

## Key Takeaways from *Just Societies: Health Equity and Dignified Lives* (Full Report)

The *Just Societies: Health Equity and Dignified Lives* full report, which came out on October 1, 2019 at the Pan American Health Organization Headquarters in Washington, DC seeks to “highlight examples of governments making a difference, civil society and professional organizations implementing evidence-informed strategies and citizen engagement in social movements and community-building actions to achieve change”<sup>i</sup> in the Americas region.

It is imperative that governments, civil society, and academia collaborate on the 12 recommendations from the PAHO Commission on Equity and Health Inequalities including “*initiatives on education and social inclusion*.”<sup>ii</sup> “The evidence brought together by the PAHO Equity Commission shows that much ill health is *socially determined*.”<sup>iii</sup>

### The 12 Recommendations

#### *Structural Drivers: Inequities in power, money, and resources*

1. Achieving Equity in Political, Social, Cultural, and Economic Structures
2. Protecting the Natural Environment, Mitigating Climate Change, and Respecting Relationships to land
3. Recognize and reverse the health equity impacts of ongoing colonialism and structural racism

#### *Conditions of Daily Life*

4. Equity from the start—early life and education
5. Decent work
6. Dignified life at older ages
7. Income and social protection
8. Reducing violence for health equity
9. Improving environment and housing conditions
10. Equitable health systems

#### *Governance for health equity*

11. Governance arrangements for health equity
12. Fulfilling and protecting human rights

## FULL REPORT FACTS & POLICIES

### Gender Equality

#### FACTS:

1. Women, in the US, earn less than men at every education level: Figure 4.35, p 132
2. Women's wages are significantly lower than men in many nations in the Americas. Figure 4.34, p 132: Gender wage gap in selected countries in the United States

#### PROGRAM and POLICIES THAT WORK

1. **Women’s Bureau, USA:** this federal agency helps working women prosper and have better quality jobs, and pay
2. **The Federal Plan for Gender Equality, Canada:** this plan commits to implementing gender-based analysis (GBA) policies, programs, and legislation P 134

### Racial, Ethnic, Immigrant Populations and Indigenous Peoples

#### FACTS:

1. Infant mortality rates in 2010 were higher among Indigenous children than among non-Indigenous children in 11 countries in Latin America: Figure 3.22, p75
2. Some Latin American nations have taken legislative measures to ensure equal rights for Indigenous and other vulnerable populations: Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Uruguay: Table 3.1, p 78

#### PROGRAM and POLICIES THAT WORK

1. **Affordable Care Act, USA:** change in the basis of health care delivery offering opportunities for underrepresented and minority groups to obtain health care
2. **Jordan’s Principle:** Canada’s response to ensure all First Nations children can access all public services without discrimination
3. **Know your Child, Chile:** The CASH program to help Indigenous mothers in poverty and ensures early child stimulation, parent education and support, nutrition, preschool education and other services
4. **Strengthening the Child program, Bolivia:** nonformal parenting, community-based program to support Indigenous Quechua women. P 83-84

## Universal Health Care

### FACTS:

1. While universal health care is a priority for many nations, many preventable deaths continue to incur across the region – including the highest income country, the United States. Figure 4.80, p 204
2. 11% of the population in the region of the Americas are at risk of impoverishment due to expenditure for surgical care. Figure 4.82, p 205

### PROGRAM and POLICIES THAT WORK

1. **EBAIS primary health care teams, Costa Rica:** the Costa Rican's public health care system created local clinics (EBAIS) in 1955 which is the first level of care that provides both primary and preventative health care to each community so that all could have access to primary health care at no charge
2. **National health service, Brazil:** Brazil has a national unified health system through its constitution which lead to improvement in people's health and a larger supply of public health programs
3. **Family Health Strategy, Brazil:** health inequities have decreased due to the work of multidisciplinary teams which include community health workers in primary health care policies
4. **Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), USA:** this program was created because many children in the US lacked health insurance because they did not qualify for Medicaid but still could not afford regular health insurance, there has been a significant increase in insurance coverage since this program's implementation

### FULL REPORT CONCLUSION

*"If there were just one thing we would recommend to governments, to civil society, and to international organizations, it would be: **equity in all policies**. In order to make health equity a priority, you must make equity a priority."*<sup>iv</sup>

<sup>i</sup>[http://iris.paho.org/xmlui/bitstream/handle/123456789/49505/9789275120217\\_eng.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y](http://iris.paho.org/xmlui/bitstream/handle/123456789/49505/9789275120217_eng.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y)

<sup>ii</sup><https://www.thelancet.com/action/showPdf?pii=S0140-6736%2818%2932349->

### TAKE ACTION WITH HENA

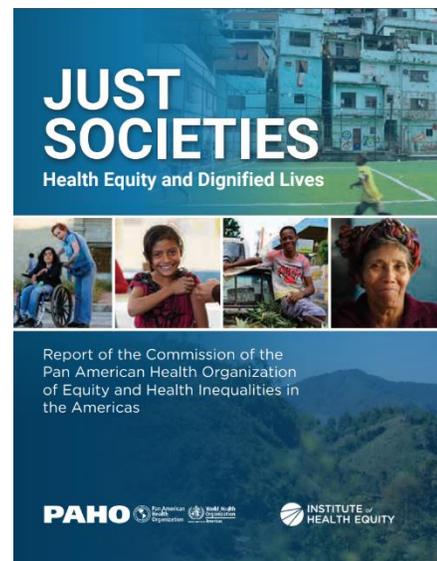
Please take a moment or two to help distribute information related to the *Just Societies: Health Equity and Dignified Lives*, which was released **October 1** at PAHO headquarters. Sir Michael Marmot will announce the recommendations at a special meeting of the ministers of health from North and South America.

HENA has prepared materials that we hope you will be able to **broadcast to your network** through the communication channels available to you. Please visit the HENA Just Societies campaign page:

<https://healthequityamericas.org/just-societies/>

### ABOUT HENA

The *Health Equity Network of the Americas (HENA)*, established in December 2017, works to identify and promote policies that encourage health equity, especially for at-risk populations. HENA seeks to advance research, training and policy work through intersectoral collaborations that facilitate sharing knowledge for action on determinants of health. Through our two-day symposium, we will convene multisectoral health equity leaders from throughout the Americas to strengthen connections, advance recommendations and prioritize actions.



<sup>iii</sup> idem

<sup>iv</sup>[http://iris.paho.org/xmlui/bitstream/handle/123456789/51571/9789275121269\\_eng.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y](http://iris.paho.org/xmlui/bitstream/handle/123456789/51571/9789275121269_eng.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y)