

**Fifty-first Session of the Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean
Cairo, Egypt, 3-6 October 2004**

9. Resolutions

**EM/RC50/R.1 Annual Report Of The Regional Director for the year
2003 and progress reports**

The Regional Committee,

Having reviewed the Annual Report of the Regional Director on the work of WHO in the Eastern Mediterranean Region for the year 2003 and the progress reports requested by the Regional Committee¹;

Noting the alarming increase in prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the Region, the lack of complete reporting in some countries and that only 5% of people living with HIV/AIDS in need of antiretroviral therapy are receiving it;

Recalling Executive Board resolution EB114.R.1 on Sustainable Financing for Tuberculosis Control and noting with concern the low case detection rate for tuberculosis and the incomplete expansion of DOTS in the Region;

Noting with satisfaction the progress in poliomyelitis eradication and emphasizing the need to make every effort to ensure cessation of circulation of the wild virus in 2004;

Noting the progress made in malaria control and towards elimination of malaria, and in particular the cooperation between countries in this regard, but concerned at the growing antimalarial drug resistance in some countries;

Noting with satisfaction the steady progress in control of micronutrient deficiency disorders in the Region, but concerned at the lack of effective national quality control and monitoring systems;

Recalling Regional Committee resolution RC49/R.10 on antimicrobial resistance and rational use of antimicrobial agents;

¹ Documents EM/RC51/2 and EM/RC51/INF.DOC 1,2,3,4,5,6

Noting with satisfaction the steady progress being made in tobacco control and in particular the number of countries that signed the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control;

Noting with concern the rising burden of noncommunicable diseases and the heavy and long-term financial burden imposed on families by chronic diseases;

Noting with satisfaction the continuing efforts of WHO towards decentralization;

Concerned at the alarming increase in substance abuse in the Region, particularly in injecting drug use;

1. **THANKS** the Regional Director for his comprehensive report which highlights the significant developments in the field of health
2. **ADOPTS** the Annual Report of the Regional Director;
3. **URGES** the Member States to:
 - 3.1 Provide complete and comprehensive data on HIV/AIDS prevalence and make maximum use of the 3×5 Initiative;
 - 3.2 Enhance tuberculosis case detection and ensure full implementation of DOTS and support resolution EB114.R.1 on sustainable financing for tuberculosis control to be presented to the Fifty-eighth session of the World Health Assembly;
 - 3.3 Contribute to the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases;
 - 3.4 Take necessary steps to rapidly ratify the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control;
 - 3.5 Sustain national commitment to poliomyelitis eradication and contribute financially to the regional programme;
 - 3.6 Continue to monitor antimicrobial drug resistance;
 - 3.7 Strengthen national systems to update information on the prevalence of substance abuse in collaboration with other government agencies.
4. **REQUESTS** the Regional Director to continue to report periodically on progress towards the Millennium Development Goals in the Region;

5. **REQUESTS** the Director-General to take necessary steps to ensure that more countries in need of support benefit from the 3 × 5 Initiative.

EM/RC51/R.2 Health conditions of the Arab population in Palestine

The Regional Committee,

Mindful of the basic principle established in the Constitution of WHO, which affirms that the health of all peoples is fundamental to the attainment of peace and security;

Mindful that the Millenium Development Goals may not be attainable unless there is peace and security in the Region;

Expressing its concern at the continued military incursions by the occupying forces resulting in killing and injuring of thousands of unarmed Palestinian civilians, particularly women and children, the elderly and people with disabilities, many of whom are left with permanent disabilities;

Expressing its concern at the serious deterioration of the economic and health situation resulting from unprecedented levels of unemployment, poverty, food insecurity as a result of destruction of crops and farms, malnutrition among children, anaemia among children and women of reproductive age, and widespread psychological disorders especially among children;

Expressing its concern at the grave violations of international humanitarian law and the Fourth Geneva Convention by the Israeli occupation authorities in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, including the unlawful arrest of thousands of Palestinian civilians, among them hundreds of children, locked up in Israeli jails, some of whom are sick and not receiving medical care;

Expressing its concern at the failure of the occupying authority to implement any of the recommendations contained in the report of the Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General regarding removing obstacles to humanitarian access as well as the continued hindering of the implementation of World Health Assembly resolutions requiring the despatch of a fact-finding mission on the deterioration of the health and economic situation;

Expressing its concern at the declining level of all kinds of support to the humanitarian emergency relief activities as well as the grave consequences of curtailing these activities, when the needs are becoming greater;

1. **EXTENDS** its thanks to the Director-General, the Regional Director and the Commissioner- General of UNRWA for their efforts to provide necessary assistance to the Palestinian people;
2. **CALLS** on the United Nations, represented by the Security Council and the General Assembly, to adopt urgently effective measures to deter and prevent the recurrence of the crimes committed against the Palestinian people, in view of their devastating effects on the health of the citizens under the occupation, and to ensure all Member States respect resolutions of the United Nations;
3. **REQUESTS** the Director-General and the Regional Director:
 - 3.1 To continue providing necessary technical assistance to meet needs arising from the current crises, including health problems resulting from erection of the “separation barrier”;
 - 3.2 To take necessary steps to make the contacts needed to obtain funding from various sources, including extrabudgetary, to meet the urgent health needs of the Palestinian people.

EM/RC51/R.3 Proposed programme budget 2006–2007

The Regional Committee,

Having reviewed the draft Global and Regional Proposed Programme Budget for 2006-2007¹;

Recognizing the Director-General’s policy to further decentralize the work of WHO and to further strengthen WHO’s presence in countries;

Appreciating the transparent approach of WHO, and the high level of dialogue and consultation conducted with Member States for the preparation of the Programme Budget;

Noting with appreciation the continuous progress in the systematic use of the results-based management approach in programme planning, monitoring and evaluation, which has resulted in developing an improved programme budget;

Appreciating the steps taken to develop an integrated programme budget covering all sources of funds;

¹ Document No. EM/RC51/3

Noting with satisfaction the proposed proportion of distribution of the budget between the Regional Office and countries, wherein more than 72% of the budget is allocated to the countries;

Welcoming the steps taken by both the Director-General and the Regional Director to further strengthen WHO's technical and administrative capabilities in Member States;

Welcoming the convergence of the regional priorities expressed in the Forty-eighth session of the Regional Committee and the global priorities expressed in the proposed programme budget, and in particular the importance given to human resources development in the global programme budget;

1. **SUPPORTS** the overall strategic directions of the programme budget;
2. **REQUESTS** Members of the Executive Board from the Region to:
 - 2.1 Support the proposed programme budget, the increase of 9% of the assessed contributions for the regular budget and increase of 12.8% in the overall budget of the Organization at the 115th session of the Executive Board;
 - 2.2 Support the allocation of the proposed increase in the budget to the six priority areas identified in the Global Programme Budget 2006-2007;
3. **ENDORSES** the proposed Regional Programme Budget for 2006-2007.

**EM/RC51/R.4 Moving towards the Millennium Development Goals:
investing in maternal and child health**

The Regional Committee,

Having discussed the technical paper on Moving towards the Millennium Development Goals: investing in maternal and child health¹;

Recalling World Health Assembly resolution WHA 55.19, WHO's contribution to achievement of the development goals of the United Nations Millennium Declaration, which recognized that "maternal, child and adolescent health and development have a major impact on socioeconomic development" and which urged Member States to advocate them as public health priorities, and WHA 57.12, Reproductive health: draft strategy to accelerate progress towards the attainment of international development goals and targets;

¹ Document EM/RC51/Tech.Disc.1

Recalling its resolutions EM/RC35/R.9, Maternal and infant mortality in the Eastern Mediterranean Region: socioeconomic implications and urgent need for control, EM/RC37/R.6, which requested Member States to aim at reducing maternal mortality by 50% by the year 2000, and EM/RC50/R.14, Healthy environments for children, which urged Member States to adopt national child health policies and integrated approaches to healthy environments for children;

Firmly convinced that mothers and children are the future of development of countries in the region, and that, therefore, investing in maternal and child health should remain a priority;

Noting with concern the high levels of maternal and child mortality in some countries of the Region which prevent the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, and impede the human and socioeconomic development of those countries;

1. **COMMENDS** the steps already taken by the Regional Director to assist Member States in implementing effective maternal and child health interventions in the Eastern Mediterranean Region;
2. **URGES** Member States who have not already achieved the targets set by the Millennium Development Goals for improvement of maternal and child health care to:
 - 2.1 Develop national child and maternal health policy documents and strategies necessary to achieve the Millennium Development Goals;
 - 2.2 Expand upon the achievements already made by the Member States in implementing the effective interventions of Integrated Management of Child Health (IMCI) and Making Pregnancy Safer (MPS) and ensuring the availability of one skilled birth attendant/midwife per village;
 - 2.3 Strengthen existing national surveillance systems to identify mortality and morbidity trends in children and mothers and adopt evidence-based interventions, including community-based interventions;
 - 2.4 Establish a national maternal mortality committee to review and monitor maternal deaths in the country;
 - 2.5 Incorporate public health approaches related to maternal and child health into the formal teaching curricula of medical and paramedical schools;
3. **REQUESTS** the Regional Director to:

- 3.1 Support further the scaling up of effective interventions; in order to improve maternal and child health in the Eastern Mediterranean Region and assist the Member States to achieve the Millennium Development Goals;
- 3.2 Assist Member States to conduct in-depth assessment of maternal mortality;
- 3.3 Conduct a regional expert consultation to advise on introduction of new vaccines;
- 3.4 Report periodically to the Regional Committee on progress in moving towards the Millennium Development Goals relating to maternal and child health.

EM/RC51/R.5 Report of the Regional Consultative Committee (twenty-eighth meeting)

The Regional Committee,

Having considered the report of the twenty-eighth meeting of the Regional Consultative Committee¹;

1. **ENDORSES** the report of the Regional Consultative Committee;
2. **COMMENDS** the support provided by the Regional Consultative Committee;
3. **CALLS UPON** Member States to implement the recommendations included in the report, as appropriate;
4. **REQUESTS** the Regional Director to implement the recommendations in the report that require WHO input.

EM/RC51/R.6 The impact of health expenditure on households and options for alternative financing

The Regional Committee,

Having reviewed the technical paper on the impact of health expenditure on households and options for alternative financing¹;

¹ Document EM/RC51/7

¹ Document EM/RC51/4

Being aware of the high rate of direct spending on health care in countries of the Region which can lead many households into poverty;

Concerned at the lack of development of effective prepayment schemes in many Member States;

1. **URGES** Member States to:

- 1.1 Formulate policies, strategies and plans of action to reduce direct expenditure on health care;
- 1.2 Expedite efforts to develop and implement the appropriate prepayment schemes;
- 1.3 Build technical capacity to plan, develop, implement and monitor performance of prepayment schemes;
- 1.4 Invest in development of analytical tools, such as national health accounts, cost-effectiveness studies and household expenditure surveys, required for successful planning, implementation and monitoring of prepayment schemes;
- 1.5 Invest in developing primary health care services so that they become more attractive to those seeking health care;

2. **REQUESTS** the Regional Director to continue to support Member States in their efforts to formulate policies, strategies and plans of action to reduce direct expenditure on health care and develop appropriate prepayment schemes through technical assistance and national capacity-building.

EM/RC51/R.7 Health systems priorities in the Eastern Mediterranean Region: challenges and strategic directions

The Regional Committee,

Having reviewed the technical paper on health systems priorities in the Eastern Mediterranean Region: challenges and strategic directions;²

Being aware of the importance of priority-setting in achieving national goals aimed at improving health;

² Document EM/RC51/5

Mindful of the importance of the close relationship between the priority health programmes and well-functioning health systems; and

Recognizing the need to identify strategic directions to address the health system priorities in the Region;

1. **REQUESTS** Member States to:

1.1 Periodically undertake and institutionalize national health system priority-setting as part of the overall strengthening of the health information system and strategic planning;

1.2 Ensure that all priority programmes (preventive, promotive, curative and rehabilitative) are adequately resourced and provide accessible, efficient and equitable services;

2. **REQUESTS** the Regional Director to:

2.1 Establish a regional task force to prepare a framework that guides the process of regional health system priority-setting and the strengthening of health system functions;

a. Provide technical support to countries in their efforts to determine national health system priorities and strengthen health system functions, as part of the Regional Office's technical cooperation and normative functions.

EM/RC51/R.8 Proposed revision of the International Health Regulations

The Regional Committee,

Having discussed the technical paper on the International Health Regulations: update on the revised version¹;

Recognizing the need to ensure that the revised version of the International Health Regulations include regional and national views and comments.

Desiring to ensure full participation of countries within the Eastern Mediterranean Region in the adoption process during the Intergovernmental Working Group (IGWG) and Executive Board meetings;

¹ Document EM/RC51/6

Noting the need to agree on universal definitions of terminology and concepts that are well understood and equivalent in all WHO official languages;

1. **CALLS UPON** the Member States to;
 - 1.1 Participate in the deliberations and play an active role in the revision of the International Health Regulations during the meetings of the Intergovernmental Working Group (IGWG), the Executive Board (EB) and the World Health Assembly (WHA);
 - 1.2 Establish mechanisms at national level for assessing and improving epidemiological and laboratory surveillance of communicable diseases and public health emergencies of international concern;
2. **REQUESTS** the Regional Director to;
 - 2.1 Support development of a regional network for outbreak alert and response to ensure prompt response to and containment of outbreaks of communicable diseases in the Region;
 - 2.2 Foster partnerships and resource mobilization among the main stakeholders in order to contribute to capacity-building in communicable disease surveillance and response.

**EM/RC51/R.9 Evaluation report of the Joint Government/WHO
Programme Review and Planning Missions in 2003**

The Regional Committee,

Having considered the report of the Regional Director on the Joint Government/WHO Programme Review and Planning Missions (JPRMs) for the biennium 2004-2005¹ carried out during 2003;

1. **THANKS** the Regional Director, staff of the Regional Office and all nationals involved in the preparation of the Joint Programme Review and Planning Missions at country level;
2. **AFFIRMS** that the Joint Government/WHO Programme Review Mission continues to be a valid instrument for the development of operational plans at country level;
3. **FURTHER REAFFIRMS** the adoption and application of results-based management in programme planning and budgeting in WHO and the Member States;

¹ Document EM/RC51/8

4. **WELCOMES** efforts made for development and application of country cooperation strategy documents as the basis for technical cooperation between countries and WHO;
5. **URGES** Members States to:
 - 5.1 Further strengthen national capacity in strategic planning and improve monitoring and evaluation of results;
 - 5.2 Expedite the process of preparation and implementation of country workplans under the Joint Programme Review and Planning Missions (JPRM).
6. **REQUESTS** the Regional Director to continue to support national capacity-building in strategic planning and results-based management in programme planning and budgeting.

EM/RC51/R.10 Vaccine development, accessibility and availability:
towards self-sufficiency in the Eastern Mediterranean
Region

The Regional Committee,

Having discussed the technical paper on vaccine development, accessibility and availability: towards self-sufficiency in the Eastern Mediterranean Region²;

Recalling resolution EM/RC45/R.5 Regional self-reliance in the production of essential drugs and vaccines;

Acknowledging the efforts Member States have made in developing their production capabilities for essential drugs and vaccines;

Having considered the current situation with regard to the local production of vaccines in the Region;

Recognizing the challenges faced in promoting self-reliance in production of vaccines;

1. **REAFFIRMS** resolution EM/RC45/R.5;
2. **URGES** vaccine-producing countries to:

² Document EM/RC51/Tech.Disc.2

- 2.1 Take necessary action to upgrade their National Regulatory Authorities to meet the WHO core six functions required for prequalification;
 - 2.2 Strengthen their national production capabilities to fully comply with the cGMP for vaccine production;
 - 2.3 Promote investment and public/private partnership in vaccine production and development and production and achieve regional self-sufficiency in quality vaccines at affordable cost;
 - 2.4 Establish a coordination and collaboration mechanism in quality assurance, research and development in vaccine production, and foster the development of common policies in relation to self-sufficiency in vaccine production through regional and sub-regional networks;
3. **URGES** other Member States to:
- 3.1 Establish/strengthen a well functioning National Regulatory Authority to ensure the quality of vaccines available in the countries;
 - 3.2 Consider buying vaccines from regional sources that comply with WHO qualification requirements;
4. **REQUESTS** the Regional Director to:
- 4.1 Support countries in developing national strategies in vaccine self-sufficiency through capacity building and provision of technical expertise;
 - 4.2 To facilitate networking of vaccine producers inside and outside the Region to improve quality and to promote access to cutting-edge technology, including biotechnology, in vaccine production;
 - 4.3 To foster partnership with appropriate financial institutions, including the Islamic Development Bank, in the area of self-sufficiency in vaccines.

EM/RC51/R.11 Development and use of genomics and biotechnology for public health

The Regional Committee,

Having reviewed the technical paper on development and use of genomics and biotechnology for public health¹;

Recalling its earlier reference to the need for application of genomics and biotechnology in resolution EM/RC50/R1;

Recognizing the potential significance and impact of genomics and biotechnology to improve health;

Desiring to promote the access and benefits of genomics and biotechnology applications to the populations in Member States;

Noting the establishment of the Eastern Mediterranean Health Genomics and Biotechnology Network for the promotion of greater coordination and collaboration in research and development among centres of excellence in genomics and biotechnology in the Region;

1. **URGES** Member States to:

- 1.1 Establish national bodies for health genomics and biotechnology with health sector representation, to frame national policies and strategic vision to promote the development and application of genomic technologies for better and improved health;
- 1.2 Engage in appropriate national capacity development programmes in genomics and biotechnology, through institutional strengthening, human resources development and establishing centres of excellence within the health systems to improve quality and equity in health care;
- 1.3 Raise public awareness, education and knowledge in genomics and biotechnology for public health and stimulate public involvement and support;
- 1.4 Create favourable environments and enabling conditions to develop and forge links and networks in genomics and biotechnology at both national and international levels;
- 1.5 Establish mechanisms for assessing relevance of genomics and biotechnologies to health needs, social, legal and economic implications,

¹ Document EM/RC51/Tech.Disc.3

ethical review processes and regulatory systems, especially with regard to safety and prevention from harm;

- 1.6 Facilitate collaboration between key stakeholders within the scientific community, the private sector and the civil society to promote genomics and biotechnology for public health, contribute to capacity-building and create opportunities and mechanisms for mobilizing necessary resources.

2. **REQUESTS** the Regional Director to;

- 2.1 Support Member States in the development of relevant policies and applications of genomics and biotechnology;
- 2.2 Facilitate and provide opportunities for exchange and sharing of knowledge and information on genomic technologies among stakeholders within the Region as well as internationally;
- 2.3 Foster partnerships among the main stakeholders in order to contribute to capacity-building and resource mobilization.