	Coffee Break
11.00-12.00 p.m.	Petrópolis Health Inequities Workshop Project Progress Report
12.00-12.30 p.m.	Clinical practice guidelines
12:30-1:30 p.m.	Lunch
1.30-2.30 p.m.	Reading of the San Salvador Agreement & Group Photo
2.30-3.00 p.m.	Closing session
3.00 p.m.	Historical Center Tour



# OPENING CEREMONY

Dr. Xochitl Sandoval, director of the INS of El Salvador, the Hosting Institute, Prof. Felix Rosenberg, director of the Itaborai Forum: Politics, Science and Culture in Health at Fiocruz and Chair of the IANPHI Latin American Network, and the Minister of Health of El Salvador Francisco José Alabi Montoya opened the meeting.

Prof. Rosenberg pointed out that the meeting has been facilitated by a group of actors who have worked together to make the meeting possible and thanked these actors for their participation and solidarity.

The Minister of Health of El Salvador stressed the contributions of the NPHIs to the scientific evidence for the well-being of countries' populations. He thanked all the strategic actors, such as COMISCA, PAHO, and UNICEF for their cooperation and said: "It is very important to participate and be part of IANPHI and to collaborate with this organization".





# DAY 1: THE ROLE OF THE NPHIs IN FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY

First of all, Prof. Felix Rosenberg presented a report of the meeting held by the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP), which may be of interest to the IANPHI Network. Like within the IANPHI Network, the CPLP has prioritized to combat hunger and to promote food security, which emphasizes that it is not a problem that can be solved solely by the health sector. Hunger can be fought against by facilitating access to food, which is why the CPLP held a joint meeting between representatives of the Ministries of Health and Agriculture from July 6-9, 2023. Nine countries from four continents, including Equatorial Guinea, participated in the meeting. The meeting brought together members of the countries' food safety councils, ministries and representatives of the civil society. Moreover, Prof. Felix Rosenberg emphasized the importance of bringing together actors working on food production, access to food, food guides and quality control.

Following, Dr. Xochitl Sandoval highlighted that the region that produce the biggest amount of food are the ones in which the people who produce the food are hungry. She asked those present what strategy NPHIs could suggest to decision-makers on this issue and concluded his speech by saying: "A person without nutrition is a person without health".

The representative of SE-COMISCA, María de Los Ángeles Campos, mentioned that the issue of hunger and food has been reconsidered again by Central American policymakers, a topic that was half-asleep the last few years. In this sense, these policymakers have promoted joint work with the authorities of the agricultural sector, and they are therefore reviewing existing policies and are seeking funding. In order to prioritize the issue, this subject has been placed on the agenda of the Meeting of Central American Presidents, during which the SICA's Regional Health Policy 2023-2030 was approved by COMISCA on September 23, 2023. The sectoral policy is indeed a framework that constitutes an instrument that contemplates a regional perspective and takes up the importance of an intersectoral approach, where food security is one of the strategic lines or axes. María de Los Ángeles Campos also stressed that it is important to look at the issue of obesity: the regulation of multi-processed foods is an issue on which it is necessary to adopt a regulation in Central America because of the serious consequences it causes. The NPHIs would have to support with evidence for an efficient regulation. "It is necessary not to lose the objectives of what is sought with food regulation and for this we need evidence," emphasized María de Los Angeles Campos.

On the other hand, Dr. Francisco Araoz from the Instituto Nacional de Higiene "Rafael Rangel" (INHRR) Venezuela pointed out that there are many proposals to reflect on the possible contributions of NPHIs to the health authorities of the countries. He affirmed that the historical role of NPHIs of only carrying out microbiological or laboratory diagnosis must be broken. For problems such as hunger and food security, NPHIs can provide evidence over and above commercial and market pressure to protect life.

In parallel, Prof. Gerardo Medina of the Institute of Nutrition of Central America and Panama (INCAP) highlighted the need for a multisector approach to the problem of hunger and food insecurity. "There is

a great economic interest involved in ultra-processed foods. In Central America, with the support of different actors, progress has been made in the policy of food and nutrition labeling".

Karen Panameño from UNICEF remarked that in addition to labeling, it is important to consider other elements such as humanitarian country teams. These teams have participated in various contingencies that affect food security, such as droughts. These teams and civil society organizations have developed needs mapping at the territorial level. This mechanism exists and provides important evidence that can be used by the NPHIs.

Finally, Dr. Cesar Cabezas, medical surgeon from the NPHI of Peru, emphasized that the NPHI of Peru is already in charge of research and generating evidence. The pandemic has allowed them to learn and even take into account anthropological and cultural aspects that are also evident in the issue of hunger and food insecurity. The NPHI of Peru has to exchange evidence and knowledge, as well as articulate with the universities to contribute to the processes of policy formulation and decision-making. He pointed out that it is not enough for NPHIs to focus on food biochemistry, such as iron deficiencies or micronutrients, but they should also focus on other aspects and generate evidence on how to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), since 2030 is just around the corner. The proposal for the creation of observatories within the NPHIs could provide important evidence for decision-making of health authorities and other sectors.

Prof. Bernardo Hernández Pardo of the NPHI of Mexico pointed out the opportunity to interrelate the issues of hunger and food insecurity with other aspects such as the environment, global health and planetary health.

During group discussions, the participants reflected on the cause of hunger and all the consequences of poor nutrition and malnutrition, including obesity, for the most vulnerable populations. They discussed the fact that the expansion of the agricultural frontier to promote the agro-export industry, and even the growing insertion of peasant production in the agro-export market, limits the possibilities of covering the nutritional needs of families. In addition, the intense campaign of the food market within the existing economic model promotes processed foods, often at a lower cost than natural foods, which poses profound problems for society and its approach to food. Finally, the diseases generated by these conditions burden the health systems, which often do not recognize the lack of adequate nutrition as the basis for many of the diseases for which the population frequently consults.

Therefore, it has been proposed to articulate efforts at the regional level by taking experiences from other regions that have been successful and adjusting them to local realities to review which strategies can be effective, analyze them and territorialize them. At the same time, it has been proposed that NPHIs should promote public policies that ensure evidence on the problem and the strategies to address them, such as the elaboration of territorialized food guides, science and training workshops for professionals, scientists and populations in general but in particular vulnerable populations, and the inclusion of the topic of nutrition in primary health care. Research is essential to propose strategies to address hunger and food insecurity based on evidence, community participation, adequate and sustainable training and the creation of groups of experts within the NPHIs.

Finally, Prof. Rosenberg summarized some conceptual points for further study:

- Commercial determinants of food production that deprive food producers of the means necessary for their own food by mono-production;
- Migratory processes from the countryside to the city, due to the lack of means of subsistence in rural areas; and
- Malnutrition and obesity, that are two sides of the same phenomenon or problem since communities cannot choose what they eat and commercial determinants induce them to unhealthy consumption.

Some recommendations have been formulated:

- NPHIs should advance in the diagnosis of food availability for populations living in the territories in relation with local food production.
- NPHIs should try to link the NPHIs in each of the countries with the councils or governance arrangements that act on hunger and food security issues.
- NPHIs should know and rescue the millenary habits and learning in relation to food production, which was often done in a much more sustainable way, becoming important catalysts of the knowledge and skills of the cultural traditions of the population through the contributions of science and technology to solve hunger and food insecurity.
- NPHIs should analyze intersectoral experiences in relation to health and agriculture. It is necessary to form the research staff of the NPHIs not only in diagnostics but also in nutritional sciences, ecology, sociology and anthropology to promote intersectoriality and interdisciplinarity.
- NPHIs should develop frameworks on the role of NPHIs in the area of food and nutrition security in order to promote the development and implementation of plans.
- NPHIs should identify opportunities for education, training and cooperation between countries.
- NPHIs should create and strengthen national observatories on health inequities, incorporating the issue of hunger and malnutrition.
- NPHIs should encourage and support countries to generate surveys, analyses and national studies on production and access to healthy food and nutrition, including the research for financial resources to support the generation of qualitative and quantitative scientific evidence, fundamental to subsidize public policies.
- NPHIs should identify and understand through community consultation, thoughts, and typical beliefs of each region on food patterns before implementing specific public policies.
- NPHIs should advocate for intersectoral public policies that favor community and agro-ecological agriculture and family fishing, healthy eating and food and nutritional security.
- NPHIs should promote processes of distribution and commercialization of food by family farmers to community fairs through short circuits and urban agriculture, implementation of popular kitchens and incentives.

## PRESENTATION OF THE VENEZUELAN FOOD BANK EXPERIENCE

Dr. Francisco Araoz from INHRR Venezuela made a presentation about the Venezuelan food bank experience. He highlighted the problem of food loss and waste throughout the food chain and pointed out that approximately 40% of the food produced worldwide is not consumed and ends up being discarded. This loss not only involves food, but also has a significant impact on natural resources, such as water, land and energy. The magnitude of this loss is alarming and negatively affects biodiversity and greenhouse gas emissions. Despite this reality, more than 800 million people in the world continue to suffer from a lack of basic foodstuffs, which is inconsistent with food wastage. Various non-governmental institutions have proposed solutions to reduce food waste, including the creation of food banks. However, the implementation of these solutions faces significant challenges, such as specific regulations and policies. He also mentioned the United Nation's proposal to remember food loss and waste awareness every September 29 as a call for action. However, he noted as well that this effort requires a stronger institutional response from countries. Dr. Araoz gave an example from Venezuela, where a food bank was formed to help alleviate hunger in vulnerable populations, with the cooperation of several countries. This initiative is valuable, but faces regulatory challenges. He concluded, by mentioning the growth of populations and of the food demand by 2050 that the pressure on natural resources will increase.

## PRESENTATION OF THE NUTRITIONAL STATUS OF SCHOOL CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Dr. Nelson Leonel Martinez Rodriguez of the Ministry of Health of the Dominican Republic made a presentation on the nutritional status of schoolchildren and adolescents in the Dominican Republic. He presented the results of a survey on the nutritional status of schoolchildren benefiting from the Dominican Republic's school feeding program, conducted in 2021 and 2022. The research was conducted in response to concerns about the increase in overweight and obesity among children and adolescents in the country. The objectives of the research included determining students' nutritional status, diet quality, and level of physical activity and was carried out in collaboration with the National Institute of Student Welfare and 53 public educational centers with school feeding programs. It has been shown that the majority of the students have an unhealthy diet. 31% of the students were overweight. Gender, geographic regions, the family history of disease and diet quality were associated with overweight and obesity in students. The report concludes that actions to strengthen the school feeding program and educational campaigns to promote healthy food consumption and exercise are essential. In addition, nutritional interventions for underweight children start to be implemented, and family-focused research is

recommended. The complete results of the research are available in the institutional repository of the Ministry of Health of the Dominican Republic.

In response, Dr. Xochitl Sandoval pointed out that obesity and overweight in children are growing problems in many countries, including El Salvador. She mentioned that El Salvador's national health surveys have shown increases in obesity rates in recent years, which is a cause for concern. Dr. Sandoval emphasized that obesity is a metabolic disease that can have serious long-term consequences, such as diabetes and hypertension, and mentioned the importance of investigating the differences and similarities in the factors that contribute to this problem in different regions and countries. She suggested to conduct multicenter researches in collaboration with other NPHIs to analyze common factors. She also stressed the importance of promoting interventions that encourage healthy habits in children, such as replacing screen games with more active and healthy options.

Regarding the Dominican Republic presentation, it was noted that it provides a lot of relevant data and information on obesity and overweight in children. However, it was also mentioned that some methodological doubts arose, especially regarding the variable of occupation and socioeconomic level of the parents. This variable is fundamental for understanding health inequities and social structure. Although statistical averages were important and useful, they could sometimes be misleading. The importance of considering various social, economic and environmental factors and conditions that could be associated with the problem of childhood obesity has been emphasized.

In summary, the importance of learning from and sharing the experiences of other countries has been emphasized, as well as the need to address malnutrition and food security from an intersectoral and regulatory perspective.

## PRESENTATION OF FOOD SECURITY AND THE FIGHT AGAINST HUNGER IN PERU

Dr. Cesar Cabezas from the NPHI of Peru presented the paper "Food security and the fight against hunger in Peru". He shared his thoughts on the food and nutrition situation in his country. Dr. Cabezas highlighted the diversity of foods that Peru possesses due to its geography and biodiversity and mentioned that climate change poses a significant risk to food availability. He noted the persistence of anemia in children aged six to 35 months in Peru and raised the need to address this problem in a comprehensive manner, considering not only iron but also other factors. He also mentioned the complexity of measuring anemia in high-altitude regions due to the lack of baseline data. Dr. Cabezas shared initiatives and resources used by the INS of Peru's National Food and Nutrition Center, including a food composition table and regional healthy recipe guides. He stressed the importance of using accessible language to communicate with the population and provide clear guidance on food composition and presented a project to implement comprehensive surveillance centers in different regions of the country. Additionally, he pointed out the importance of addressing the challenges of food security



and nutrition in Peru, considering food diversity, anemia, and strengthening epidemiological surveillance in public health.

## PRESENTATION ON FOOD SECURITY AND HEALTH EQUITY IN ECUADOR

Finally, Dr. Jorge Edwin Bejarano Jaramillo gave a presentation entitled on food security and health equity in Ecuador. He began by talking about the physiological condition and access to adequate food, highlighting the importance of NPHIs in the context of food and nutritional security. He addressed various dimensions such as availability, stability, physical and economic access and biological utilization of food. Dr. Bejarano Jaramillo highlighted the need to strengthen governance, intersectoral and interinstitutional coordination, as well as community and social participation in food and nutrition security policies and mentioned the importance of technical and managerial competencies in this field. He presented data showing an increase in hunger in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as an increase in cases of stunting and overweight. Dr. Bejarano Jaramillo focused notably on the importance of equity in health and the relationship between food security and the SDGs. He highlighted the need for funding for food and nutrition security policies and mentioned the relevance of surveillance and monitoring, along with the implementation of an observatory. Finally, Dr. Bejarano Jaramillo proposed strategic lines of research and discussed the importance of food acceptability in promoting a healthy diet.

In response, Prof. Felix Rosenberg mentioned several ideas related to malnutrition and obesity, noting that they are closely related, as lack of access to healthy foods often leads to obesity. Many people in communities with limited access to nutritious food and with strenuous work schedules consume fast foods, such as instant noodles, ultra-processed foods. He stressed the importance of considering the relationship between territory and hunger, since territories have specific characteristics that influence access to food and eating habits. Prof. Felix Rosenberg mentioned the importance of working on food guides that take into account local foods and the opinions of the population. He proposed the creation of a regional virtual center of competence in food and nutrition security, where teachers and professionals can collaborate and share knowledge. He also mentioned the possibility of collaborating in joint research and promoting a research agenda in the region. He also said that it is essential to define the "why" and "how" of research, since anthropometric parameters are often used to assess nutritional status, although this is not always sufficient. Finally, he emphasized the importance of considering territorial factors, such as geographic location, and social aspects, such as social class and type of occupation.

Dr. Carlos Hernández from the INS of El Salvador proposed several ideas to strengthen research and action in the area of food security. First, he suggested the creation of an advisory group that could share experiences and serve as a reference for institutes and ministries wishing to carry out research in this field. Dr. Hernández then raised the need for a document setting out the essential elements to be considered when conducting food security research. He stressed the importance of generating food security policies. He pointed out that institutes can play a fundamental role in presenting evidence to

decision-makers and contributing to the formulation of effective policies in this area. Dr. Hernández also emphasized the need to consider food security as a right, and the importance of translating knowledge and evidence into policy actions that benefit the population.

It has been proposed to identify within the Latin American Network individuals with expertise in food security and social determinants of health research and to establish contact with those who have travelled a path in these areas. They could provide guidance and advice on how to address specific issues, such as the measurement of anemia or the inclusion of social determinants of health in research.

## AGREEMENTS

All presentations emphasized the need to highlight the issue of food insecurity and inaccessibility for the most vulnerable populations due to the trend of agro-exports to expand the agricultural frontier, leaving rural food-producing communities without adequate food to meet their family and community needs.

NPHIs can be national bodies that intervene in promoting food and nutritional security, through the development of public policies that consider food insecurity, scarcity, inaccessibility, quality, suitability and relevance as part of the national and regional interest agenda to combat hunger and poverty, which is why it is worth asking several questions:

- Can NPHIs have a common research agenda? And if this is possible, how could a regional initiative be promoted? What would it seek to achieve?
- What is the objective for a research agenda?
- Can a common agenda serve to have joint strength in obtaining cooperation and funding in the region?
- What aspects should be considered: anthropometry, characteristic aspects of the populations; social and economic determinants, territoriality, community participation, political will?
- What methodologies should be used?

Moreover, each NPHI in the region has a path to follow, so an advisory team could be identified to optimize resources for research and define minimum elements of coincidence among the countries. As for what should be investigated, there is already enough information on what the causes are, so it should be avoided revisiting these issues and it might be more convenient to investigate whether the interventions implemented have been effective, how they could have an impact on the vulnerable populations affected by the hunger epidemic and what could work and what could not, which cases should be analyzed and what is required for them to be successful, like fiscal incentives, monetization and production circles. According to what was discussed during the first day, five strategic axes have been identified for consideration:

1. Research: Conduct research that helps to formulate public policies. Develop a research agenda that identifies those aspects relevant to the problem and the solutions to formulate public policies. The causes should be identified in all their dimensions and characteristics, the methodologies to be used to evaluate the interventions should be from a territorial perspective and shared with the communities, promote behavioral change in the communities and scientists to address a complex



problem through appropriate methodologies. A draft agenda will be prepared to be shared within the network Latin American Network by Mexico, Guatemala and Ecuador. The different countries should contribute and from there build a final agenda.

2. Training: The focus should be on several levels: decision makers, researchers, technicians and the community. Create a syllabus or curriculum for each level. Decision-makers should address negotiation and political advocacy. They are the ones who will sell the idea to the Ministries of Health and other ministries for an intersectorial approach. Training should be directed to researchers and technicians to conduct research on these issues and use appropriate methodologies. Identify teachers who are familiar with the topics to build this capacity. Use existing training and capacity building resources such as the resources from Fiocruz and the NPHI of Mexico. Fiocruz has for example developed a modular training system that can be used for blended or single segments and certification at different levels of learning. Mexico can provide hosting platforms for these courses, as can El Salvador. Training modules can include conceptual, orientation, research and technical aspects, as well as advocacy, management, evidencebased decision making, financial and technical resource procurement. Brazil and Mexico could prepare a training agenda in modules and share it within the Latin American Network for each country to contribute and obtain a final product.
3. Advisory Group: Identify within the Latin American Network which institutions have done work on these issues, what are the main works and who are the referents. El Salvador, supported by Argentina, will identify and map the institutions.
4. Methodology of territorialized food guides: Share what has been done, the methodologies used and help each country to carry out a diagnosis. Peru can lead this effort by accompanying the elaboration of food guides, socialized from the communities, territorialized and in a citizens' language.
5. Publication: The network has scientific journals that can be used to disseminate these guidelines and the processes followed. Encourage that what has been elaborated be published in the journals of the NPHIs.

# DAY 2: POST-PANDEMIC MENTAL HEALTH AND THE ROLE OF THE NPHIs: SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

Dr. Xochitl Sandoval presented the results of the First National Mental Health Survey of El Salvador, whose purpose was to have a baseline that can provide information on mental health problems for the creation of indicators that favor the diagnosis of the current mental health situation in the different stages of life. The study surveyed the situation of mental health status, mental disorders, psychosocial problems and gaps in access to mental health care services in the population over three years of age in El Salvador. The instrument used for data collection contained validated scales of free use, which were reviewed by national experts in mental health, in order to establish a questionnaire to know the characteristics of Salvadoran households in different age strata and a questionnaire of gaps in mental health. This is a cross-sectional study, with representativeness of national indicators, geographic areas (urban and rural) and health regions (central, metropolitan, western, eastern and paracentral). A total of 293 segments were selected, in which 25 households were chosen. In each household, one person from the different age groups was interviewed to explore mental health through validated scales.

The presentation of the survey, elicited important comments from the participants.

Cynthia Chavarría from the SE-COMISCA stressed the importance of starting with early childhood education, sexual and reproductive health. For her, it is necessary to work on mental health strategies and draft a policy from the point of view of education.

Prof. Felix Rosenberg highlighted the importance of incorporating psychologists into the NPHIs who can contribute to address mental health issues. Beliefs and ways of thinking can influence the focus of mental health surveys. He insisted on conducting studies at the local, community level, which will allow a better understanding of these issues. It would be interesting to work with psychologists on rapid qualitative diagnostic techniques to capture the population's perception. For him, NPHIs should approach mental health issues from the community point of view with a qualitative approach.

Dr. Karen Panameño from UNICEF congratulated the INS of El Salvador for the survey and pointed out the importance of having this information for the management of funds for mental health problems. She stressed the importance of secondary studies to address specific problems. Support is needed at the political level.

Dr. Francisco Araoz from INHRR Venezuela pointed out that the mental health problem must be addressed for all the actors in the civil society. The approach begins when there is a favorable attitude towards the approach from the little that is available at the moment. It is necessary not to lose leadership in mental health issues and to approach these from the community's point of view, creating response groups to solve these problems.

Among the agreements reached, it should be noted that this is not an individual pathology but a social one. As an NPHI, it is possible to make a territorial diagnosis of the social pathology of the community in order to influence intersectoral public policies.

## PANEL DISCUSSION: CONTRIBUTIONS OF NPHI-BASED EPIDEMIOLOGY PROGRAMS TO HEALTH SYSTEMS

Moderator Prof. Bernardo Hernández Prado from the NPHI of Mexico stated that the situation of the NPHI in each country is not the same. The panel discussion focused on what the epidemiology programs of the NPHIs of each country can contribute based on their reality and their relationship with the central units of the respective Ministries of Health.

Dr. Elmer Mendoza presented the context of epidemiology in El Salvador. He emphasized the support of the Minister of Health in the implementation of the epidemiology program in the country from 2020 and highlighted the importance of the Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP) in the country, which provides knowledge on the advances in field epidemiology at the first level. Dr. Carlos Hernández pointed out that training has been a priority in El Salvador and that there is a relationship with the central level. It is important to involve technology and intersectorality to address health problems.

Prof. Bernardo Hernández Prado, in his capacity as moderator, pointed out that the role of the NPHIs will be to create research agendas and form epidemiological programs in collaboration with other units of the Ministries.

## POST- PANDEMIC MENTAL HEALTH AND FOOD SECURITY: LESSONS LEARNED AND CHALLENGES IN ARGENTINA

Valeria Scuffi from the Antimicrobial Service of the National Institute of Infectious Diseases (ANLIS) of Argentina presented the context of the regulatory framework and strategies for mental health in Argentina. The Argentinian Ministry of Health implemented a telephone line to address post-pandemic mental health problems and a program that helped in the distribution of essential medicines to the first level of care, as well as other strategies to strengthen the primary healthcare sector. A federal strategy for a comprehensive approach to mental health and problematic consumption was developed. The mental health plan 2020-2023 was approved with nine strategic axes, among which the first level mental health leadership and intersectoral expansion and integration stand out. The National Mental Health Law, included in the budget of the Ministry of Health, allocates 10% of its budget to mental health. Valeria Scuffi said that even though it is true that Argentina is still halfway there, as some actions have just been implemented, progress is being made.

## FETP EL SALVADOR PROGRAM

Dr. Elmer Mendoza presented the context of the network of South American Field Epidemiology Training Programs, which became part of the NPHI in 2020. The objectives of the program are to:

- Strengthen the capacities of the Ministry of Health to conduct epidemiological surveillance;
- Respond to public health emergencies;
- Conduct studies or research on priority public health problems; and
- Improve communication and networking within the country and across countries in the region.

The FETP is part of a regional program that includes Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama and the Dominican Republic.

The FETP is achieving, first, the integration between the Ministry of Health, the Solidarity Fund for Health, the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Culture and the NPHIs. The program has grown a lot. Since 2000, the program has formed more than 500 professionals. Laboratory specialists, nutritionists, dentists, doctors, nurses and inspectors have been trained in the program. This provides the most comprehensive part from the professional point of view. There are twelve trained teachers who train others at the national level. In addition, SE-COMISCA ensures compliance with the FETP guidelines.

## PANEL DISCUSSION: THE ROLE OF NPHIs WITH RESPECT TO MENTAL HEALTH

The panel discussion was moderated by Prof. Felix Rosenberg and Dr. Francisco Araoz.

It has been said that when talking about the NPHIs, it is important to emphasize the many differences in the institutions to address health problems. There are so many differences between missions, actions and organizations that it is a little difficult to find a common denominator but by complementing each other in different functions, the IANPHI Latin American Network is strengthened. For example, Fiocruz today plays a central role in the supply of vaccines, drugs and diagnostic reagents for the health system. In addition to the capacity to have about 25 postgraduate programs, including master and doctoral programs, Fiocruz has two hospitals and they provides many services. Fiocruz is, above all, an academic body linked to health needs. It is a science and technology body, but many of the actions proposed here are carried out and executed by central departments of the Ministry of Health. The Mexican NPHI has a clinical simulation program that does not exist in any other institute. In the case of El Salvador, it has the FETP, for training in field epidemiology. In most Latin American countries, this program is in central areas of the Ministries of Health. It cannot be said that one NPHI model is better than another, because they are different contexts and years of experience.

The NPHI in Peru started as a vaccine center, then extended to diagnostic laboratories and other areas, but does not cover mental health. The common denominator is to generate evidence to create public policies. To promote health research in our countries to address health problems. In 2014, a prioritization

of issues was carried out in Peru on tuberculosis and HIV with funds from the Global Fund. It is not only necessary to define and prioritize issues, but also to seek funds to address the problems identified. Finally, it is important to disseminate all the studies developed by the INS in Latin America.

Dr. Jorge Bejarano from Ecuador proposed, by that taking into consideration what was discussed on the second day of the meeting, to organize a videoconference to address the determinants of mental health and quality of life of populations and the role of NPHIs.

Prof. Rosenberg stressed that we should not fall into the error of verticalizing the problem of mental health, but rather incorporate it as an integrated component of the health-disease/quality-of-life process, and that it is necessary to address the issue in a multidisciplinary manner. It is important to identify mental health professionals to subsequently create an advisory group.

## CHRONIC DISEASES: RESULTS FROM MEXICO'S NATIONAL HEALTH SURVEY

Prof. Bernardo Hernández Prado presented the results of Mexico's national health survey. Mexico's NPHIs has programs accredited by the National Council of Science and Technology (CONACYT) and the Council on Education for Public Health, the Centennial School of Public Health, a scientific journal and a national system of researchers. It is a reality that currently the healthy regional diet has been replaced by ultra-processed foods.

The NPHI of Mexico has taken up the National Nutrition and Health Survey, since in the nineties there were a series of surveys on different topics, a survey on chronic diseases and a survey on health and nutrition, and what they have done over time is to try to consolidate them into a single survey. Mental health was not included because the methodology is very different. Starting in 2020, the survey has been conducted annually, with the expectation that in a period of five years, it will have national, urban, rural, regional and state representativeness. Among the objectives of the survey are: the determination of nutritional status and quantification of the magnitude, distribution and trends of malnutrition and obesity, quantification of the prevalence and distribution of chronic degenerative diseases in adults, and the study of environmental, socioeconomic and cultural determinants of the health-disease process, including dietary patterns and others related to lifestyles.

In this context, the National Health and Nutrition Survey (ENSANUT) measured the national prevalence of underweight, short stature, wasting and overweight plus obesity in children under five years of age, between 1988 and 2021. The comparative data were as follows:

- Comparative national prevalence of overweight and obesity in the adolescent population aged 12 to 19 years from 2006 to 2021 by sex;
- Global prevalence of obesity worldwide 2020;
- Prevalence of overweight and obesity in Mexico;
- Prevalence of diabetes in the adult population 2021;

- Total prevalence of diabetes;
- Prevalence of arterial hypertension in adults older than or equal to 20 years; and
- Prevalence of chronic diseases in adults with obesity measured by body mass index 2022.

In the Mexican scenario, in an environment of chronic diseases and urbanized country where there is a significant consumption of processed foods, there was not the slightest regulation on many aspects of junk food. What these surveys have managed to do is to put this issue on the agenda, under the idea that the fundamental problem is that ultra-processed foods should be replaced by a healthy diet. Policies have been created to regulate the consumption of ultra-processed foods, among them he mentioned:

- The policy to reduce the effect of the consumption of sweetened and sugar-sweetened beverages;
- The implementation of frontend warning labeling, through the formulation and implementation of health policies and the promotion of legislation that protects the health of the population; and
- New strategies for the management of obesity.

## THE ROLE OF NPHIs IN CLIMATE CHANGE

Dr. Jorge Bejarano from Ecuador began by commenting that the results of the mental health surveys that were presented during the conference show that there is an increase in the number of people with mental health problems and an increase in the prevalence of chronic non-communicable diseases, mainly cardiovascular diseases and diabetes mellitus. This situation raises the question of what will be the role of the NPHIs in decision-making based on the findings of the surveys. He stressed the importance of developing studies on the effectiveness of interventions in health systems. The importance lies in the fact that, for different non-communicable diseases to develop there are a series of doors that are opening. Therefore, it is important to intervene at the primary or secondary health care level in order to close these doors and prevent people from suffering from cardiovascular diseases or diabetes mellitus.

He also stressed that the paradigm that genetic factors are the origin of many chronic non-communicable diseases has been discarded many years ago. The evidence shows that 80% of diseases are influenced by behavioral factors, 15% by environmental factors and the remaining 5% by genetic factors. Surveys allow us to obtain a snapshot of the current situation, but the important thing will be to move forward with other studies of efficacy, health interventions and social determinants of health. Dr. Bejarano also mentioned environmental pollution, for example, particulate matter 2.5 (PM 2.5), which has been associated with arteriosclerosis in the adolescent school population.

In this regard, he stressed the importance of knowing what strategies are being developed by the NPHI in our countries in order to complement individual experiences and thus support us in making decisions. One of the major threats today is climate change, which is a set of changing patterns that cause, for example, droughts and floods. It is important to have a picture of how climate change will change over the next two decades in order to create adaptation strategies along with mathematical models to know how climate change is likely to behave in the coming years in our countries. It will be important because climate change is a factor that is directly linked to health and quality of life.



# DAY 3

## PERSPECTIVES AND CHALLENGES FOR (SUB-)REGIONAL NETWORKS OF NPHIs

Prof. Felix Rosenberg reviewed the objectives of the network, of the Plan approved in Cuernavaca in Mexico.

### Objective 1: Strengthening of the Institutes through Peer-To-Peer Cooperation

The first of its goals is to encourage other countries to join the network, including Belize, Chile, Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay and Uruguay. Thanks to the efforts made by the INS of El Salvador with the support of COMISCA, the Ministries of Health of Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic were able to participate. As a result, the activity could be carried out in some way. In the case of Guatemala, in addition to the representation of the Ministry of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - Central America Regional Office (CDC-CAR) of Guatemala was also present. Chile was unable to attend the meeting, as were Uruguay and Paraguay, the latter being surveillance laboratories that depend on the national epidemiology directorates.

Dr. Nelson Martinez from the Dominican Republic pointed out that his country does not have a NPHI, however, knowing the experience of the NPHIs of El Salvador and Mexico, it is something that is needed as a country and hopes to create one in the future, taking into account that health research and knowledge management are essential for public health. An infrastructure is needed where space is available to train health personnel, but also where research can be conducted and disseminated.

Samir Aguilar from Nicaragua recognized the level of progress that El Salvador has achieved. Research in his country is more of an academic nature, which is a disadvantage. From the experience shared at the workshop, 12 activities have been identified that can be taken up again as a Ministry of Health. In the country there is already resident training, however it is in charge of three departments of the Ministry of Health such as the national teaching department, the health services department and the planning department. Five groups have been formed and are currently occupying positions in the Local System of Integrated Health Care (SILAIS).

Jorge Cifuentes Morales, interinstitutional coordinator at the Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance of Guatemala, commented that it is important to have a proactive attitude towards the new incoming government. However, he will inform the current minister what activities can be developed for the creation of a NPHI.

Russel Manzanero, director of the Epidemiology and Statistical Surveillance Unit of the Ministry of Health and Welfare of Belize, mentioned that his country will take up many of the ideas and projects mentioned at the meeting by Dr. Xochitl Sandoval and that he will seek greater visibility for health research from his institution.



María de los Ángeles Campos from COMISCA mentioned that the Health Research Technical Commission (CTIS) is promoting a critical mass to have a new web service, for an infrastructure, a platform, to support primary clinical studies. She put into context that one of their priorities is research and the use of evidence for decision making.

Prof. Felix Rosenberg pointed out the existing experience in IANPHI in the creation of new NPHIs in different countries and in the continent such as in El Salvador, through advocacy, law creation and strategic planning support, among others, and it is operated with the support of peers, particularly from institutions with greater experience and affinity. This peer evaluation methodology consists of groups of five to six directors who visit a NPHI to make an evaluation, using different tools for external evaluation of an NPHI, and give a report on the results. The evaluation team makes recommendations to strengthen the institute, consults the authorities of the health system, interviews the different environmental and health authorities. This has a great advocacy value because the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation, elaborated together with the team of the evaluated Institute, are sent by the IANPHI President to the minister.

The countries should create a law for the creation of NPHIs in order to seek support for their development through IANPHI. There should be an articulated work between the reference laboratories and the research institutes, which is the main objective of the institutes, since research is fed back to the laboratories and the interaction of both. The INHRR Venezuela has already asked to join IANPHI. It has been also proposed to identify gaps or needs to improve institutional capacities for actions in response to health emergencies, particularly in the face of current climate changes of structural origin.

Dr. César Cabezas, advisor to the NPHI of Peru's headquarters, pointed out that the experience of the peer review has allowed the Ministry to do so, which was carried out post-pandemic. This has served to implement necessary changes in Peru. He said that we must be open to everything that can be learned from other institutes.

Dr. Xochitl Sandoval mentioned that she needs support for the creation of the health inequities observatory. She agrees to inform SE-COMISCA about ENSO (climate phenomenon of irregular variations in sea surface temperatures) and offers the ECHO (European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations) project as a superhub to expand the experience and share it with the other NPHIs as a tool to strengthen continuing education and public health systems.

Jorge Bejarano talked about the [Staged Development Tool](#) for assessing and identifying gaps to help develop plans to address those gaps. U.S. CDC's support is available. This tool is available on the IANPHI website in English and Spanish.

To set up a Virtual Health Library (VHL) with reference documents of the Institutes and sub-regional organizations and selected bibliographies on priority topics.

This proposal is intended to be a library containing the documents of the institutes. Dr. Xochitl Sandoval will make available the VHL El Salvador and delegated Dr. Hernandez to make available the infrastructure of El Salvador for the rest of the NPHIs. César Cabeza talked about the importance of having a platform such as the VHL to share experiences, diagnostic capacity to detect diseases.

## Objective 2: Fostering an open Science Movement of the NPHIs

Isabella Delgado, advisor at Fiocruz, talked about data sharing, through a repository where the reproducibility of studies and their reliability which provides laboratory practices for open science. He talked about training in already established networks. Sustainability must be taken into account. Prof. Felix Rosenberg agreed to prepare a brief document of the different spaces and links and to send it to the Network.

Prof. Felix Rosenberg talked about the different magazines that the NPHIs have, such as Alerta, from the NPHIs in Mexico, Brazil, Peru, Colombia. Dr. Xochitl Sandoval proposed the creation of a network of scientific editors. Carlos Hernandez Avila, head of the Governance and Knowledge Management Unit of the Ministry of Health of El Salvador, mentioned the gaps that journals could have, such as swapping, license sharing, peer review, infrastructure to promote open science, to take advantage of all the information generated from surveys.

It has been proposed to organize a meeting of IANPHI journal editors to generate a forum of editors in the first quarter of 2024.

It is important to strengthen the essential public health functions in Latin America, based on the existing capacities of each NPHI, which includes the following activities:

1. Concepts and practices for the development of regional epidemiological intelligence, including the environmental crisis as a stimulus to change the surveillance paradigm at the regional level. Epidemiological surveillance should cease to be postmortem and become predictive epidemiological surveillance; and
2. Addressing the problem of hunger and nutritional insecurity in the region, in conjunction with the corresponding areas in the agriculture sector.
3. Research and mitigation of the impact of climate change on health. Pending.
4. Regional self-sufficiency of strategic health inputs. A survey has been initiated.
5. Role of the INS in the formation of human talent or health workforce. It talks about the network of schools of public health.
6. Universal Health Systems; Universal Coverage and reduction of inequities in access to health promotion, prevention and care services.

Dr. Sandoval appointed Dr. Elmer to organize the virtual event on epidemiological intelligence.

Other actions:

- Conducting a classroom course on territorial characterization through the use of Participatory Rapid Appraisal and cartographic tools. Prof. Rosenberg points out that discussions are underway with Dr. Tonatiuh to implement this project in Morelos and that this pilot can also be initiated in Buenos Aires. In this sense, he assumes the commitment to manage the funds for a one-week training course for the application of participatory mapping.
- Creating a Regional Metagenomics Network as an instrument for the diagnosis of emerging or little-known pathologies: this issue was raised by the former director of the NPHI of Colombia and, in this regard, it is questioned whether it is viable because its implementation is complex.

- Creating a Regional Observatory on Health Inequities, including access to health services: Not much progress has been made on this point; there is only one in Colombia. The evaluation of inequities in access, quality and timeliness of health care should be incorporated and a network should be organized to carry out research on inequities in health services. It would be desirable for each participating institute to create a team within its institution and for the network to carry out training and education activities.

## PETRÓPOLIS HEALTH INEQUITIES WORKSHOP PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT

This activity was carried out less than three months before the meeting so the commitments made may not have been worked on yet. However, they should be left to be carried out in the future. Three dimensions were identified.

### At a Global Level

The economic and technological dependence of less developed countries for access to health products and supplies (medicines, vaccines, diagnostic reagents and equipment for diagnosis and treatment). On this dimension, Prof. Rosenberg worked with ANLIS on a survey in two stages, a first quicker one as a diagnosis and a second stage with a more in-depth study.

Propositions:

- Activity 1.1: Mapping of what the NPHI of the Region are doing in terms of standardization of diagnostic techniques and production of sera, toxins, antitoxins and immunoglobulins.
- Activity 1.2: Strategic analysis of diagnostic kit production capacities in light of primary care needs and prioritized diseases.
- Activity 1.3: Comparative analysis of the regulatory frameworks and mechanisms of diagnostic kits, antisera, antitoxins and immunoglobulin.
- Activity 1.4: Dissemination and management of knowledge on the production capacity of strategic health inputs.

### At a National Level

Unequal and unfair access to health services (at primary care, specialized care and high complexity care levels). The objective was to generate information on the national health services of the countries.

Result 1: Preparation of a Position Paper reorienting the NPHI perspectives, to go beyond the exclusive scope of this human resource (webinars, internships).

Outcome 1: The Network will conduct research projects on Primary Health Care in the countries evaluating community participation and the role of community health agents and on Health Services in border areas, particularly in the Amazon and Mesoamerica.

Outcome 2: Development of Observatories on Health Inequities in the NPHI/Systematization and mapping of the observatories in the Region, evaluating different degrees of progress and what indicators they collect (that Mexico and Colombia support the rest). Prof. Felix Rosenberg is committed to systematize all the information and possible support for a plan.

Outcome 3: Good observatory practices (INS of Mexico and Colombia). The ECHO platform of the INSP of El Salvador will be used. PAHO/SAM (PAHO/South America Office) will support the implementation of this expected result.

Prof. Felix Rosenberg asked if Isabella Delgado could prepare a document to circulate with these commitments. Ask each country to state whether they have the capacity to measure the performance of their systems.

### At a Territorial Level

Fragile territories where the right to the city is seriously limited, such as housing, sanitation, education, transportation, sports and recreation. In this sense, the directions are:

- Technological Innovation Project/Itaboraí Forum/Fiocruz will share documentation on Rapid Participative Diagnosis and social mapping. It is proposed that a step-by-step operational manual be shared to enable countries to assess its feasibility.
- Countries will analyze feasibility, identifying barriers and facilitators for implementation.
- Virtual meeting to resolve doubts and possible solutions to the identified barriers. This meeting is expected to conclude whether the pilot implementation is feasible.
- In viable countries, the methodology will be implemented in a community to pilot its implementation. Technological Innovation Project/Fiocruz will provide training for the pilot. The objective is to identify barriers and facilitators and the contextualization effort that the methodology would require to be scalable.
- The results of the pilot study will be shared at an IANPHI forum, discussing the scopes of the study.
- A report will be written on the experience by sharing the methodology with specific reflections from each of the countries.
- Identification of a local municipal government to become a pilot as an example or model for combating inequalities.
- Formal link between the NPHIs and a local government, to pilot advances, Fiocruz will follow up on the methodology to make it scalable.

Objectives: To write an article to share this experience, subsequent to the magazine editors' forum.

## NEXT NPHI MEETING VENUE

The participants were asked where the next annual meeting could be held. Prof. Felix Rosenberg proposed a virtual meeting for a specific topic in 2024 and that the next face-to-face annual network meeting should be held in 2025.

In relation to the agreements of the Petropolis Inequities Workshop, it is recalled that they are still in force and must be answered and progress must be made on them.

