

**Tenth Session of the Advisory Committee (AC) of the Latin American and Caribbean Center on Health Sciences Information (BIREME)**

**BIREME/PAHO/WHO**  
**Department of Evidence and Intelligence for Action in Health – (EIH)**

The tenth session of the AC of the Latin American and Caribbean Center on Health Sciences Information (BIREME/PAHO/WHO) was held online, on October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021. The meeting was held in compliance to Resolution 5 of the 49<sup>th</sup> Directing Council of PAHO/WHO (CD49.R5) in which the Statute of BIREME was approved, in effect from the year 2010, which defines its new institutional framework.

The session was attended by the following members of the AC: Permanent Members - representatives of PAHO/WHO and Brazil in accordance with Resolution CD49.R5, when BIREME Statute was approved; and Non-permanent Members - delegates from Colombia and Costa Rica, Member States elected as members of BIREME AC according to Resolution CD58.R6 for a three years period (2021-2023) and delegates from Guyana, Mexico and Uruguay, Member States elected as members of BIREME Advisory Committee in accordance with Resolution CD56.R4 for a three years period (2019-2021).

**FINAL REPORT**

São Paulo (SP), October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021

## FINAL REPORT

### Opening Session

- 1) On October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021, the X Session of the Center's AC was held online, which fulfills advisory functions before the Director of PAHO/WHO. The Session was led by Diego González Machín, Director of BIREME and Secretary ex-officio on the occasion, supported by the appointed President, Graciela Fernández Fortete, Deputy Medical Technical Director of Management Evaluation, National Resource Fund, Uruguay, together with the staff of the rapporteur in charge of the BIREME management team.
- 2) Sebastián García Saiso, Director of the Department of Evidence and Intelligence for Action in Health (EIH) began with words of welcome, recognizing the participation of the AC members, emphasizing the importance of the BIREME AC, and the recommendations from its members for the continued sustainability of the Center.
- 3) The participation of the AC members was thanked and the importance of holding the session within the framework of the institutional development of the Center was highlighted.
- 4) The AC members and BIREME staff participating in the session introduced themselves and the work was started.

### Regulation Matters

- 5) The following Member States were elected to constitute the directing panel of the Advisory Committee of BIREME in its tenth session:

**Presidency:** Uruguay (Graciela Fernández Fortete)

**Rapporteur:** BIREME management staff

- 6) The President of the X Session of the AC proposed to hold the discussions after all the presentations to have an overview of all the information exchange. At this time, the words of one of the members of Brazil who was present at the beginning of the X Session of the AC, Luiz Tadeu Villela Blumm, Undersecretary of Administrative Affairs, Executive Secretary of the Ministry of Health of Brazil (SAA/SE/MS), expressing the full support of the SAA/SE/MS for BIREME's institutional sustainability, through the development of its projects, products and services in coordination with the SAA/SE/MS are highlighted.

## PRESENTATION

7) The presentations were structured as follows:

**Institutionality** Mission, Priorities and Strategic Actions of BIREME

**First Axis** Financial Sustainability

**Second Axis** Scientific Communication

**Third Axis** Technical Cooperation: Information products and services

**Fourth Axis** Technical Cooperation: Information technologies for technical cooperation

- 8) The Director of BIREME began with the presentation: “BIREME: Mission, Priorities and Strategic Actions”. During his presentation, he pointed out the technical cooperation program of the Center, its projects, products and services available to the countries of the Region (and outside of it) at the local, national, regional and global levels of action, with emphasis on actions carried out from December 2020 to date, highlighting BIREME's strategic priorities and actions.
- 9) Silvia Almeida de Valentín (GA) in the first axis, on the financial sustainability of the Center, highlighted the Biannual Work Plan 2020-2021 (PTB 20-21), the financial sustainability and general operations of BIREME. She highlighted how the Center could expand the funding sources of its PTB and the key elements for the development of its plan. She clarified that all BIREME's work is aligned and contributes to the Strategic Plan 2020-2025 and the PAHO/WHO Technical Cooperation Work Plan. In addition, she stressed that BIREME's new institutional framework is still being implemented, pending the formalization of its Headquarters Agreement in Brazil. In addition, it is still in the process of elaboration, as defined in the BIREME Statute, the conformation of the membership of the Center, to be composed of the Member States of PAHO/WHO, international and public organizations in scientific-technical information and communication.
- 10) Lilian Calò (COM/DIR) presented the scientific communication axis, highlighting the scientific communication courses in the Portuguese language, launched in 2021, and in the Spanish language, launched in 2019. She also presented the scientific communication actions (VHL Scientific Communication, situation of indexing of AL&C journals in the databases, indexing criteria, face-to-face courses of scientific communication which can be carried out in Portuguese, Spanish, English and French) and also presented the institutional communication channels of the Center (Institutional website, PAHO Intranet, BIREME Bulletin, social networks, and PSI and FiquePorDentro internal bulletin) and update dynamics.

- 11) Carmen Verónica Abdala (PFI/SCI), in the technical cooperation axis with emphasis on information services and products, presented the actions of information and knowledge management, for decision-making with a focus on networking, activities and initiatives in 2021, aligned with the recommendations of the IX CA. She highlighted the continuing update and new Windows of Knowledge that were released in 2021, such as the COVID-19 Natural History Window of Knowledge. She also highlighted the evidence maps developed in conjunction with countries in the Region.
- 12) Renato Murasaki (AFI / MTI), in the technical cooperation axis focused on information technologies, presented the advances in the area, which includes database administration and health terminology, considering the recommendations of the IX AC. He shared data on increasing visibility and access to technical and scientific information in health available in the Virtual Health Library (VHL). He highlighted the e-BlueInfo product, advances in initiatives with the WHO and developments in open data and impact measurement.

### **Comments and Recommendations**

- 13) The discussions, comments and recommendations issued, facilitated by the President of the Session and by the Secretary ex officio, in addition to congratulating BIREME for the presentations and for the progress in technical cooperation products and services, were directed towards the continuous development and strengthening of BIREME, expressed in proposals for a more effective dissemination of its projects, products and services in the countries of the Region, seeking intersectoral partners, in addition to the need to venture into strategic issues and in particular, the implementation of institutional frameworks that define and sustain BIREME's institutional framework both in Brazil and throughout the Region.
- 14) Graciela Fernández (Uruguay) considers that the recommendations made in previous sessions are permanent and do not lose validity, since their objectives are usually of gradual and constant implementation. In addition, she recommends deepening work with the PAHO/WHO country offices, which are the entities that are most familiar with the local issues and needs of the countries and can generate projects with BIREME on issues that should be developed and deepened. For that, it is also necessary for them to know what BIREME is capable of offering.
- 15) Matheus Corradi de Souza (MRE Brazil) expressed interest in knowing the current status of the Headquarters Agreement, which is pending. He reports that the processing of this type of document, due to its binding legal nature, is complex and slow, even involving the National Congress. He understands the relevance of the formalization of this Agreement for the Center. At the request of the Director of BIREME, Silvia de Valentin

(GA) recounted the brief recent history and current situation of the Headquarters Agreement, concluding that negotiations between PAHO/WHO Brazil, the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should be resumed in coordination with the PAHO/WHO Headquarters. Matheus was also thanked for his interest in this important issue for BIREME.

- 16) By way of reflection, Matheus Corradi emphasizes that now, more than ever, the exchange of scientific and technical information between countries is fundamental; the pandemic made this very clear to achieve equitable access to vaccines and medical supplies, with the support of PAHO/WHO.
- 17) Shirlei Corrêa Rodrigues (CGDI/SAA/SE/MS Brazil) recommends advancing the Headquarters Agreement, based on what was discussed between Matheus Corradi (MRE Brazil) and Silvia de Valentin (BIREME), which would provide more guarantees and sustainability to BIREME in terms of its technical cooperation. She mentions the key role of BIREME and the continuous improvement of its products and services with a focus on the democratization of health information to reduce inequities and combat misinformation, especially about Covid-19, not only in Brazil, but in LA&C.
- 18) Adriana Salazar (Costa Rica) at first has no recommendations since it is her first meeting on her behalf of her country. However, she agrees with Graciela Fernández (Uruguay) in recommending deepening the work with the PAHO/WHO Country Offices, which would give the Ministries of Health the opportunity to learn about the possibilities of technical cooperation with BIREME. She adds that these opportunities can also be extended to academic institutions, in addition to the Ministries of Health, since she observed that BIREME offers numerous possibilities for products and services of interest to academia. In relation to this recommendation, the Director of BIREME pointed out that the future decision-makers are in academia, universities, scientific societies, etc. He also commented that BIREME is already prospecting technical cooperation activities with academic and governmental health institutions in Costa Rica (eg, on the MTCI and e-BlueInfo topic).
- 19) Martha Caballero (Mexico) highlighted that, like Adriana Salazar (Costa Rica), she is also a bridge between the governing bodies of the countries and the more specific functions of the Organization, such as BIREME. She mentioned the institutional video of the Center during CD59 and, for her, it was a discovery to know the important work of BIREME, as also described in the report received. She mentions the next Pan American Sanitary Conference (CSP) and the information products on Covid-19 developed by BIREME, suggesting that the scientific information platform on Covid-19 be presented at the CSP, since it includes not only public policy documents on the disease, but also information and scientific evidence from various countries. She mentions the topic of the

infodemic in Covid-19 and other possible health emergencies, and how the information provided by BIREME's products can help combat it.

- 20) Margaritha Contreras (Mexico) thanked the opportunity to access all this scientific work and made available a potential collaboration with COFEPRIS and join BIREME's initiatives.
- 21) Grecia Umbarila (Colombia) stated that she was learning about BIREME's activities in this first meeting of the CA in which she participated on behalf of its country. The Director of BIREME added that the Center has a long-standing work of technical cooperation activities with Colombia (Virtual Health Library) focused on Primary Health Care (PHC) with the National Institute of Health of Colombia.
- 22) The AC members and the participants reached a consensus on the recommendations, which are summarized below and will be sent to the PAHO/WHO Director for consideration.
- i. Advance with the implementation of the BIREME Statute, especially the formalization of its Headquarters Agreement in Brazil
  - ii. Continue strengthening the search for financing and the sustainability of BIREME with the support of PAHO/WHO
  - iii. Increase the spaces for promoting the information products and services developed by BIREME, within the countries and internally within PAHO/WHO
  - iv. Identify actions so that the products of excellence developed by the Center can receive attention in the Member States of PAHO/WHO
  - v. Strengthen links with PAHO/WHO Country Offices and national counterparts, including academia, to support the identification of funding sources and development of technical cooperation projects

### **Other topics**

- 23) The participation of the Delegates of the Member States was thanked for highlighting the discussions held and the results achieved at the meeting, as well as the BIREME team for their performance at the Center in the area of scientific information on Health and especially in the realization of the X Session of the Advisory Committee.

## **Session Closure**

After the participants shared comments on their appreciation for and experiences at the meeting, the main objectives reached towards the new institutional positioning of the Center were pointed out.

In witness whereof, the tenth session of the Advisory Committee of the Latin American and Caribbean Center on Health Sciences Information (BIREME) was ended, the Director of BIREME and *ex officio* Secretary, signed this final report in its original language, Spanish.

It was held online, in the seventh day of the month of October of the year two thousand and twenty-one.

The original signed document will be deposited in the files of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau.

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Sebastian Garcia Saiso  
EIH Director and Acting Director of BIREME/PAHO/WHO since NOV/1/21  
Advisory Committee of BIREME/PAHO/WHO

Annexes  
**Annex A**

**Agenda**

**Opening of the Session**

Presentations on the new institutional framework of the Latin American and Caribbean Center on Health Sciences Information (BIREME/PAHO/WHO), its context in PAHO/WHO, its mission, objective, technical cooperation program, work plan and budget.

**Debate, questions and answers**



Annex B

**LIST OF DOCUMENTS**

**Working documents**

1. Meeting Agenda
2. Executive Report of BIREME

## Annex C

### LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

#### MEMBERS OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

##### **Brasil**

Matheus Corradi de Souza  
Terceiro secretário, Assistente da Divisão de Cidadania (DCID).  
Ministério das Relações Exteriores

Luiz Tadeu Villela Blumm  
Subsecretário de Assuntos Administrativos  
Ministério da Saúde

Shirlei Corrêa Rodrigues  
Coordenadora-Geral de Documentação e Informação – Substituta.  
Ministério da Saúde

##### **Colombia**

Sra. Grecia Umbarila  
Asesora Grupo de Cooperación y Relaciones Internacionales  
Ministerio Salud

##### **Costa Rica**

Lic. Adriana Salazar González  
Jefe de Relaciones Internacionales  
Ministerio Salud

##### **Guyana (ausente)**

Dr. Anand Persaud  
Ministry of Health

##### **México**

Lic. Martha Leticia Caballero Abraham  
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Zulema Guerra Carpio  
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Margaritha Contreras  
Comisión Federal para la Protección contra Riesgos Sanitarios (COFEPRIS)

##### **Uruguay**

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Subdirección de Evaluación de Gestión  
Fondo Nacional de Recursos

**PAHO/WHO, HQ**

Sebastián García Saiso

Director of Evidence and Intelligence for Action in Health – EIH and  
Acting Director of BIREME since NOV/1/2021

**BIREME/PAHO/WHO**

*Diego González Machín*

*Director and Secretary ex officio until OCT/31/2021*

Lilian Calò

Coordinator of Scientific Communication

*Carmen Verônica Abdala*

*Manager of Cooperative Services of Information and Evidence (SCI)  
Production of Information Sources (PFI)*

Juliana Sousa

Supervisor of VHL Instance Monitoring and Projects

Rosemeire Pinto

Supervisor of User Attention Services

Sueli Suga

Supervisor of Referential Information Sources

*Renato Murasaki*

*Manager of Methodology and Information Technologies (MTI) and  
Administration of Information Sources (AFI) until OCT/31/2021*

Marcos Luis Mori

Supervisor of Technical Support Network

*Silvia Almeida de Valentin*

*Manager of Administrative Management and Planning (GA)*

Marcia Ymanaka Barretto

Coordinator of Infrastructure of Technologies of Information

Adriano Rehder de Sá

Controllershship and Processes

Annex D

**ACRONYMS USED IN THIS REPORT**

**BIREME** – Latin American and Caribbean Center on Health Sciences Information

**CGDI/SAA/SE/MS Brasil** – Coordenação Geral de Documentação e Informação / Subsecretaria de Assuntos Administrativos / Secretaria Executiva / Ministério da Saúde do Brasil

**COFEPRIS** - Comisión Federal para la Protección contra Riesgos Sanitarios

**MRE Brasil** – Ministério de Relações Exteriores do Brasil

**MTCI** – Medicina Tradicional, Complementaria e Integrativa

**VHL** – Virtual Health Library