During the International Drinking-Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (1981 to 1990), the programme in environmental health for the WHO Western Pacific Region will focus on facilitation of national efforts to meet the goals and objectives of the Decade. The activities necessary to accomplish such cooperation will be programmed in three phases, with individual activities tailored to specific national situations. The first phase, planning, will result in formulation of national decade action plans for each Member State; the second phase, action, will result in infrastructure development and construction of water supply and sanitation schemes, as needed, for full sector coverage in each country; the third phase, long-term support, will result in development of national capabilities to maintain and enhance sector coverage, in accordance with overall strategies for health/2000.

1. INTRODUCTION

The International Drinking-Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (IDWSSD) will be launched in 1981, following a three-year preparatory phase. The WHO water supply and sanitation programme for the Western Pacific Region

---

during the Decade will amplify the medium-term programme for environmental health and will emphasize cooperation with Member States in the development of their national plans and programmes for the Decade. This report briefly outlines the present situation and describes plans for the future.

2. PRESENT SITUATION AND ACTION TAKEN

In compliance with resolution WHA30.33,1 adopted by the Thirtieth World Health Assembly, rapid assessment reports were completed for nine countries in the Region in 1978.2 The reports indicate that slow progress has been made in most countries as also did an earlier report on progress achieved between 1970 and 1975.3 Coping with population increases and demographic shifts and providing initial coverage for large underserved rural populations is going to constitute a major challenge during the Decade.

The more rapidly developing countries, such as Malaysia, Philippines and Republic of Korea, have continuing water supply programmes which are making satisfactory progress. Achievement of Decade goals for water supply is feasible provided strong external support continues. However, the provision of adequate sanitation facilities lags behind, particularly in remote rural areas, constituting a serious challenge. The less rapidly developing countries, such as Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands, have low levels of service, major problems related to programme support capabilities and only marginal prospects of full achievement of Decade goals, without relatively massive efforts, particularly in manpower development. In the Pacific island communities, water supply facilities range from well-developed, as in Fiji, to extremely rudimentary, as in the many small island communities, while sanitation development lags greatly behind provision of safe drinking water. Manpower constraints again constitute the greatest barrier to progress. Little information is available with regard to the situation in China, Democratic Kampuchea, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Viet Nam, although urgent needs may be felt in one or more of those countries.

---


2The reporting countries comprise Fiji, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands and Tonga.

3. THE REGIONAL DECADE PROGRAMME

The major emphasis of the regional programme during the Decade will be on facilitating sector development and maintenance activities at national level. This will be complemented by activities at global and regional level. A three-phase approach will be used for programme purposes, consisting of a planning phase, an action phase, and a long-term support phase. In all phases, activities will be adapted to the situation in each Member State, thus ensuring full coverage and permitting careful monitoring of progress.

3.1 Planning phase

Substantial time and effort will be required to enable most Member States to formulate and implement national plans for water supply and sanitation improvement. The Decade programme will actively support government initiative in the following areas:

(1) formation of national multi-agency IDWSSD planning committees;
(2) definition of national policies;
(3) sectoral analysis (resources, sector coverage);
(4) community analysis (needs, support and participation structures);
(5) technology review (what is "appropriate");
(6) engineering design;
(7) financial planning;
(8) development of implementation strategies;
(9) plan preparation and review;
(10) plan acceptance, promulgation and support;
(11) project document preparation;
(12) commitment to projects.

It is anticipated that this phase will be substantially completed throughout the Region by 1983.

3.2 Action phase

The implementation of development activities will constitute the second phase of the Decade programme. WHO will support government initiative in the following areas:

(1) formation of national IDWSSD action groups;
(2) political endorsement and funding of project elements;
(3) securing of financial and institutional arrangements for project elements;
(4) development of effective community participation programmes;
(5) training and manpower development (technical and administrative);
(6) strengthening of institutions;
(7) education of users in health and hygiene;
(8) construction of water supply and sanitation schemes;
(9) monitoring and evaluation of sector and individual system status;
(10) communications and publicity.

It is anticipated that all Member States will have initiated their action programmes before 1984 and that most will require the remaining years of the Decade for completion of this phase.

3.3 Long-term support phase

Development of national capabilities to protect and expand sector coverage will be a major priority of the regional programme during the last half of the Decade. Accordingly, after 1986, the Decade programme will include strong support for national initiative in the areas of:

(1) political support;
(2) strengthening of permanent institutional structures and programmes;
(3) sector and system monitoring, programming and management;
(4) maintenance, repair and system expansion programmes;
(5) programme evaluation.

The third phase will begin in 1986, after phase 2 action programmes have been established. It will continue well beyond the end of the Decade, since long-term support will be a continuing government responsibility.