



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

EXECUTIVE BOARD
109th Session
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Reports of the Executive Board Committees

Report of the WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health

1. The WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health held its third session at United Nations Headquarters (New York, 19-20 April 2001), with UNFPA acting as host organization. Dr Pia Rockhold (Denmark), representing UNFPA's Executive Board, was elected to chair the meeting, which was addressed by the Director-General; Ms Carol Bellamy, Executive Director of UNICEF; and Mr Kunio Waki, Deputy Executive Director of UNFPA.

2. The Committee received a report on progress in implementing the recommendations it had made at its second session (Geneva, 2-3 December 1999).¹ On reduction of maternal mortality and morbidity (including use of micronutrients), the Committee emphasized that the quality of data on maternal and perinatal health needed to be improved; that equitable access must be ensured to appropriate care during pregnancy, delivery and in the postpartum period; and that greater support was required for activities to reduce anaemia in pregnancy. On adolescent health and development, the Committee advocated a gender approach to violence and highlighted the essential role of communicating information and providing services related to sexual health and family planning. With regard to HIV/AIDS, the three agencies have endorsed the three-pronged United Nations strategy to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV, based on primary prevention of HIV infection among potential parents, prevention of unwanted pregnancies among HIV-infected women, and prevention of transmission of virus from HIV-infected mothers to infants. In relation to coordination of follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD+5), work on benchmark indicators on reproductive health had resulted in agreement on 17 indicators; work was continuing on sex-disaggregated health data. The Committee also pointed to the need for funding to continue the United Nations system's highly beneficial immunization programme and urged advocacy in the three agencies to foster support for the Global Polio Eradication Initiative Strategic Plan 2001-2005.

3. The Committee received a presentation on the role of the United Nations system in sector-wide approaches for health development, and reports on experiences with such approaches in one country at the beginning of the process (Cambodia) and another with three years of involvement (Uganda). At its next session, the Committee will take up a report on progress in improving United Nations support to sector-wide approaches; a detailed presentation, focusing on maternal and newborn health, violence – especially against women and girls, and HIV/AIDS and young people, and discussion of the process in one or two countries will also be on the agenda.

4. The Executive Board may wish to take note of the attached report.

¹ See document EB105/15 Add.1.