



AMERICAN
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HEARING
ASSOCIATION

**Ad Hoc Committee for Technical Support to
the Instituto Salvadoreño de Rehabilitación
Integral (ISRI) in El Salvador**

December 2015

Final Report

***Ad Hoc Committee for Technical Support to the Instituto Salvadoreño de
Rehabilitación Integral (ISRI) in El Salvador***

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Karen Munoz, CCC-A

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Catherine Crowley, CCC-SLP (IIB liaison)

Lily Waterston, Ex Officio

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Final Report
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Submitted by Linda I. Rosa-Lugo, EdD, CCC-SLP**

COMMITTEE CHARGE: To provide technical assistance to the Instituto Salvadoreño de Rehabilitación Integral (ISRI) staff engaged in rehabilitation of the communication disorders discipline in El Salvador, with a specific focus on individuals with hearing loss.

MEMBERS: Linda I. Rosa-Lugo (Chair), Mayra Cabrera, Diana Barreneche-Doniger, Karen Munoz, Catherine Crowley (IIB Liaison), Lily Waterston(Ex Officio)

BACKGROUND

The ad hoc committee was established to provide technical assistance regarding ASHA's work with the Instituto Salvadoreño de Rehabilitación Integral (ISRI) in El Salvador as part of the ASHA–Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) collaboration. A needs assessment trip to El Salvador, May 20–24, 2013, identified specific needs. Armando Vasquez/PAHO, Lily Waterston, and Silvia Martinez met with the collaborators at ISRI/Centro de Audición y Lenguaje (CALE). They are Ricardo Rápalo Claude, Director of CALE, and Ana Lourdes Orellana Salinas, Project Coordinator.

Specifically, the identified needs were to provide technical assistance to the ISRI staff engaged in the rehabilitation of the communication disorders discipline in El Salvador, with a specific focus on individuals with hearing loss. The El Salvador plan, agreed to by the three agencies (ASHA, PAHO, and ISRI), include the development of an action plan that would address the need for training at different levels for professionals conducting services to children and adults with hearing loss.

Five members were identified to be members of the ASHA ad hoc committee. In 2014, Mauricio Mendel's term expired as the ASHA International Issues Board (IIB) Liaison, and Catherine Crowley was appointed to be the IIB Liaison for the remaining term.

IMPLEMENTATION

In July 2014, the ad hoc committee chair visited ISRI/CALE. During this visit, Rosa-Lugo presented in the First International Congress on Children With Autism and met with the President of ISRI, Alex Francisco González, and key cabinet members to discuss the ASHA/PAHO collaborative. Meetings with professionals resulted in modifications to the original action plan. Four major focus areas were identified: (1) preparation of professionals in family-centered intervention, with a focus on listening and spoken language; (2) development of capacity to obtain amplification for newly identified infants with hearing loss and for persons without amplification; (3) development of assessment and management services in vestibular/tinnitus; and (4) development of a training program in communication sciences and disorders (a long-term priority).

Ad hoc committee members met electronically to address the implementation of the action plan in each of the four areas. The activities are outlined below.

(1) Preparation of professionals in family centered intervention, with a focus on listening and spoken language

- Offered assistance for training program through videoconference
- Conducted two meetings (December 1, 2014, and January 8, 2015) via Adobe Connect with ISRI and ad hoc committee members to plan for a professional development activity in Spring 2015 with a target of five professionals and one director from each ISRI center.
- Provided an outline of a potential professional development training workshop in this area to be implemented in June 2015; however, it appeared that the outlined training did not align, at that time, with the ad hoc committee's critical priorities. In a communication with ISRI, the ASHA ad hoc committee indicated its continued commitment to address this area because many of the committee professionals have expertise in this area. Karen Munoz has been instrumental in obtaining resources on family-centered intervention and on listening and spoken language. These resources will be disseminated to ISRI/CALE once the resources in Spanish are ready for dissemination.

(2) Development of capacity to obtain amplification for newly identified infants with hearing loss and for persons without amplification

- Developed a PowerPoint presentation identifying the technical equipment and process for creating ear molds (ad hoc chair and one committee member visited a lab in the United States)
- Identified resource(s) in El Salvador for assisting ISRI in developing a plan/proposal for a lab and training technicians in making earmolds (e.g., Starkey)
- Researched funding sources for hearing aids (e.g., Starkey, Siemens, Widex) and identified organizations that would be interested in providing raw materials, used earmolds, and/or equipment for training technicians to make earmolds.

In July 2015, ISRI informed us that, through their previous relationship with Starkey, hearing aids were donated to ISRI that will benefit 150 hearing aid users (see the ISRI website article titled "[Users Benefit from ISRI Hearing Aid](#)"). We anticipated that this organization might also be a resource in developing a lab and training technicians for this purpose.

(3) Development of assessment and management services in vestibular/tinnitus.

- Solicited and identified ASHA member(s) to assist with training activities, resulting in a telephone conference with the ISRI/CALE Director to determine specific needs in the area of vestibular assessment and management; this is awaiting further action.
- Had several conversations with ISRI that focused on the challenges in implementing professional development in the area of balance and tinnitus. Specifically, Diana Barreneche-Doniger has been instrumental in obtaining information and resources in the area of amplification and vestibular assessment and management/tinnitus.

(4) Development of a training program in communication sciences and disorders.

- Discussed the possibility of addressing the critical shortage of professionals in audiology and speech-language pathology. Currently, Silvia Martinez, is working with the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras (UNAH) through the ASHA/PAHO project. She has agreed to provide this ad hoc committee with updated information about the university training program to be offered in Honduras and to share the information with ISRI/CALE.

A comprehensive educational resource package was produced in Spanish and sent to ISRI as a sustainable tool for training of its personnel in rehabilitation.

The ASHA Ad Hoc Committee for Technical Support to El Instituto Salvadoreño de Rehabilitación Integral (ISRI) in El Salvador formally ended on August 31, 2015. However, committee members are planning to continue assisting the country on a volunteer basis.

PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Publications

(Schuermann) Waterston, L., Martinez, S., Weddington, G., and Rosa-Lugo, L. (2014, September). Strengthening relationship between the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) and the Pan American Health Organization, Regional Office for the Americas of the World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO). *Perspectives on Global Issues in Communication Sciences and Related Disorders, 4*, 75–78.

Rosa-Lugo, L. I., Martinez, S., Weddington, G., & Waterston, L. (in press). ASHA-PAHO collaboration: Addressing communication disorders across three countries. *Perspectives on Global Issues in Communication Sciences and Related Disorders*.

Presentation: 2014 ASHA Convention

Title: An International Perspective on the Care & Treatment of People With Disabilities: ASHA-PAHO Collaboration

Presenters: (Schuermann) Waterston, L., Weddington, G., Wickham, C., Martinez, S., Enríquez, R., Rosa-Lugo, L. I.

Poster Presentations: 2015

Title: Education Development in Latin America Through ASHA/WHO Collaboration

Conference: 9th European Standing Liaison Committee of E.U. Speech and Language Therapists and Logopedists (CPLOL)

Location: Florence, Italy

Title: Addressing Country Priorities in Capacity Building in Central and South America at the 4th

Conference: Annual Conference on the Coalition of Hearing

Location: Washington, DC

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A meeting with the PAHO Regional Advisor on Disability and Rehabilitation revealed that El Salvador does not presently have a Rehabilitation Office at the Ministry of Health. In the absence of this office, one recommendation for sustainability of service provision to children and individuals with hearing loss is to explore policies and procedures that are in place to ensure that program recommendations are implemented and monitored to determine their efficacy.
- ASHA should continue supporting program initiatives in the identified areas (e.g., preparing ISRI staff in the areas of family-centered intervention, building capacity in obtaining amplification for persons with hearing loss, and developing assessment and management services in vestibular/tinnitus) through the help of ASHA members who have expertise in the designated areas.
- ISRI should explore collaborating with UNAH to prepare professionals from El Salvador to work with children with hearing loss and their families as well as with adults who have hearing loss.