



ANNUAL REPORT 2007

“What we have been doing in all these years has, in a great deal, a double movement. The active participation of Abrasco in the politic life of our country, rescuing Brazilian democratic principles toward our Public Health mandate, in one hand and in the other, the effort to maintain the major mission of our Association – to improve our academic capacity on building work force for Public Health”

José da Rocha Carvalheiro, President of Abrasco (2006-2009)
Bulletin No. 97, October 2006

INTRODUCTION

The Brazilian Association of Collective Health (ABRASCO), since it was founded in 1997 has consolidated and expanded its mission to act as a mechanism for support and linkage between teaching, training, and research centers in Collective Health, aimed at mutual strengthening of member organizations and expanding the dialogue directly with the technical and scientific community, and between the latter and health services, governmental and nongovernmental organizations, and civil society.

By December 2007, with 44 member institutions (schools, institutes, and departments of Public or Collective Health and Preventive and Social Medicine) and 4.455 individual members (health workers, faculty, and/or researchers), ABRASCO supports and develops projects, seminars, workshops, and publications and holds the largest Public/Collective Health congresses world wide (the most recent, in August 2006, together with the World Federation of Public Health Associations, in Rio de Janeiro, drew more than 11 thousands participants).

In addition, the eleven Work Groups and four Committees in ABRASCO hold thematic seminars and workshops, expanding the Association's range of activity throughout Brazil and elsewhere in Latin America, besides representing the Association in academic and political forums for the discussion and production of knowledge in health. Following the trajectory of the consolidated Work Groups, the Association is responding to the growing movement and interest by constructing three new multidisciplinary areas in its structure: Health and Nutrition, Oral Health and Evaluative Research on Health.

Throughout the last 29 years, ABRASCO has participated actively in various thematic forums and in the National Health Council/Ministry of Health, consolidating spaces for negotiation and maintaining an active voice in public policy-making and monitoring in the fields of health and science and technology in health.

Overcoming the inherent difficulties in science publishing in Latin American region, the journals *Ciência e Saúde Coletiva* and *Revista Brasileira de Epidemiologia* have grown in both the quantity and quality of articles published since they were launched in 1996 and 1998,

respectively. Their indexing in important national and international databases expresses their recognition and relevance within the scientific community.

The expansion of Graduate Studies programs, the growing search for Collective Health impacts on undergraduate studies, the increasing recognition that the complexity of public health requires greater integration among health services and research centers, and the incorporation of public health professionals into the health services system, especially in Family Health Programs, are all indicative of this expanding horizons of ABRASCO's activity.

Beyond the academic dimension, ABRASCO's mission is directly linked to the development of public health practices and policies within health services at all levels of the Unified National Health System, and to the interaction between the Ministry of Health, managers from various levels in the System, health workers, faculty, and researchers.

ABRASCO has thus maintained and implemented its partnerships with Brazilian and other Latin American, and international actors and organizations regionally and internationally, with which the Association shares projects and activities aimed at the search for better living and health conditions for our populations. At the national level, these include the Brazilian Center for Health Studies (CEBES), *Rede Unida*, the Brazilian Association of Health Economics (ABRES), and the Councils of State and Municipal Health Secretaries. Latin American partners include the Latin American and Caribbean Association of Public Health Education (ALAESPE), the Latin American Association of Social Medicine (ALAMES) and especially the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO/WHO-Br). These organizations have allowed collaborative, expanded, and organized participation by ABRASCO in the various congresses and through its presence in countless events and movements in the area.

Since June 2005 in Montreal, Canada, when the 1st Symposium of the Portuguese and French-Speaking Conference on Health (COLUFRAS) was held, ABRASCO in partnership with Canadian (particularly the Canadian Public Health Association), Brazilian and Portuguese-speaking African researchers and organizations, strives to expand the frontiers of its work and commitments.

In this perspective, ABRASCO has also been - since 2002 - a member of the World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA). The planning and development toward the 11th World Congress on Public Health '*Public Health in a globalized world: breaking political, economic, and social barriers*', in Rio de Janeiro, in August 2006, has worked as a catalytic process in building an comprehensive collaborative agenda with the Federation and its members. One of the results of this ongoing process was the election of a Brazilian Public Health leader – Paulo Buss – as president of the WFPHA (2008-2010).

Following this same thrust of interaction between Brazil's Collective Health field and international actors and organizations, the Congress of the World Association of Health Economics and Policies (under the national coordination of ABRES) and the *Asociación Latino Americana de Medicina Social* - ALAMES Congress, was held in the city of Salvador, Bahia, Brazil in 2007, in close partnership with ABRASCO. In addition, in September 2008 in the city of Porto Alegre, the working plan is to jointly host the Brazilian Congress of Epidemiology and the triennial Congress of the International Epidemiological Association (IEA), when we will have the opportunity to convene the Brazilian and international epidemiological community in a live demonstration of our virtues, capacities, and expertise in this field.

ACTIVITIES

ABRASCO's activities are related to the Association's institutional mission, and based on four major areas: knowledge management and institutional development; political and institutional representation and action; international cooperation; and program and project management.

(a) Knowledge management and institutional development: includes consultancies and discussion forums in the planning and management of organizational and associative activities involving the strengthening of communications and information between individual and institutional members; support for the interrelationship between the ABRASCO Board of Directors and its Advisory Board, Work Groups, and Technical and Scientific Committees and enhancement of the Association's interaction in the field of political and academic representation with teaching and research centers and individuals and organizations involved in sector and inter-sector social policies that are relevant to the Unified National Health System and the development of Collective Health in Brazil.

The complex nature of scientific output in the field of Collective Health, the interdisciplinarity and diversity of outputs; the role and activity of agencies working with the promotion of research and teaching; the criteria and process involved in the evaluation of research and teaching institutions and programs; and other key questions in the policy for scientific and technological development and innovation in health have become the central theme for debate and action by the National Forum of Coordinators of Graduate Studies Programs in Collective Health. The Forum, coordinated by ABRASCO, consists of 40 teaching and research centers, responsible for the production, dissemination, and innovation of knowledge in this field.

This area also includes activities related to organizing and holding congresses, seminars, and discussion forums on the field's relevant themes. In addition, the publishing area includes the production, editing, and distribution of *Revista Ciência em Saúde Coletiva* and *Revista Brasileira de Epidemiologia*; as well as the modernization of the regular ABRASCO newsletter and webpage, aimed at ensuring greater interest and interactivity among its users and qualitatively and quantitatively expanding the inclusion and updating of relevant material from the health field and informing and stimulating reflection and debate.

(b) Advocacy - Political and institutional representation and action

In the field of political action, ABRASCO has expanded its agenda for representation and technical cooperation with the Ministry of Health, the National Health Council and its technical committees and chambers, the National Council of State Health Secretaries (CONASS), the National Council of Municipal Health Secretaries (CONASEMS) and the Representatives Council of the National Coordination of Capacity Building on Graduated Studies (CAPES).

Participation in the National Health Council has allowed ABRASCO to have an active voice in the organization of the 13th National Conference on Health (13th NCH), in Brasilia, in November 2007. The conference's comprehensive theme '*Health and Quality of Life: State Policy and Development*' and, its planning and realization process, resulted in a nationwide participatory agenda evolving representatives from all the 27 Brazilian States (State Stage) , 4.430 municipalities (Municipal Stage) and multiples leaders from Social Movements. The 13th National Conference on Health (Federal Stage) joint together 4.700 delegates from all the levels of Health governance, decision-makers of Health

Policy, professionals and institutions related to Health and associated sectors, and Social movements and organizations.

The Policy Committee of Abrasco edited a special issue of the journal *Ciência e Saúde Coletiva* focusing the main theme of 13th NCH and approaching barriers and proposals to the National Health System; Social Determinants on Health; Social Participation on Health; Health Financing and Science, Technology and Innovation on Health. Together with this journal, Abrasco also produced three folders in partnership with the founding entities of the Health Reform Forum. All these printed material had been widely distributed and worked as a reference tool for the delegates in the Conference.



(c) International cooperation: includes activities in technical consultancy; promotion of meetings and support for participation by ABRASCO representatives in national and international forums aimed at institutionalization of international cooperation with the Association. The area's work ultimately aims at expanding and consolidating agendas for integration between organizations, institutions, and national and international actors, as well as to strengthen the exchange of experiences and practices and to expand the visibility of national health policies vis-à-vis the international public health community and leadership.

Activities in this area bear a close relationship to Abrasco cooperation with two major international agenda:

- (1) The World Federation of Public Health Associations and its members-associations' agenda, including ongoing, emerging projects and the WFPHA Strategic Plan (2008-2010); to attend national and international meetings; and to contribute in the development of the Planning Committee of the 12th World Congress on Public Health in Istanbul, Turkey, in 2009
- (2) The Working Plan of the Brazilian Committee on Social Determinants of Health (BCSDH) <http://www.determinantes.fiocruz.br> in close partnership with the International Committee on Social Determinants of Health (WHO).

The BCSDH working plan 2006-2009 has five areas of action: (i) knowledge production and dissemination; (ii) supporting and promoting programs and policies; monitoring and evaluating; (iii) promoting social participation; (iv) developing communication strategies; (v) international cooperation with the International Commission on Social Determinants of Health [WHO/PAHO] especially in the Latin American Region. Within the BCSDH plan, in the area the knowledge production and dissemination, during 2007, 4 million dollars had been applied on selected researches to assess inequities in the access to health services and technologies, groups' vulnerability, human rights, ethics, race and ethnicity, environmental issues vis-à-vis the BCSDH principles and working frame.

By the beginning of 2008, with the launch of the Final Report of BCSDH, the major challenge will be to institutionalizing and to incorporating principles and proposals of this Committee within the national health policy structure and related agenda from existing organizations and social movements.

(d) Program and project management: includes consultancies in financial and administrative management of programs and projects related the Association's institutional mission. The main task in this area is to support the development of programs and projects integrated with Abrasco Work Groups and Committees, nevertheless the Associations also support and gives visibility to projects addressing the challenges for the development of the Brazilian Collective Health.

The following is an overall and itemized presentation of the activities developed in 2007 for each of the above-mentioned areas. Documents or results and outputs for the listed activities are available on file at the Association. The list here includes only the activities that are deemed essential for understanding and evaluating the Association in the fulfillment of its mission and fundamental objectives.

(a) Knowledge management and institutional development

- Preparation of the VII Brazilian Congress of Epidemiology and the XVIII World Congress of Epidemiology. Abrasco and International Epidemiological Association (IEA) will host simultaneously these two congresses, in September 21-24, 2008, in the city of Porto Alegre.
 - Preparation of the 4th Brazilian Symposium on Health Surveillance in November 2008 in Fortaleza, Ceará, held by the ABRASCO Work Group on Health Surveillance. Participation in the Symposium: one thousand health professionals, including national and international guest experts.
 - Supporting the preparation of the II International Forum on Mental Health and Human Rights, Rio de Janeiro, May 21-25, 2008. The Forum has been a joint initiative of various organizations at national (Oswaldo Cruz Foundation, National School of Public Health; Abrasco) and international level (Madres de la Plaza de Mayo)
 - Supporting the preparation of the II National Seminar on Health Promotion Effectiveness, Rio de Janeiro, May 13-15, 2008. This event has been a joint initiative of
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the Brazilian Office of the International Union of Health Promotion and Education (IUHPE –Br); Abrasco and their multiple partners.

- The 4th Brazilian Congress on Human and Social Sciences in Health (Abrasco); the 14th Congress of the International Association of Health Economics and Policies (under the national coordination of ABRES) and the 10th Congress of the *Asociación Latino Americana de Medicina Social* – ALAMES. These three congresses were simultaneously held in the city of Salvador, Bahia, Brazil in July 2007, in close partnership with ABRASCO. The congresses main theme was *Equity, Ethic and Right to Health: Challenges of the Collective Health in the Globalization*. This international event jointed together over 3.600 participants from eighteen countries. National community on Human and Social Science on Health, together with Alames and IAHP leaders and partners, including the World Federation of Public Health Associations, shared along the congresses' five days period, more than 3.800 experiences (presented both in oral sessions and posters).
- National Meeting of the Forum of Coordinators of Graduate Studies in Collective Health, in September , 2007, in Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais.
- The I Brazilian Symposium of Health Work Force, in October 2007, in Conservatoria, Rio de Janeiro.
- Bi- monthly publishing and distribution of *Revista Ciência & Saúde Coletiva*.
- Quarterly publishing and distribution of *Revista Brasileira de Epidemiologia*.
- Quarterly publishing and distribution of *Boletim Abrasco*.

(b) Political and institutional representation and action.

- Representation and technical cooperation with the Ministry of Health, National Health Council and its committees and technical chambers.
 - Representation and technical cooperation with the National Council of State Health Secretaries (CONASS) and the National Council of Municipal Health Secretaries (CONASEMS).
 - Support for the organization and participation in the 13th National Conference on Health (13th NCH), in Brasilia, in November 2007.
 - Permanent support for the organization and structuring of the permanent Forum on Health Reform. ABRASCO, together with civil society organizations working in the health struggle, organized the permanent Forum on Health Reform and set an agenda for political action aimed at improving the development of the Unified National Health System (SUS).
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(c) International cooperation

- Abrasco as member organization of the World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA), incorporates in its working agenda the technical cooperation and support to emerging projects and the WFPHA Strategic Plan (2008-2010); the participation on national and international meetings, specially the WFPHA Annual Meeting in Geneva (May 2007);
- Contributions and support for the development of the Planning Committee of the 12th World Congress on Public Health in Istanbul, Turkey, in 2009;
- Permanent support for the organization and participation in the international forums by the Symposium of the Portuguese and French-Speaking Conference on Health (COLUFRAS).
- Support for and co-participation in the preparatory process of the Congress of the World Association of Health Economics and Policies (under the national coordination of ABRES) / Congress of the Latin American Association of Social Medicine /ALAMES and 4th Brazilian Congress of Human and Social Sciences in Health - ABRASCO, scheduled for the year 2007 in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil.
- Planning and organization of the 7th Brazilian Congress of Epidemiology and 18th Congress of the International Epidemiological Association (IEA) in September 2008 in Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil.

(d) Program and project management:

Currently, together with its Work Groups and Committees members and institutional partners, both at national and international level, ABRASCO support for the development and implementation of sixty (60) projects in numerous relevant areas for the development of the Collective Health field.

Rio de Janeiro, May 2008
