

## PART IV

DISCUSSION ON OTHER MATTERS1 Resolutions of Regional Interest Adopted by the World Health Assembly and the Executive Board

A number of resolutions were taken up when the relevant sections of the Regional Director's Annual Report were discussed. The remaining resolutions were noted. In response to the Executive Board's resolution EB60.R4, a resolution was adopted on the subject of Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries (resolution SEA/RC30/R10).

2 Health Manpower Development: Medium-Term Programme for the South-East Asia Region

The background and the steps taken for the development of the medium-term programme for health manpower development in this region were presented to the Committee. These were then followed by a brief presentation of the programme itself.

The observations of the Committee were noted and it was proposed that the programme be further considered by individual governments and their comments and suggestions forwarded to the Regional Director. It was further pointed out that if any Member State wished to carry out the programme or a part of it, the Regional Office would consult with each country on any reprogramming which would become necessary.

3 Infant Mortality

The delegation from India presented the working paper on infant mortality and stressed the importance of reliable information or statistics relating to children in the child health programme. It was, in fact, essential to know the magnitude of the problem and the epidemiological profile of the causes of sickness and death before one could start an effective programme of prevention. The importance of demographic data and vital statistics as a basis for child health programmes was also highlighted. A resolution was adopted (SEA/RC30/R11). The Committee noted, however, that initial steps could be taken without waiting for detailed scientific information. The possible impact of simple environmental health and nutritional measures was well accepted.

The Committee was informed of the document "Regional Programme in Child Health" which had been prepared in response to the resolution adopted at its last session (SEA/RC29/R8). The research studies being undertaken with regard to the causes of infant mortality, the proposed intervention studies on its prevention, and the consultative meeting on this subject which was scheduled to take place in December 1977, were also mentioned.

4 Community Health Workers - Transfer of Skills and Knowledge, and Identification of Appropriate Medical Technology for the Developing Countries

These two items were introduced together. The attention of the Committee was drawn to the need to train vast numbers of community health workers for the implementation of the primary health care programme and to develop appropriate technologies for the training of these workers. A resolution was proposed and adopted which dealt with both of these items (resolution SEA/RC30/R12). It was also pointed out that efforts should be made to develop and utilize the traditional systems of medicine to help provide health care to the population, and a resolution on traditional systems of medicine was proposed, discussed and adopted by the Committee (resolution SEA/RC30/R13).

5 Training in Health Services Management Science

The Regional Committee noted that a training programme in management based on operational research and systems analysis (ORSA) in the field of health development had been organized in the Health Services Development Institute (HSDI), at Surabaya in Indonesia. Since the management of health services is an important element in health development, the Committee was glad to note that this facility may be used by the countries of the Region whenever necessary. The Committee adopted a resolution supporting the development and use of such facilities in the Region (resolution SEA/RC30/R14).

6 Selection of a Subject for the Technical Discussions to be Held During the Thirty-first Session

During the discussion on this item, two topics were suggested: "Expanded programme of immunization" and "Health services and manpower development". The subject of "Expanded programme of immunization" was chosen by the Regional Committee for the technical discussions during its thirty-first session (resolution SEA/RC30/R2).

7 Time and Place of the Thirty-first Session of the Regional Committee

The Regional Committee accepted with appreciation the invitation of the Government of the People's Republic of Mongolia to hold its thirty-first session in August/September 1978 in Ulan Bator (resolution SEA/RC30/R3), the exact dates to be arranged between the Regional Director and the Mongolian Government.

8 Health Information Systems with Special Reference to Primary Health Care and Community Development

The Committee discussed and noted the report of the technical discussions (Annex 4).

The group dealt with the subject of primary health care in the light of the definition adopted at the Twenty-eighth World Health Assembly. It also stressed that, though the detailed programme might vary widely

among countries, each having its unique pattern, the seven basic principles of primary health care should be applicable in all countries.

The meaning, scope and content of national health information systems were also gone into. The common characteristics of a national health information system were also identified, while the inter-relationships between health information sub-systems and other information sub-systems were reviewed. The main part of the discussion was devoted to the delineation of the health information system in relation to primary health care and community development. Aspects relating to organization, information requirements and flow of information were dealt with in detail. As one important outcome of the discussion, possible steps for the development of a health information system at the primary health care level were outlined. Problem areas which would be relevant at various stages of this development were also identified.

The recommendations arising out of the discussions are on:

- (1) priority for the development of appropriate health information systems in general and at the primary health care level in particular;
- (2) the relevance of the organization of the health services at various levels to the design of a primary health care information system;
- (3) the need for data collection to correspond to those actually required for management purposes;
- (4) the necessary links between the various sub-systems of the national health information system and the information systems of other health-related sectors;
- (5) the need for an appropriate mechanism to link voluntary health workers and village councils with the national health services at the community level;
- (6) the need for an appropriate technology and methods for the processing and simple analysis of basic data;
- (7) provision of adequate technical and material support to Member countries in developing their primary health care information systems and support activities, and
- (8) the need for exchange of experience and expertise in the field of information systems for primary health care among countries.

During the discussion of the report on the technical discussions in the plenary session a point was made that, while accepting the definition of primary health care as adopted by the Twenty-eighth World Health Assembly, it would be useful to refer to a description of primary health care as given on page 11 of the WHO/UNICEF document "Health for all by

the year 2000". The Committee agreed to this suggestion. It was further suggested, and agreed by the Committee, that the following recommendation should be added: "Indicators for decision-making in primary health care should be developed, including a simple method of data collection and analysis".

The Committee accepted the report and adopted the recommendations of the technical discussions group and adopted a resolution to this effect (resolution SEA/RC30/R15).