

AFR/RC41/R7 Cholera epidemic in the African Region

The Regional Committee,

Considering the alarming situation caused by the cholera epidemic in the Region;

Considering Resolutions AFR/RC35/R6 and AFR/RC35/R9 on the control of diarrhoeal diseases in general and cholera in particular;

Considering resolutions AFR/RC38/R24 on health infrastructure organization at the district level to cope with epidemics;

Considering resolution WHA44.6 of the World Health Assembly on cholera;

Recognizing that cholera epidemics are essentially connected with the lack of safe water supplies of adequate quality and quantity;

Recognizing that the utilization of available technology could prevent the recurrence of epidemics related to water and inadequate sanitation, and in particular to unhygienic excreta disposal and the absence of personal hygiene in general;

Recognizing the importance of coordinated multisectoral action to combat cholera both within each country and between neighboring countries;

1. THANKS the Regional Director for his report;
2. EXPRESSES its deep concern at the epidemic outbreaks of cholera in the Region, and in particular at the very high and unacceptable rates of case fatality;
3. APPEALS to Member States to give highest priority to cholera control, in particular by:
 - (i) ensuring adequate supply of potable water and hygienic sanitation, and excreta disposal in particular, at the community level;
 - (ii) ensuring that individuals, families and communities are appropriately informed and educated with regard to the measures that should be taken to prevent and control cholera;
 - (iii) reinforcing the training of health personnel, particularly at the district level, in the correct management of cases of diarrhoea, including cholera;
 - (iii) improving disease surveillance and notification systems at the district level to facilitate early warning of any epidemic of cholera;
4. REQUESTS Member States to prepare and implement national plans for the prevention and control of cholera;
5. REQUESTS the Regional Director:
 - (i) to continue to support the countries that are facing epidemics of cholera;
 - (ii) to impress continuously upon Member States the importance of the control of diarrhoeal diseases;

- (iii) to re-emphasize to Member States that as of now cholera vaccination has no place in the control of cholera epidemics;
- (iv) to strengthen training in the correct management of cases of diarrhoea, including cholera, especially in the countries affected by cholera;
- (v) to continue to mobilize external support for the control of cholera and other epidemics in Africa;
- (vi) to ensure coordination of measures to control cholera between neighbouring countries, particularly during epidemic situations;
- (vii) to give technical support as appropriate to Member States in the formulation and implementation of their national plans for the prevention and control of cholera.

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