

# Progress on Children's Environmental Health in the Americas

International Conferences for the Evaluation of Global Health Strategies  
Florence, 21-23 November 2006

Dr. Enrique Loyola

Risk Analysis and Management Unit (SDE/RA)

Sustainable Development and Environmental Health Area (SDE)

Pan American Health Organization (PAHO/WHO)



SDE

# Children's Environmental Health in the Americas

- The region of the Americas has played a key role in advocating for children's rights, health and protection.
  - G-8 Miami Declaration on Children's Environmental Health
  - Mar del Plata Ministerial Meeting
  - 2nd WHO International Conference on Children's Health and the Environment
- PAHO has responded to calls for action and assisted countries with implementation and progress reporting. As a result, more people are aware, more policies are in place, and many needs have been identified to improve the lives of children in the Americas.

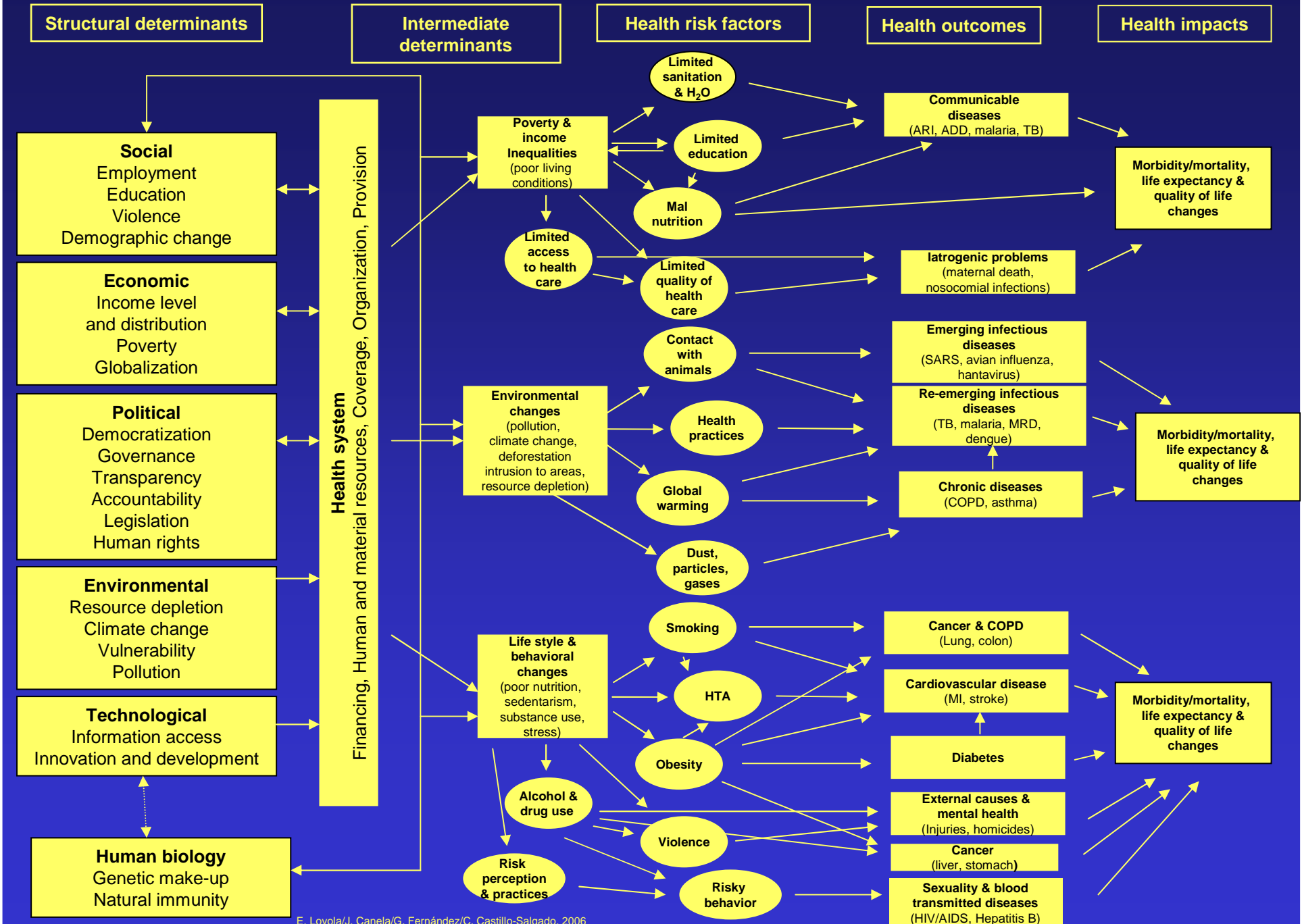


## Children's Environmental Health-related Mandates provide background and support

- Three international declarations specifically serve to identify a vision of development and poverty eradication, investment in environment for social and developmental sustainability, and commitment to children's health and welfare as an investment in the future.
  - the Millennium Declaration of 2001,
  - the Johannesburg Declaration from the World Summit on Sustainable Development of 2002 and,
  - the Mar del Plata Ministerial Declaration of 2005 from the Meeting of Health and Environment Ministers of the Americas.



# Human Development and Health Process in the Americas: main aspects and interactions



## Key Concerns on Children's Environmental Health in the Americas

- Water and sanitation
- Outdoor air quality
- Indoor air quality
- Solid waste management
- Pesticides and toxic substances
- Food safety



## PAHO's strategic action in the Americas

- PAHO has demonstrated leadership, expertise, and ongoing interest to work toward the vision of these three declarations and in 2002 outlined goals in its strategic plan on children's environmental health, called *Healthy Environments: Healthy Children*, taking into consideration that:
  - To enhance children's health, the safety and healthfulness of settings where children live, grow, learn, play and work, (i.e. home, school and community) need to be improved
  - To be more efficient, an integrated approach of different interrelated areas of technical work at PAHO (i.e. IMCI, healthy schools, tobacco control, POP, and others) with additional mobilization of inter-sectoral stakeholders (i.e. CDC, MoT, EPA, WB, UNEP, among others) is required



# Healthy Environments: Healthy Children

## Vision and Goals

### Vision

- Children in the Latin American and Caribbean Region live, grow, learn and play in an environment that is supportive of good health.

### Goals

- We make all people, especially children, aware of the special vulnerability of children to environmental threats and of the need to protect children from environmental hazards.
- We promote scientific research and are a source of expertise, scientific information and indicators on the prevalence of environmental exposures and their impact on children's health.
- We advocate for children's environmental health and enhance the capabilities of health and environmental authorities to develop and implement prevention and control measures that better protect children from environmental threats.
- We contribute worldwide to improve the status of children's environmental health.



## PAHO'S activities

- PAHO has designed and implemented many actions under these four goals, resulting in:
  - new information and awareness products
  - successful implementation of pilot projects
  - promotion of research
  - bringing together experts in workgroups and conferences
  - providing advice to ministers of environment, health and other leaders
  - providing examples of best practice and lessons learned
  - mobilizing resources



## PAHO'S activities: some examples <sup>(1/2)</sup>

- Regional workshop on key science and policy issues on environmental health in Lima (World Health Day 2003)
- National Profiles of Children's Environmental Health, mobilizing inter-sectoral national and international groups for their preparation (2004)
- Multimedia toolkits for Information, Education and Awareness, available to the public in four languages (2004)
- National Action Plans of Children's Environmental Health, including establishment of pediatric environmental health centers in Argentina (2004)
- Children's Environmental Health Indicators: CEC, regional initiative, WHO-supported pilot based on national plans (ongoing)
- Development of guidelines on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) National Implementation Plans, following the Stockholm Convention (2004)



## PAHO'S activities: some examples (2/2)

- International informal consultations on Long-Term Studies of children's environmental health (2004 & 2005)
- Reducing Childhood Lead Poisoning in the Americas, including its full elimination from gasoline (2005)
- *Children's Environment and Health: Action Plan for the Americas*, presented to the Ministers of Health and Environment (2005)
- 2nd WHO global conference on children's environmental health, *Healthy Environments, Healthy Children: Increasing Knowledge and Taking Action*, focusing on science, research and learning needs and planning for concrete actions at different levels (2005)
- Studies on the Ambient Air Pollution and Effects on Children's Health in the Americas (2004-2006)
- *Atlas of Children's Environmental Health in the Americas* (upcoming)



# Raise awareness: virtual library



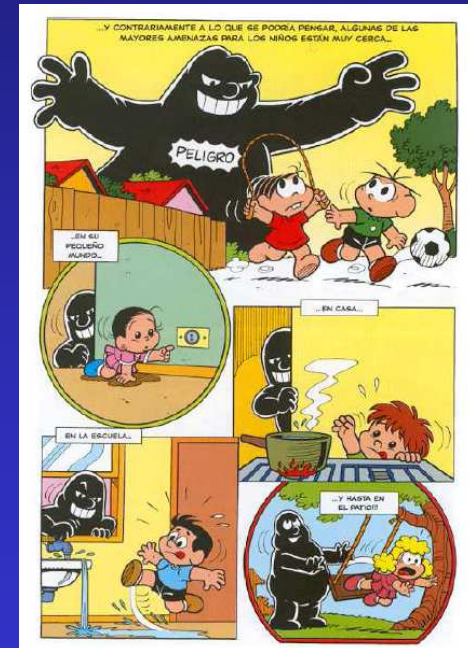
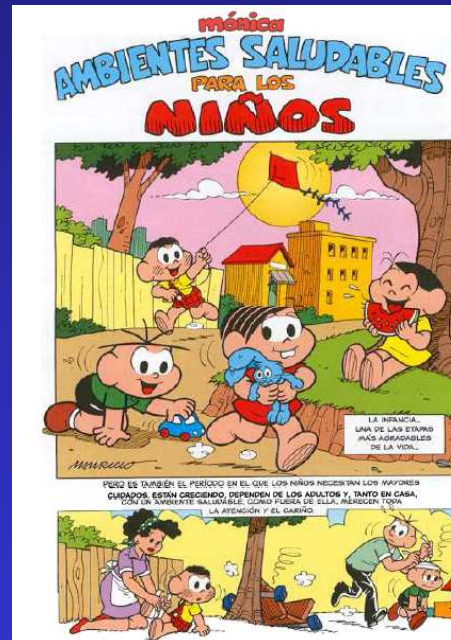
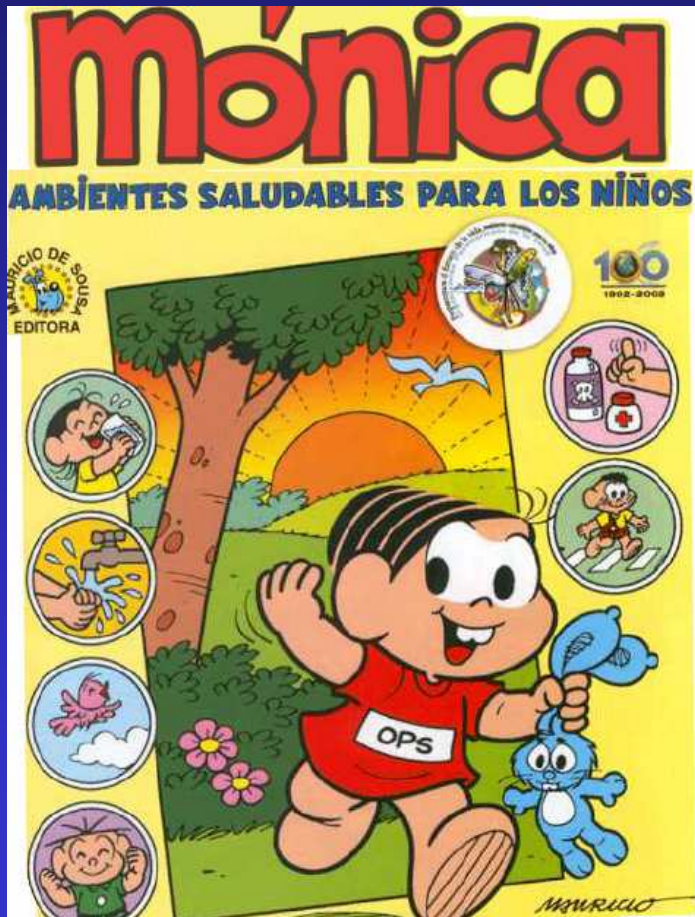
A screenshot of a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the website 'BVSDE Children's environment and health'. The browser's address bar shows the URL 'http://www.bvsde.paho.org/sde/ops-sde/ingles/infantil-acerca.html'. The website header includes navigation links for 'Español' and 'Portugués', and 'Home', 'Map', and 'Contact us'. The main content area is titled 'SDE: Children's Environment and Health' and features a vertical sidebar on the left with the text 'Children's Environment and Health' and 'Virtual library of sustainable development and environmental health'. The main text includes sections for 'About the BVSDE of Children's Environment and Health', 'Introduction', and 'Why concentrating on children?'. The 'Introduction' section welcomes visitors to the PAHO website and mentions that documents are available for download. The 'Why concentrating on children?' section explains that children are more vulnerable to environmental risks and that poor children are particularly affected. The browser's status bar at the bottom shows 'Done' and 'Internet'.

# Raise awareness and inform children

Barro



SDE

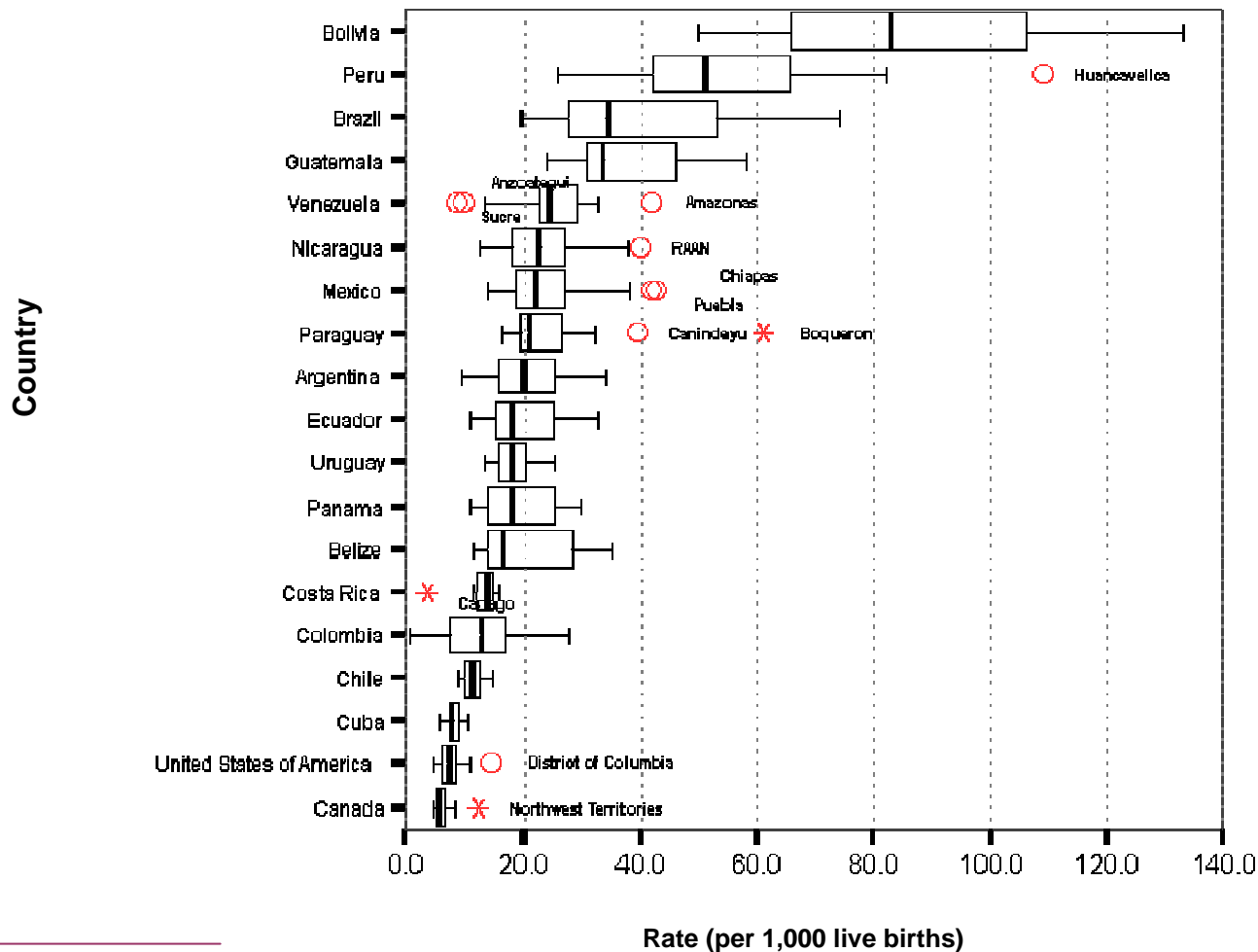


# Promote science and information reporting



# Promote science and information reporting

Infant mortality in selected countries of the Americas by subnational units, around 2000

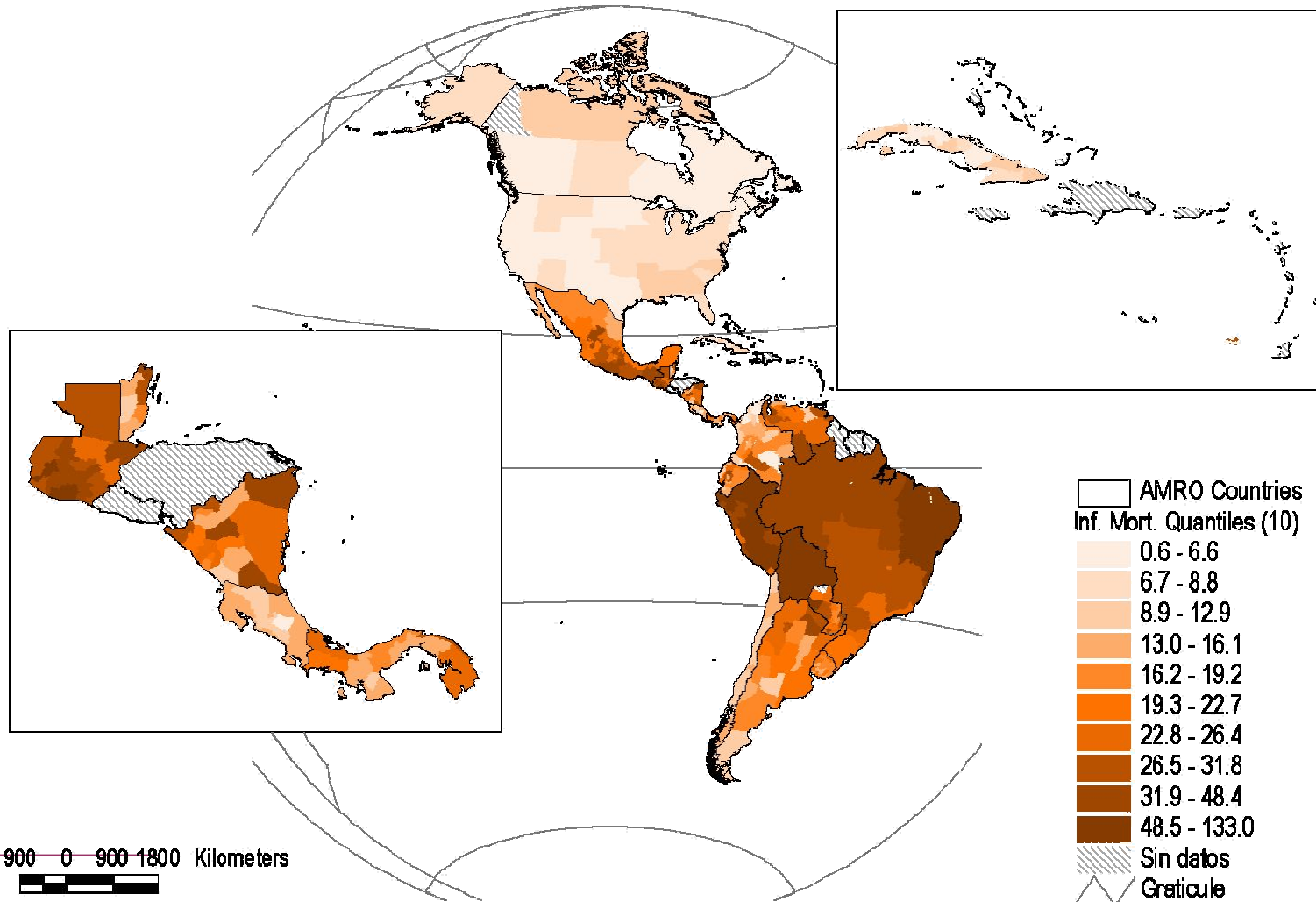


Source: PAHO. Health in the Americas, 2002 edition



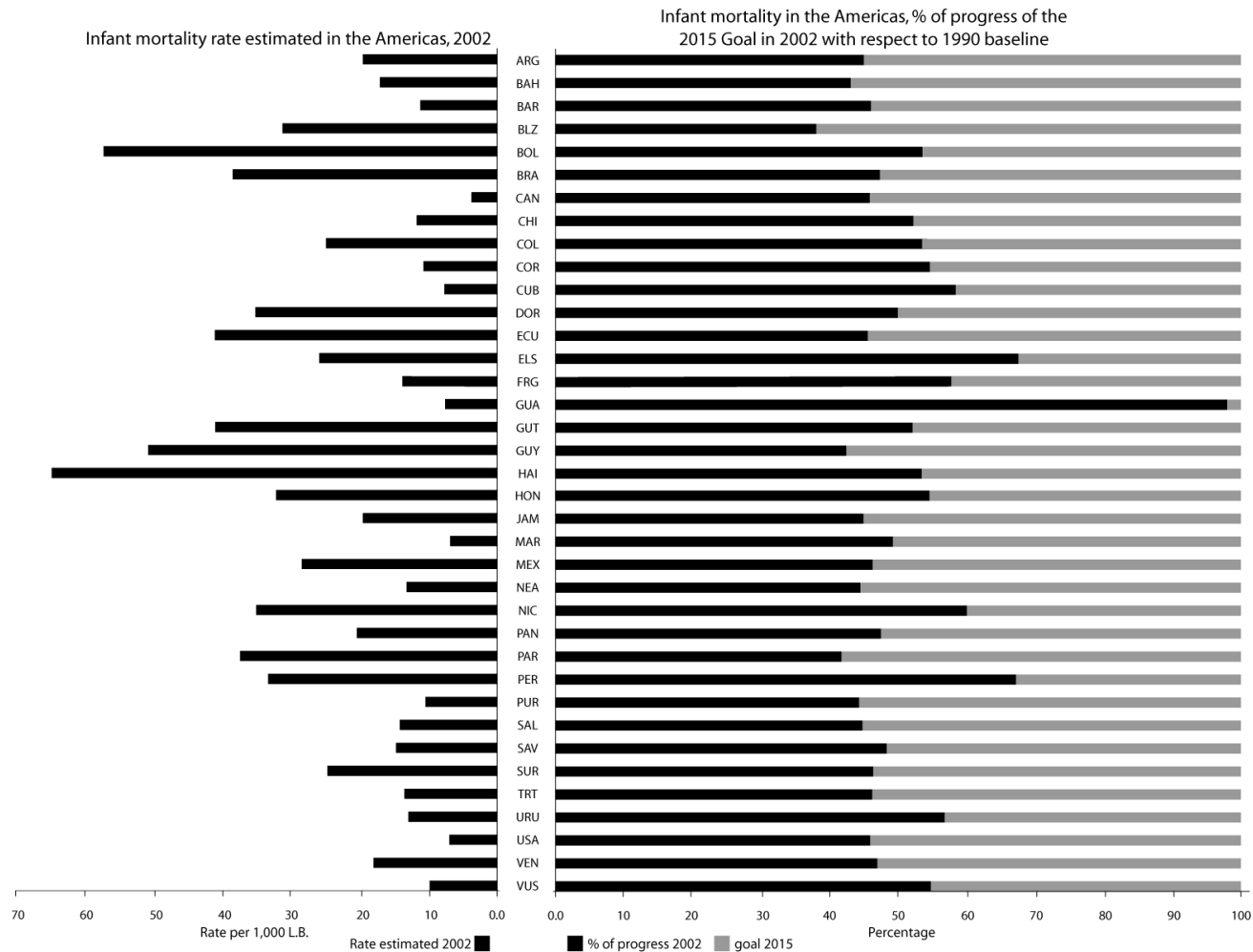
# Promote science and information reporting

Infant mortality in selected countries of the Americas by subnational units, around 2000



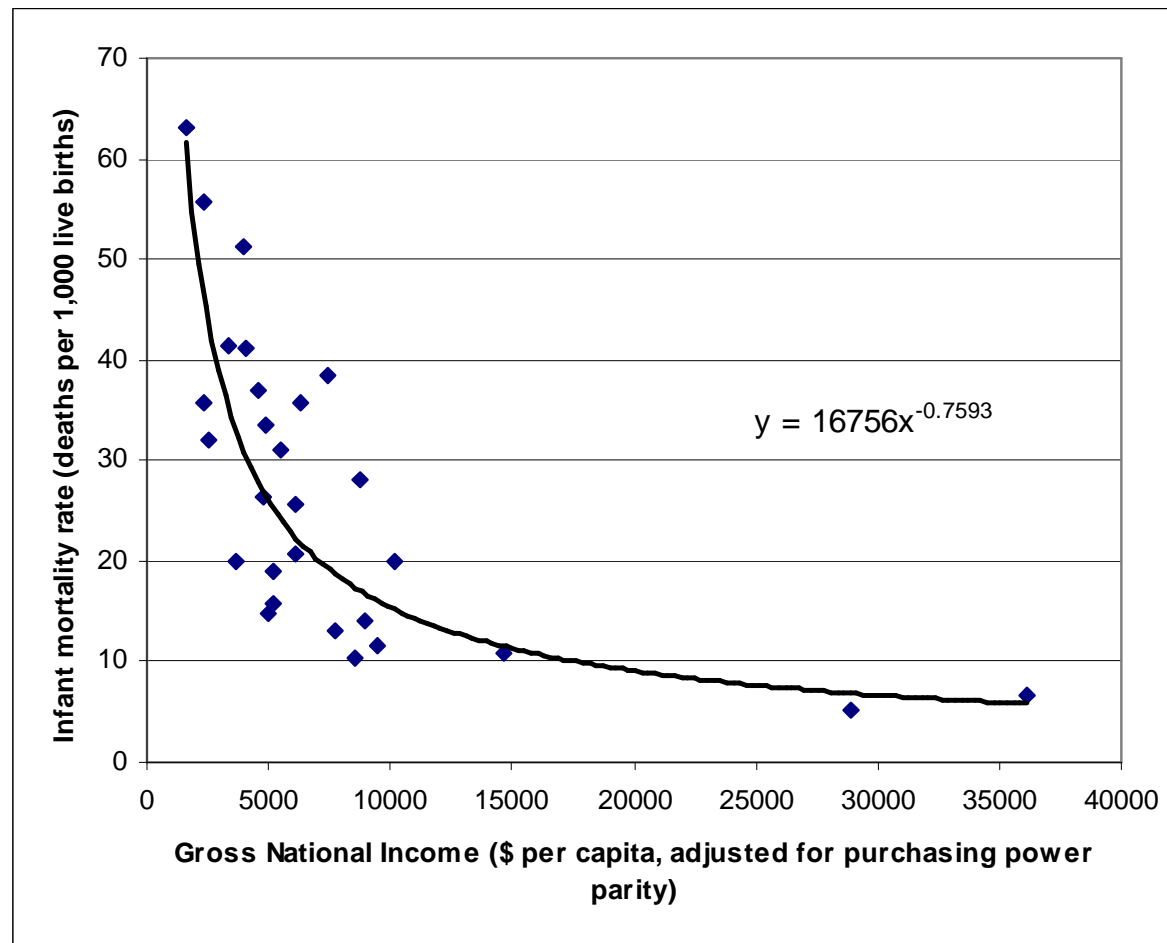
# Promote science and information reporting

## Infant mortality in countries of the Americas and progress towards MDG, around 2002



# Promote science and information reporting

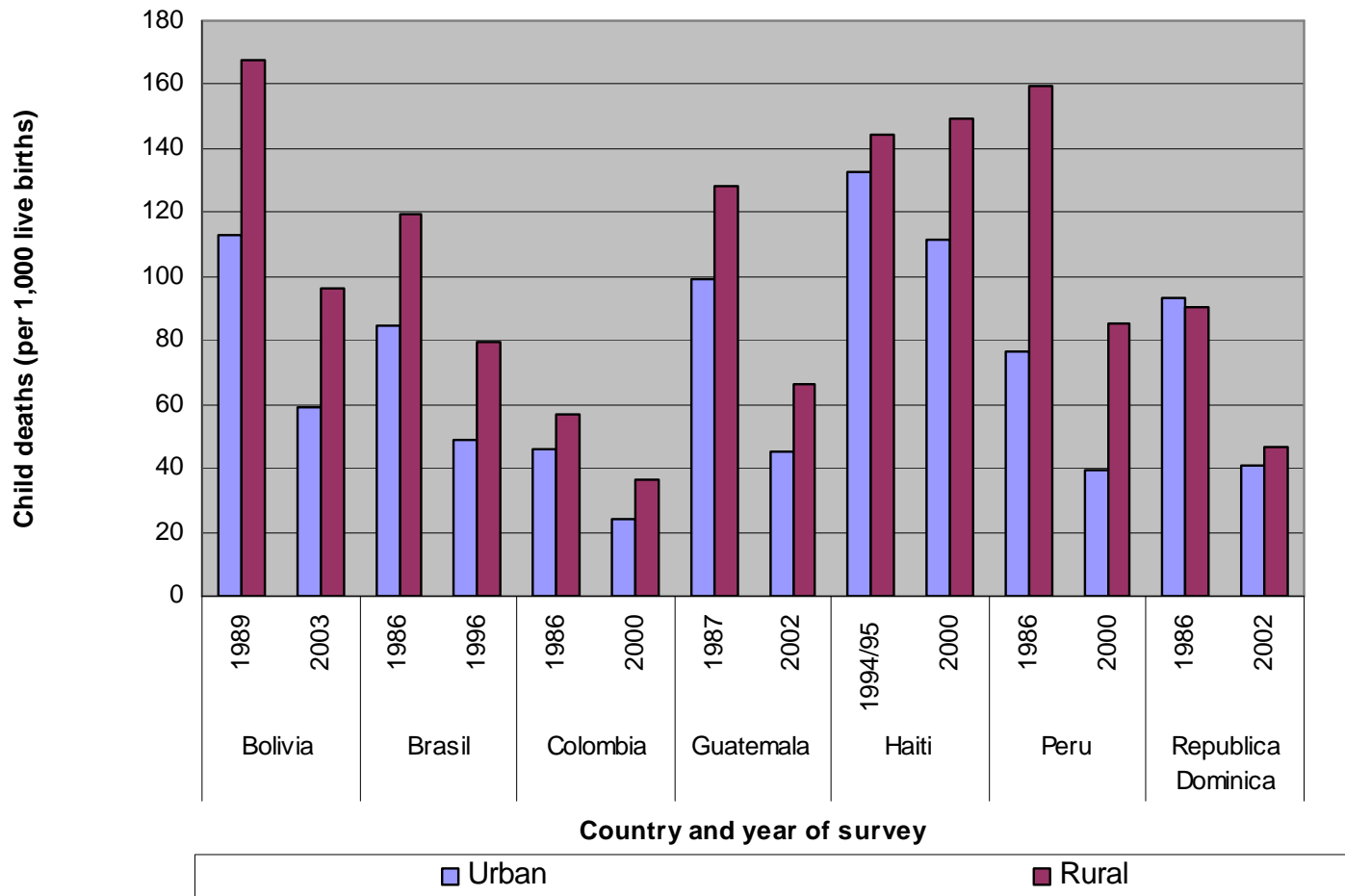
Relation between Infant Mortality and Gross National Income in the Americas, 2002



Source: PAHO. Core Health Data Initiative. Basic Health Indicators, 2004

# Promote science and information reporting

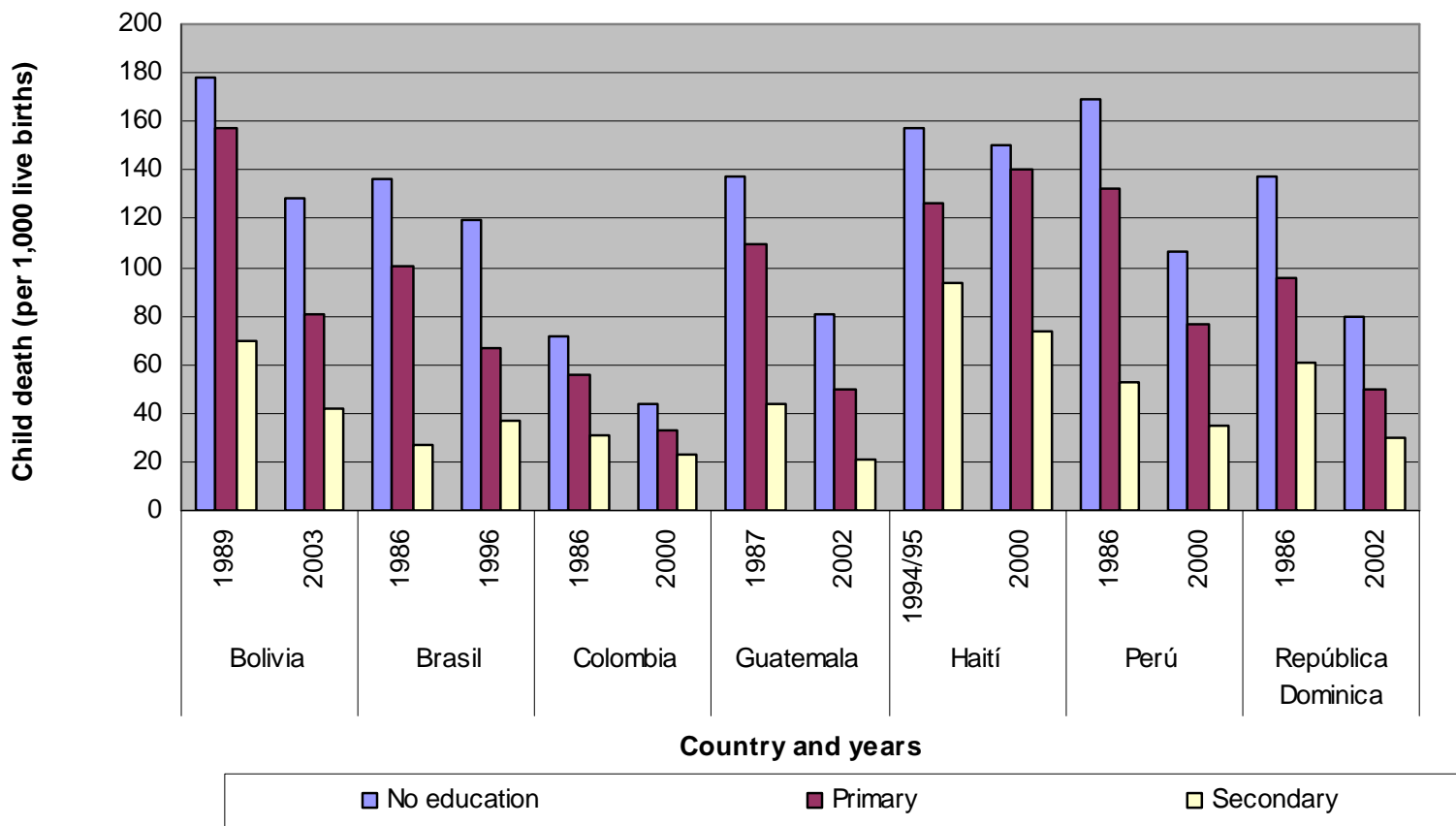
Child mortality trends in selected countries of the Americas by place of residence and year



Source: Demographic and Health Surveys, country data from Website [www.measuredhs.com](http://www.measuredhs.com)

# Promote science and information reporting

Child mortality trends in selected countries of the Americas by mother's education and year



Source: Demographic and Health Surveys, country data from Website [www.measuredhs.com](http://www.measuredhs.com)



## Promote science and information reporting

**Correlation of health status and its determinants in countries of the Americas, around 2000.  
The case of infant mortality and other MDG indicators**

Indicators	Infant mortality	Daily calorie availability	Female literacy	Access to potable water	Access to Basic sanitation	Births attended by trained personnel
<b>Infant mortality</b>	<b>1.000</b>					
<b>Daily calorie availability</b>	<b>-0.494</b>	<b>1.000</b>				
<b>Female literacy</b>	<b>-0.673</b>	<b>0.701</b>	<b>1.000</b>			
<b>Access to potable water</b>	<b>-0.588</b>	<b>0.475</b>	<b>0.633</b>	<b>1.000</b>		
<b>Access to basic sanitation</b>	<b>-0.716</b>	<b>0.358</b>	<b>0.633</b>	<b>0.700</b>	<b>1.000</b>	
<b>Births attended by trained personnel</b>	<b>-0.779</b>	<b>0.811</b>	<b>0.931</b>	<b>0.824</b>	<b>0.687</b>	<b>1.000</b>

**Source:** processed by AIS/PAHO based on Basic Health Indicators of the Americas in 2000. Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belice, Bolivia, Brasil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haití, Honduras, Jamaica, México, Nicaragua, Panamá, Paraguay, Perú, República Dominicana, Trinidad y Tobago, Uruguay and Venezuela.



# Building the capabilities of health and environmental authorities



**BVSDE Children's environment health - Microsoft Internet Explorer**

Address: <http://www.bvsde.paho.org/sde/ops-sde/ingles/bv-infantil.shtml>

**SDE: Children's Environment and Health**

**Themes BVSDE**

- Health Promotion
- Social Determinants of Health
- Millennium Development Goals
- Healthy Settings
  - Avian Influenza
  - Health-Promoting Schools
  - Healthy Housing
  - Healthy Municipalities
  - Local Development
  - Urban Health
- Risk Assessment and Managemes
  - Children's Environ. Health
  - Consumer's Health
  - Epidemiology
  - Injuries and Violence Prevention
  - Pesticides
  - Road Safety
  - Tobacco
  - Toxicology
  - Worker's Health
- Basic Sanitation - CEPIS -
  - Sanitation
  - Solid Waste
  - Water
- Food Security and Nutritional INCAP

**SERVICES**

Search in: Sources of BVSDE

Enter words to search.

All the words  Any word

**INFORMATION SOURCES**

- Technical Information
  - Full Texts
  - Bibliographic References
  - Institutions
  - Journals
  - Links to others Webs
  - Meetings
- Education
  - Academic Studies
  - Educational Materials
  - Self Learning Courses
- BVSDE: Children's Environment Health
  - About the BVSDE: Children's Environment and Health
  - Group Consultative

**Services**

- News
- Selective Dissemination of Information

**Toolkit for teachers**

- Juego de herramientas para maestros
- Caixa de ferramentas para professores
- Trousse à outils pour les enseignants

**AQUALox**

2,861 visitors since Jan./02/2005

2,019 visitors since Jan./02/2006

webmaster

## PAHO's future steps and actions <sup>(1/3)</sup>

- Establish a Unit of Pediatric Environmental Health in at least one country in each of the sub-regions.
  - Make connections among new and existing centers across the Americas.
  - Provide access to information, documents and programs.
- Develop a public awareness campaign about the dangers of lead exposure to children.
  - Include a model strategy for the Americas to reduce and eliminate lead contamination and exposure from sources other than gasoline.



## PAHO's future steps and actions <sup>(2/3)</sup>

- Develop and Report Regional Indicators on Children's Environmental Health.
  - Follow up on the 2004 Costa Rica indicators meeting.
  - Review, evaluate and modify the indicators suggested in the strategy, *Healthy Environments: Health Children* and begin collecting data for more specific progress and outcome reporting.
  - Conduct project evaluations, for example, the in-country use and experience with the Toolkits for Education, Information and Awareness.
  - Rerun the National Profiles of Children's Health and Environment to report progress and to expand the profiles to additional countries.



## PAHO's future steps and actions (3/3)

- Obtain comments on the strategy on children's environmental health drafted at Mar del Plata 2005, and finalize the document for national approval at the next ministerial meeting.
- Review, evaluate and modify the PAHO regional strategy, *Healthy Environments: Healthy Children* to support planning for the next five years.



# Conclusion

- PAHO continues to strive toward a vision where all children in the Americas live, grow, learn and play in environments that are supportive of good health.\
- Much has been accomplished in the Region of the Americas, in terms of both products and policy, but there is still a long way to go
- More people are aware, more policies are in place, and many needs have been identified
- More specific and up-to-date information and indicators that allow to monitor progress in children's environmental health and of programs aiming to improve it is needed



## To contact us at PAHO:

- Sustainable Development and Environmental Health Area (SDE/PAHO):
  - Email: [SDE@paho.org](mailto:SDE@paho.org)
- SDE/PAHO Virtual Library:
  - Internet: <http://www.bvsde.paho.org/sde/ops-sde/ingles/bv-infantil.shtml>

