

RESOLUTION

OF THE

WHO REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR SOUTH-EAST ASIA

SEA/RC62/R3 SOUTH-EAST ASIA REGIONAL EFFORTS ON MEASLES ELIMINATION

The Regional Committee,

Noting a significant reduction in global measles mortality by 74% between 2000 and 2007, from an estimated 750 000 deaths in 2000 to 197 000 in 2007, and an increase in the global routine measles immunization coverage from 72% in 2000 to 82% in 2007,

Noting that in the 47 countries where measles accounted for 98% of the total estimated global measles mortality in 2007, the measles vaccination coverage increased from 58% in 2000 to 72% in 2007,

Concerned that measles mortality is one of the barriers to achieving Millennium Development Goal 4, while affordable effective vaccine is available and evidence indicates that immunization is the most cost-effective intervention,

Recognizing that two countries in the South-East Asia Region have measles vaccine production capacities with the potential to ensure vaccine supply and security,

Noting the achievement—though varied across countries in the South-East Asia Region—of 42% measles mortality reduction between 2000 and 2008, although further improvements are required to increase and sustain a high level of routine immunization coverage,

Recalling the Global Immunization Vision and Strategies endorsed by the World Health Assembly resolution WHA58.15 urging Member States to strengthen national immunization programmes between 2006 and 2015, with the goal of achieving greater coverage and equity in access to immunizations,

Noting that the vaccine coverage target of two doses of measles containing vaccine (MCV1 and MCV2) to achieve elimination needs to be >95% in all districts, which can be achieved through a combination of routine services and periodic mass campaigns,

Further noting that high-quality case-based surveillance systems, adverse events following immunization (AEFI) monitoring and laboratory capacity strengthening are crucial components of measles elimination strategies,

Recognizing that various health systems challenges need to be addressed in the efforts towards measles elimination, in particular sustaining a high level of routine immunization coverage, other public health priorities that compete for limited resources, and maintenance of high-quality surveillance systems on measles incidence and mortality,

Concerned about the social and political implications from AEFI and stressing that utmost efforts need to be made to ensure vaccines and injections are safe and that effective information, education and communication strategies and responses to AEFI are in place,

Noting the ongoing WHO efforts towards measles elimination and WHO assessment of the feasibility of global measles elimination¹ and that the regional elimination efforts have proven that it is feasible through sustaining a high level of routine immunization coverage supplemented by second doses of measles vaccination, either in a routine programme or campaign,

Noting the results of the August 2009 regional consultation of technical and policy officials in New Delhi on the situation analysis of measles and the recommendation of pursuing the goal of regional measles elimination by 2020,

1. URGES Member States:

- (a) To mobilize political, societal and financial support towards elimination of measles;
- (b) to strengthen health systems including laboratory capacity to increase and sustain a high level of routine immunization, high-quality case-based surveillance and well-functioning AEFI monitoring;
- (c) to conduct epidemiological assessment of population susceptibility to measles and provide a second dose of measles vaccine if required through an appropriate mechanism; and
- (d) to actively contribute to the dialogues and designs of the global measles elimination goals; and

2. REQUESTS the Regional Director:

- (a) To provide technical support to Member States in their efforts to strengthen immunization systems and improve performance;
- (b) to mobilize financial resources and build on the existing partnership in support of measles elimination efforts; and
- (c) to report to the Sixty-third Session of the Regional Committee on the status of global measles elimination goals and outcome of activities in the South-East Asia Region.

¹ EB125/4