AFR/RC41/R4: Accelerating the implementation of water supply and sanitation programmes in the African Region

The Regional Committee,

Recalling resolutions AFR/RC34/R8 and WHA39.20 on the progress achieved in the first half of the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (IDWSSD); AFR/RC35/R6 and AFR/RC38/R13 laying stress on the role of safe water supply and sanitation in the control of diarrhoeal disease and in the eradication of dracunculiasis respectively; WHA42.25 calling for sustained efforts to extend and intensify Decade activities in the 1990s in the framework of the Health-for-All Strategy;

Having examined the report presented by the Regional Director on the progress achieved in the water supply and sanitation sector by Member States in the Region;

Recognizing that nearly all countries in the Region have actively implemented programmes for the improvement of water supply and sanitation services as an integral component of the primary health care approach;

Acknowledging the significant progress achieved by the countries in providing better access to water supply and sanitation facilities under difficult social and economic conditions, often aggravated by natural disasters or armed conflicts;

Noting with satisfaction the region-wide increase of awareness and the recognition of the importance of safe water supply and adequate sanitation to the health and well-being of the population;

Considering the breadth and the depth of experience gained at all levels in the countries to overcome the many constraints hampering the development of the sector;

Concerned with the considerable ground still to be covered to satisfy the essential needs of the underserved populations, especially those living in rural and peri-urban areas;

1. CONGRATULATES the Regional Director for his report on the progress made, in the Decade, in the Member States of the African Region;

2. ENDORSES the strategies and action plans proposed in document AFR/RC41/7 for the development of the water supply and sanitation programmes in the 1990s;

3. INVITES Member States in pursuance of the practical application of the regional strategy based on the African Health Development Scenario and, in particular, the district focus approach to primary health care delivery:

   (i) to plan and effectively integrate the activities of water supply and sanitation with those of other priority programmes in health and health-related sectors;

   (ii) to undertake reinforcing actions in the field of management, training and research at the district, provincial and central levels with a view to enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of programme delivery;

   (iii) to mobilize national and external financial, human and material resources in proportion to identified needs in the country mainly through community participation, local revolving funds, cost sharing schemes and by means of appropriate bankable projects to obtain external funding;
(iv) to emphasize the optimal utilization and exploitation of existing facilities through sustained comprehensive actions in order to ensure appropriate operation, adequate maintenance as well as rehabilitation;

(v) to carry out at the end of 1991 an assessment of the Decade as at December 1990 as part of the management strengthening mechanism for the 1990s and in contribution to the regional review of the Decade;

4. REQUESTS the Regional Director:

(i) to further reinforce cooperation with all Member States through sustained strategic, technical and operational support to national water supply and sanitation programmes integrated in primary health care;

(ii) to collaborate with Member States in the assessment of the Decade by providing the necessary methodological and other support;

(iii) to intensify cooperation with external support agencies in the overall development of the sector;

(iv) to present an end-of-Decade assessment report to the forty-second session of the Regional Committee.

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