

Strengthening of health information systems

The Sixtieth World Health Assembly,

Recalling resolution WHA58.30 on achieving internationally agreed health-related development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration;

Noting resolution WHA58.28 on eHealth, and mindful of resolution WHA58.34 on the Ministerial Summit on Health Research;

Acknowledging that sound information is critical in framing evidence-based health policy and making decisions, and fundamental for monitoring progress towards internationally agreed health-related development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration;

Recognizing that health information systems in most developing countries are weak, fragmented, have on occasion scattered isolated and hard-to-reach primary sources of information, and are understaffed, and inadequately resourced;

Convinced of the importance of health information, disaggregated by gender, age and key socioeconomic factors, to inform decisions on delivery of interventions to those who need them most;

Acknowledging that health information and research are complementary as foundations for strengthening health systems and health policy;

Mindful of the key role of national statistics offices in developing and implementing national statistical strategies and contributing to population health information;

Noting the constitutional normative mandates of WHO in health information and epidemiological reporting, and reaffirming the Organization's role as a founding partner of, and hosting secretariat for, the Health Metrics Network which has determined core standards for health information systems,

1. URGES Member States to mobilize the necessary scientific, technical, social, political, human and financial resources in order:

(1) to recognize, establish and operationalize health information systems as a core strategy for strengthening their national health systems;

- (2) to develop, implement, consolidate and assess plans to strengthen their health information systems through collaboration between health and statistics sectors and other partners, effective coordination within health departments and a rational division of responsibilities;
- (3) to determine programme-based information systems as subsets of national health information systems and to organize the harmonization of the various programme subsystems in this context;
- (4) to bring together technical and development partners around a coherent and coordinated country-led strategy and plan for strengthening health information systems that is fully integrated in the mainstream of national health programmes and plans;
- (5) to strengthen the capacity of planners and managers at various levels of the health system to synthesize, analyse, disseminate and utilize health information for evidence-based decision-making and for raising public awareness;
- (6) to strengthen the capacity of health workers to collect accurate and relevant health information;
- (7) to link strengthening of health information systems to policies and programmes for building of statistical capacity in general;
- (8) to strengthen research on health information standards and to promote the standardization and harmonization of health information systems;

2. CALLS UPON the health information and statistical communities, other international organizations, including global health initiatives and funds, the private sector, civil society and other concerned stakeholders, to provide strong, sustained support for strengthening of information systems, including use of the standards and guiding principles set out in the framework of the Health Metrics Network, and covering the spectrum of health statistics, including health determinants; health resources, expenditures and system functioning; service access, coverage and quality; and health outcomes and status, and according particular attention to information on poverty and inequity in health;

3. REQUESTS the Director-General:

- (1) to strengthen the information and evidence culture of the Organization and to ensure the use of accurate and timely health statistics in order to generate evidence for major policy decisions and recommendations within WHO;
- (2) to increase WHO's activities in health statistics at global, regional and country levels and provide harmonized support to Member States to build capacities for development of health information systems and generation, analysis, dissemination and use of data;
- (3) to promote better access to health statistics, encourage information dissemination to all stakeholders in appropriate and accessible formats, and foster transparency in data analysis, synthesis and evaluation, including peer review;
- (4) to promote improved alignment, harmonization and coordination of health information activities, bearing in mind the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness: Ownership,

Harmonization, Alignment, Results and Mutual Accountability (2005) and the Best Practice Principles for Global Health Partnership Activities at Country Level,¹ and to give priority to programmes that support health information systems;

(5) to undertake regular reviews of country experiences, to provide support for updating the framework of the Health Metrics Network in line with lessons learnt and evolving methodologies, to keep countries informed about the Network, to support countries' capabilities to become involved in the Network and to report on progress as from the Sixty-second World Health Assembly.

Eleventh plenary meeting, 23 May 2007
A60/VR/11

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¹ Best Practice Principles for Global Health Partnership Activities at Country Level. Report of the Working Group on Global Health Partnerships. Paris, High-level Forum on the Health MDGs, 14–15 November 2005.