

**Online Ad Hoc Session to the members of the VIII Session of the Advisory Committee
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 online ad hoc session of the Advisory Committee (AC) of the Latin American and Caribbean Center on Health Sciences Information (BIREME/PAHO/WHO) was held on July 30th, 2020 aiming to maintain effective the communication with the members of the AC and thus offer partial information on the progress achieved in the recommendations made by them during the VIII Session that took place in October 2019. It will also be an opportunity to present the challenges in the implementation of the 2020-2021 Biannual Work Plan (BWP 20-21) during the global COVID-19 pandemic and to obtain recommendations for overcoming them.

The participants of the ad hoc session are listed at the end of this report.

REPORT

São Paulo (SP), July 30th, 2020

REPORT

Opening Session

- 1) On July 30th, 2020 the Online Ad Hoc Session of the AC of the Center took place, led by Diego González Machín, Director of BIREME and Secretary *ex-officio*.
- 2) Sebastián García Saiso, Director of the Department of Evidence and Intelligence for Action in Health (EIH), began with welcome words and he shared the objective of the Ad Hoc session to maintain effective the communication with the members of the CA and offer partial information on the progress in the recommendations provided by them in the VIII Session held in October 2019. It was also an opportunity to obtain recommendations for the financial sustainability of BIREME also considering the challenges of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

PRESENTATION

- 3) The Director of BIREME thanked the online participation of the meeting attendees and began the presentation of the partial progress in the fulfillment of the recommendations of the VIII AC (2019) and the challenges in the implementation of BIREME's BWP 20-21 during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 4) During his presentation, Dr. González highlighted 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. He showed the actions carried out since October 2019 to date in each of the recommendations of the AC:
 - a. Search for **intersectoral collaboration**;
 - b. Strengthen **alliances that strengthen BIREME and contribute to the mobilization of financial resources**, including public-private partnerships, non-profit NGOs, among others;
 - c. Strengthen and expand **BIREME collaboration networks**;
 - d. Implement **strategies and mechanisms so that products can impact remote regions**;
 - e. Intensify actions for the **promotion of BIREME products and services**, including their dissemination in national events;
 - f. **Disseminate information on BIREME products and services** in the Ministries of Health, identifying focal points at a technical level;
 - g. Strengthen the **strategy of training for trainers** on topics such as Access and Use of Information, Evidence-based Policies and Scientific Communication.
 - h. **Develop the culture of research and data mining**.
 - i. Present BIREME **projects to the Academy**

- j. Perform a **mapping of actors, networks, scientific societies at the Regional level and in countries** that can support the promotion of BIREME products and services.
- 5) To obtain reflections and recommendations from the participants, the challenges for BIREME's financial sustainability considering the context of the global COVID-19 pandemic were also presented:
- a. Reduce gaps and expand sources of financing;
 - b. Mobilize technical cooperation projects with the countries of the Region;
 - c. Formalize the annual contribution of the Government of Brazil for the improvement of BIREME;
 - d. Continue supporting countries in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic;
 - e. Adopt effective actions to disseminate its products and services throughout the Region;
 - f. Encourage participation in Global, Regional, Sub regional and Interprogrammatic Projects; and
 - g. Implement the Financial Resources Mobilization Plan.

Discussions and Recommendations

- 6) Following are the comments and recommendations of the participants:

Rodrigo dos Santos Santana (Brazil) congratulated the BIREME team for the progress made in complying with the recommendations and stressed that the strategies and products developed and presented today are of great added value for the economy. He also reported that changes in the structure of the Ministry of Health of Brazil impacted the formalization of the contribution of the Government for the improvement of BIREME.

Shirlei Rodrigues (Brazil) also congratulated BIREME team for the progress and highlighted that she participates closely in the developments carried out by the Center, also because there is another Technical Cooperation Agreement (TC) that is specific for the joint work with CGDI/SAA/SE/MS. We have periodical meetings and we closely follow all developments in products and services. Regarding the contribution of the Government of Brazil, she confirmed that the changes that have taken place in the Ministry of Health have caused this delay, but she also expressed that there is a lot of interest and understanding and that we will soon be able to follow up on this TC - of improvement - to be able to send the resources to BIREME.

Carlos Enrique Hernández Ávila (El Salvador) congratulated BIREME team and commented that it is always a pleasure to listen and he is always amazed with all BIREME products. Regarding funding sources, he asked if BIREME had already explored working with foundations. He also highlighted the importance of seeing the products in operation, knowing the statistics of how they are behaving and, in that sense, he stressed that it would be good to

know what has been done in each country and if the members of the CA, as a commitment, are working all the products and services of the Center in their countries.

Silvia de Valentin (GA - BIREME) highlighted that El Salvador's comment was related to item 5 of the recommendations, which is to further disseminate BIREME products and services, including how it can explore together with the countries so that we know what are actually been done and to have the certainty that the countries also have this knowledge of what the Center can contribute. This can support the identification of funding opportunities and joint work. In this way, also contributing to item 7 of implementation of a financial resource mobilization plan, which has already been discussed with ERP, the corresponding area at PAHO.

Graciela Fernández Fortete (Uruguay) thanked for the report, which was very complete, and also congratulated for the impressive progress due to this complex moment that is being experienced worldwide and, particularly for the Region of the Americas. Regarding the point of dissemination of BIREME products, she added that the PAHO country offices, with their information and communication focal points, should play a fundamental role since they can have a more panoramic view of the options and/or situations that can contribute to the dissemination where necessary.

Silvia de Valentin (GA - BIREME) reinforced that BIREME should also be present in the Country Cooperation Strategies, which constitutes the document jointly developed by the PAHO in the country jointly with the Ministry of Health (MoH) and the corresponding technical authorities and that contemplates the health and information priorities of the country. This action would be coordinated with Dr. Diego Gonzalez (DIR BIR) and the CSC area of PAHO/WHO.

Shirlei Rodrigues (Brazil) commented on the technological and methodological importance of the technical cooperation agreement with the Executive Secretariat of the Brazilian MoH for the development of activities in the information area, and also science and technology, for the MoH.

Kay Shako (Guyana) and Reeshemah Cheltenham-Niles (Barbados) were only connected for some moments, but could not share comments, which they will send once they receive the report of the session.

Other topics

- 7) The participation of the attending was thanked, 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 and technical information in Health and especially in the realization of the Ad Hoc 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 and the ad-hoc session was then closed.

Diego González Machín
Director of BIREME/PAHO/WHO
Secretary *ex officio* of the online ad hoc session of the
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 document

1. Agenda of the Online Ad Hoc Session of the Advisory Committee of BIREME

Annex C

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

MEMBERS OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Barbados

Reeshemah Cheltenham-Niles
Chief Health Planner
Ministry of Health and Wellness

Brazil

Rodrigo dos Santos Santana
Director, Department of Environmental Determinants of Indigenous Health, Special
Secretary of Indigenous Health
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Ministry of Health

Shirlei Corrêa Rodrigues
General Coordinator of Documentation and Information
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Ministry of Health

PAHO/WHO, HQ Sebastián Garcia Saiso
Director of Evidence and Intelligence for Action in Health - EIH

BIREME/PAHO/WHO

<i>Diego González Machín</i>	<i>Director and Secretary ex officio</i>
Lilian Calò	Coordinator of Scientific Communication
<i>Carmen Verônica Abdala</i>	<i>Manager of Cooperative Services of Information and Evidence (SCI)</i>
	<i>Production of Information Sources (PFI)</i>
Sueli Suga	Supervisor of Referential Information Sources
<i>Renato Murasaki</i>	<i>Manager of Methodology and Information Technologies (MTI) and</i>
	<i>Administration of Information Sources (AFI)</i>
Marcos Mori	Supervisor of Technical Support Network
<i>Silvia Almeida de Valentin</i>	<i>Manager of Administrative Management and Planning (GA)</i>
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

VHL – Virtual Health Library