

1. Annual Report of the Regional Director 2011 – including progress reports (Agenda item 2, document EM/RC59/2)

The Annual Report of the Regional Director covers the calendar year 2011 and comprises three chapters in line with the core areas outlined in the amended Medium-term Strategic Plan 2008–2013. It highlights issues and challenges, actions taken, results achieved and future directions for the priorities in WHO's collaboration with Member States.

Under this agenda item, progress reports on the following subjects will also be outlined and provided as information documents:

(a) Eradication of poliomyelitis (EM/RC59/INF.DOC.1)

(b) Tobacco-Free Initiative (EM/RC59/INF.DOC.2)

(c) Achievement of the health-related Millennium Development Goals and global health

goals after 2015 (EM/RC59/INF.DOC.3)

(d) Regional strategy for health sector response to HIV 2011-2015

(EM/RC59/INF.DOC.4)

(e) Improving health care financing and progress towards social health protection in the Region (EM/RC59/INF.DOC.5)

2. Health system strengthening in countries of the Eastern Mediterranean Region: challenges, priorities and options for future action (Agenda item 3, document EM/RC59/Tech.Disc.1)

Inequities in health and unacceptably low levels of access to quality health care represent the most important challenges for many countries of the Region. Health system strengthening has been identified as a priority and the Regional Office is preparing a strategy paper that provides a systematic analysis of the challenges and gaps, identifies priorities, and outlines options for countries of the Region. For the purpose of analysis, countries of the Region have been categorized in three broad groups based on population health outcomes, health system performance and level of health expenditure.

3. The Political Declaration of the United Nations General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases: commitments of Member States and the way forward (Agenda item 4(a), document EM/RC59/3)

Noncommunicable diseases represent a new frontier in the fight to improve health in low and middle-income countries. Four types of noncommunicable disease – cardiovascular diseases, cancers, chronic respiratory diseases and diabetes – make the largest contribution to mortality in the majority of developing and low-income countries. These diseases are largely preventable by means of effective interventions that tackle four common modifiable risk factors, namely: tobacco use, unhealthy diet, physical inactivity and the harmful use of alcohol. The UN Political Declaration on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases, adopted by Heads of State and Government in September 2011, provides a clear road map and specific recommendations for action by Member States and stakeholders. In line with the Declaration, WHO and Member States need to scale up actions to implement the road map, and to strengthen regional and national capacity in the three main pillars of the noncommunicable disease strategy (surveillance, prevention and health care). Member States will be invited to discuss opportunities for scaling up their response in addressing the commitments made in the Political Declaration.

4. National core capacities for the International Health Regulations 2005: meeting the 2014 deadline (Agenda item 4(b), document EM/RC59/4)

The national core capacities required for implementation of the International Health Regulations

2005 include capacities related to surveillance and response to public health events and the ability to carry out certain public health functions at points of entry designated by the State. The paper aims to provide the Regional Committee with the information needed to evaluate the situation with regard to implementation of the Regulations in the Region. It discusses the challenges faced during the 5-year assessment and implementation period (15 June 2007 to 15 June 2012), the current status in preparing countries to meet the required core capacities, and proposes the actions needed to move forward to implement the Regulations during the 2-year extension period (to 15 June 2014).

5. WHO reform: current status and regional perspectives (Agenda item 5, document EM/RC59/5)

The 65th World Health Assembly in May 2012 discussed the agenda item on WHO reform and issued decision WHA65(9) requesting the Director-General to report, through the Executive Board at its 132nd session, to the 66th World Health Assembly in May 2013 on progress in the implementation of WHO reform on the basis of a monitoring and implementation framework. The 131st Executive Board of May 2012 requested regional committees to discuss this subject and advise on action taken at the regional level to implement decision WHA65(9). The paper will highlight the main issues relating to the reform process that are relevant to the regional context, as well as regional specificities. Members of the Regional Committee will be invited to provide input with regard to the way in which they see the reform being implemented at the global and regional level. The views of the Committee will be reported by the Chair of the 59th Regional Committee to the 132nd Executive Board which will be held in January 2013.

6. Programme and budget matters: 12th General Programme of Work and Programme Budget 2014-2015 (Agenda item 6(a), document EM/RC59/6)

The 12th General Programme of Work 2014–2019, approved by the Sixty-fifth World Health Assembly, provides a mid-term perspective on challenges to health, strategic areas of work and specific priorities. The programme budget document, which will be presented to the regional committees, Executive Board and World Health Assembly in 2013, is a strategic document, based on the categories and priorities defined in the 12th General Programme of Work, outlining the directions and ways of implementation of the Organization for the biennium 2014-2015. The Programme Budget 2014-2015 will differ from the current one. WHO will implement a new results chain for six categories of priorities dealing with outcomes and outputs, in order to improve effectiveness and accountability.

7. Programme and budget matters: Joint Government/WHO Programme Review and Planning Missions in 2011, including utilization of Country Cooperation Strategies: outcomes and lessons learnt (Agenda item 6(b), document EM/RC59/7)

The report on the outcome of the 15th round of the Joint Government/WHO Programme Review and Planning Missions for the biennium 2012–2013, implemented between August and December 2011, evaluates the process and elaborates on the utilization of country cooperation strategy documents, revised guidelines and capacity-building workshops for application of the results-based management approach.

8. Revision of Rules of Procedure for the Regional Committee of the Eastern – RC58 decision No.7 (Agenda item 7, document EM/RC59/8)

In line with Decision no. 7 of the Fifty-eighth session of the Regional Committee, the Sub-Committee appointed to review the proposed changes to the Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean has developed a report for consideration by the Regional Committee. The report will be presented to the Regional Committee for discussion and approval.

9. Resolutions and decisions of regional interest adopted by the Sixty-fifth World Health Assembly and the 131st Session of the Executive Board (Agenda item 8(a), document EM/RC59/9)

The paper highlights resolutions and decisions on global developments adopted by the World Health Assembly in 2012 that have direct relevance to or implication for the Region, and a direct link with many of the priority activities of the Region. In addition, it provides a summary of the steps and actions being taken in implementing specific resolutions relating to regional and country needs.

10. Review of the draft provisional agenda of EB132 (Agenda item 8(b), document EM/RC59/9-Annex I)

The Regional Committee will review the draft provisional agenda of the 132nd Executive Board (January 2013).

11. Report of the Consultative Expert Working Group on Research and Development: Financing and Coordination (WHA resolution WHA65.22) (Agenda item 8(c), document EM/RC59/10)

The report of the 'Consultative Expert Working Group (CEWG) on research and development (R&D): financing and coordination' was discussed during the 65th Session of the World Health Assembly in May 2012. The main task of the CEWG stems from the objective of the Global Strategy and Plan of Action on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property (GSPA-PHI): "to examine the current financing and coordination of R&D, and proposals for new and innovative sources of financing to stimulate R&D related to Type II and III diseases and specific R&D needs of developing countries in relation to Type I diseases". The recommendations of the report include approaches to funding mechanisms and pooling of resources through a global instrument for R&D and innovations for health. The World Health Assembly requested the Regional Committees to discuss the report at their 2012 meetings in the context of the implementation of the global strategy and plan of action on public health, innovation and intellectual property in order to contribute to concrete proposals and actions. The Health Assembly also requested WHO to hold an open-ended meeting of Member States following national consultations and regional committee discussions and the outcome of this meeting will be presented to the Sixty-sixth World Health Assembly, through the 132nd session of the Executive Board.

12. Application of Republic of South Sudan for reassignment from the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region to the WHO African Region (Agenda item 9, document EM/RC59/11)

Through its letter of 25 May 2012, Ref.RSS/MOH/MO/J18.3, the Republic of South Sudan has formally requested its reassignment from the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region to the African Region of the World Health Organization. In line with resolution WHA49.6, the request should be examined by the regional committees concerned and their views conveyed to the World Health Assembly for its decision. The 59th session of the Regional Committee is required to examine this request and submit its recommendation to the World Health Assembly.

13. Award of the Dr A.T. Shousha Foundation Prize and Fellowship (Agenda item 10(a), document, EM/RC59/INF.DOC.6)

The Executive Board, at its 130th Session approved the nomination of Dr Shaikha Salim Al Arrayed (Bahrain) for the Dr A.T. Shousha Foundation Prize for 2012. The prize will be awarded to Dr Al Arrayed during the opening of the Fifty-ninth Session of the Regional Committee.

14. Award of the State of Kuwait Prize for the Control of Cancer, Cardiovascular Diseases and Diabetes in the Eastern Mediterranean Region (Agenda item 10(b), document, EM/RC59/INF.DOC.7)

Following Decision No. 4 of the Fifty-eighth Session of the Regional Committee, the State of Kuwait Prize for the Control of Cancer, Cardiovascular Diseases and Diabetes in the Eastern Mediterranean will be awarded to Dr Mohamed Mohsen Ibrahim (Egypt), during the opening of the Fifty-ninth Session of the Regional Committee.

15. Award of the Down Syndrome Research Prize (Agenda item 10(c), document EM/RC59/INF.DOC.8)

Following Decision No.3 of the Fifty-eighth Session of the Regional Committee, the Down Syndrome Research Prize will be awarded to Dr Muneera Abdullah Al-Husain (Saudi Arabia) during the opening of the Fifty-ninth Session of the Regional Committee.

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