

The Regional Committee,

Noting with satisfaction the efforts exerted by the WHO Regional Office to increase the representation of women among its long-term professional staff;¹

Noting also that, despite recent efforts by WHO to collect gender-disaggregated, gender-specific and gender-sensitive data, the collection of appropriate indicators needs to be improved in order to identify areas for action;

Recognizing that improvements in women's health and their increased participation in the development process can be brought about only through concerted efforts in many sectors including the health sector, and by the active support of men;

Reaffirming that basic elements, such as education, gender equity, reproductive choices, nutrition, housing, clean environment and sanitary living conditions are among the most important factors required to ensure women's health and development;

Noting further that women's involvement in programme planning, design, implementation and evaluation needs to be increased;

Extremely concerned by women's increased adoption of unhealthy lifestyles, by the health and other consequences of a preference for male offspring in some countries of the Region, and by rising levels of violence directed at women;

1. URGES Member States:

(1) to strengthen the collection and analysis of a wide range of appropriate gender-disaggregated, gender-specific and gender-sensitive indicators in order to improve understanding of the gender gap, to develop and implement appropriate policies, and to report progress to the Regional Director for inclusion in his annual report;

(2) to take action to minimize gender inequities and to increase women's participation in the overall development process, particularly in relation to health;

(3) to encourage women's involvement in planning, designing, implementing and evaluating health programmes and to increase the number of women participating in training and fellowship activities, in expert committees and in official delegations;

2. REQUESTS the Regional Director:

(1) to further develop, within the framework of *New horizons in health*, appropriate quantitative and qualitative indicators to improve knowledge of the health status and role of women in countries of the Region;

(2) to work with Member States to compile gender-disaggregated, gender-specific and gender-sensitive data at the regional level, in order to enable the Regional Committee to assess which factors affecting women's health status require particular attention;

- (3) to suggest actions required to improve women's health status;
- (4) to continue efforts to reach targets called for in World Health Assembly resolution WHA50.16 of 50% by 2002 for new appointments of women to professional categories, and for representation of women as temporary advisers, consultants and on scientific and technical advisory groups;
- (5) to encourage the incorporation of gender issues into all programmes;
- (6) to provide the Regional Committee with an indication of budget allocations directly related to women's issues;
- (7) to take every opportunity to support Member States in the development of policies designed to prevent violence against women;
- (8) to report to the Regional Committee, as part of his annual report, on progress on each of the above initiatives.

¹ Document WPR/RC48/10.