

## **Terms of Reference of BIREME Scientific Committee**

The 49<sup>th</sup> PAHO/WHO Directing Council (CD49) has approved the new Statute of the Latin American and Caribbean Center on Health Sciences Information (BIREME), valid since 2010, one that establishes a new governance structure for BIREME formed by three permanent organs: the Advisory Committee, Scientific Committee, and the Secretariat of BIREME.

The Advisory Committee performs roles of advisory services to the Director of PAHO, the Scientific Committee fulfills functions of advisory services to the Director of PAHO and to the Advisory Committee, the Secretariat of BIREME is responsible for the management and technical and administrative execution of BIREME subjected to the general authority and decisions of the Director of PAHO.

## **Roles of the Scientific Committee of BIREME**

1. According to the roles of advisory services to the Director of PAHO, and to the Advisory Committee and to article VII of the Statute of BIREME, the Scientific Committee shall:
  - a) formulate recommendations to the Advisory Committee on programmatic functions of BIREME according to the state of the art international on information and scientific communication, including: policies and quality criteria for the selection of contents; information management, knowledge, and scientific evidence; editorial management; infrastructure of information storage and retrieval; bibliometrics; infometrics, and scientometrics;
  - b) advise the Director of PAHO and the Advisory Committee on the methodologies and technologies that BIREME uses in the management of information products and services, and recommend solutions and updates needed;
  - c) advise the Director of PAHO and the Advisory Committee in the adoption of innovations in the field of scientific information and communication;
  - d) advise the Director of PAHO and the Advisory Committee on the preparation and implementation of BIREME's Biennial Work Plan, in keeping with the PAHO Strategic Plan and Biennial Work Plan;
  - e) advise the Director of PAHO and the Advisory Committee on the adoption of international partnerships for the development of scientific information and communication in health;

## **Composition of the Committee**

2. The Scientific Committee shall consist of at least five international specialists, named by the Advisory Committee of BIREME for their recognized expertise in scientific

research, health information and knowledge management, and scientific and technical communication in health and their knowledge in the areas of research, ethics, development, operations, and financing.

3. Members of the Scientific Committee shall be named individual specialists for a period of 3 (three) years, except for the initial members of the Scientific Committee that will be named by drawing in order to serve over a period of two, three or four years, as necessary for maintaining the balance among the members of the Scientific Committee. The members can be reelected for a second period of three years always when they do not have participated more than two complete periods.

#### **Criteria for the nomination of the candidates for the Scientific Committee**

4. The Committee members should have recent, pertinent and high-level experience in the field of scientific information in health. That experience should encompass, as possible, advanced knowledge on the following thematic domains:
  - a) scientific communication and open access;
  - b) registry, indexing, preservation, search, retrieval and dissemination of scientific and technical information;
  - c) networks and specialized library services and knowledge management centers in the field of the health sciences;
  - d) access and use of evidence to support policy-making, decision-making and knowledge translation applied to health systems and services;
  - e) organization and thematic representation of information, health terminology and taxonomy (controlled vocabularies, classification, thesaurus, ontologies) and semantic networks;
  - f) methodologies for the development and adoption of information technologies, public domain and other types of tools, including the development of standards that ensure the interoperability among them;
  - g) management of scientific information systems in health, information flow and evaluation of scientific information sources and resources;
  - h) specialized technical cooperation in the field of scientific and technical information systems in general and particularly in the field of health sciences and related themes; and
  - i) dissemination and democratization of scientific and technical knowledge in health towards the new platforms of integration and communication.

## **Proposal of candidates**

5. Each Member State of PAHO\* can suggest or identify up to 2 (two) specialists, and the Director of PAHO it can appoint specialists additional, that they will be included in the list of international specialists from which the appointments will be made, taking into account also the thematic diversity and the necessary expertise so that the Scientific Committee fulfills its functions. The members of the Scientific Committee will be approved by the Advisory Committee of BIREME considering the thematic diversity and the expertise necessary for the development of its functions.

6. The list of candidates will be communicated by the Director of PAHO to the Advisory Committee of BIREME and should include a detailed curriculum of each candidate

## **Responsibility of the Scientific Committee Members**

7. While they remain in practice of their functions, the members of the Scientific Committee will not require nor receive instructions of any national governmental authority. They will act as advisers, without any executive functions, and will be totally independent of any government or agency, structure or entity of the PAHO. The members will follow their scientific and technical knowledge and professional judgment in order to respond to the demands generated by the decisions of the Scientific Committee and in order to support with recommendations the fulfillment of BIREME's mission.

## **Meetings and Rules of Procedure**

8. BIREME Scientific Committee will meet annually in regular session. It may, through a representation of at least 3 (three) of its Members, request to BIREME Advisory Committee extraordinary sessions. The members of the Scientific Committee may organize, through BIREME, periodic virtual meetings in order to guarantee the necessary advances of their functions.

9. The Scientific Committee will adopt a Rules of Procedure to approved by the Committee itself in an ordinary session.

10. Members of the Scientific Committee, observers, and any person invited by the Scientific Committee or by BIREME to participate in the sessions will not publicize any document or information without previous authorization of the Advisory Committee of BIREME.

## **Access**

11. The Scientific Committee will have access to BIREME's Biennial Work Plan, which is included in the Biennial Work Plan of PAHO's Knowledge Management and Communication Area, to the strategy of Knowledge Management and Communications of the Organization and to documents recommended by the Director of PAHO and/or by BIREME Advisory Committee.

12. The Scientific Committee will have access to the Advisory Committee Web Portal and to the virtual environments set up to support their mission.

## **Reporting**

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\* Includes Member States, Participating States and PAHO Associate Members

13. The Scientific Committee will prepare an annual report on its activities to present to BIREME Advisory Committee. The Scientific Committee can also prepare *ad hoc* reports in accordance with requests done by the Director of PAHO or by BIREME Advisory Committee.

### **Resources**

14. The resources required for the performance of the Scientific Committee will be included in BIREME's biennial budget in order to cover administrative support, travel expenses and lodging regarding the functions of the Committee's members. Travels will be processed in accordance with PAHO standards and procedures. The members will perform their functions without perceiving any remuneration from the Organization.

### **Review of the Terms of Reference**

15. The Advisory Committee, in consultation with the Director of PAHO, will examine periodically the performance of the Scientific Committee aiming to evaluate its effectiveness and formulating the pertinent recommendations regarding its members and its Terms of Reference. The Terms of Reference of the Scientific Committee may be modified by BIREME Advisory Committee if necessary.