

**WORLD HEALTH
ORGANIZATION**



**ORGANISATION MONDIALE
DE LA SANTE**

**Regional Office for the Western Pacific
Bureau régional du Pacifique occidental**

Wellington, New Zealand
Manila, Philippines
28 JUL 1989

REGIONAL COMMITTEE

WPR/RC40/5

**Fortieth session
Manila
19-25 September 1989**

15 June 1989

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Provisional agenda item 9.2

REGIONAL DIRECTOR'S DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME, 1990-1991

At its thirty-ninth session in 1988, the Regional Committee welcomed the proposal that part of the resources in the Regional Director's Development Programme should be used to accommodate its suggestions on strengthening certain programme activities. Such suggestions from the Regional Committee have led to the allocations described in the present report.

The funds of the Regional Director's Development Programme are traditionally used for substantial activities and projects which are innovative in nature or require "seed money". At the thirty-ninth session of the Regional Committee, the Special Representative of the Director-General proposed allocating up to one-third of these funds to programmes the Committee found to be in need of more support than originally foreseen.

The Regional Committee identified three programmes of this kind, namely:

- (1) Prevention and control of alcohol and drug abuse;
- (2) Essential drugs and vaccines; and
- (3) Other noncommunicable disease prevention and control activities.

However, because the third of these is closely linked to cardiovascular diseases and smoking, two further programmes were added:

- (4) Cardiovascular diseases; and
- (5) Tobacco or health.

The Regional Director has allocated US\$195 000 from the Regional Director's Development Programme for 1990-1991 to the following programmes:

- (1) **PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE** **US\$60 000**

Activities to be supported in this programme area will focus on strengthening educational curricula for the prevention of drug abuse and strengthening national programmes on alcohol abuse prevention.

(a) Drug abuse prevention

In 1987, WHO developed training modules on the management of drug abuse. It then organized courses to train trainers to incorporate these modules into existing basic and post-basic curricula and continuing education programmes for all medical and health professionals. In collaboration with the Ministry of Health of Malaysia, a core curriculum on drug abuse for all health training institutions was developed. This curriculum was submitted to the Division of Training and Manpower of the Ministry of Health, and the health schools in Malaysia have revised their curriculum accordingly.

To further strengthen the education curriculum for the prevention of drug abuse, additional funds will be used to continue this collaboration with Malaysia by providing consultant support. This will also strengthen the role of the health sector in the prevention and rehabilitation of drug abusers and facilitate collaboration with other related sectors such as law enforcement, education and social welfare. Similar projects may be initiated in other interested Member States which encounter serious drug abuse problems.

Consultant (3 months)

US\$21 000

(b) Alcohol abuse prevention

The need for an educational programme for children on alcohol abuse, as part of the primary school curriculum, was stressed in a study on alcohol consumption as a public health problem in Papua New Guinea. The need to monitor the entire alcohol situation in Papua New Guinea on a regular basis was also stressed.

It is proposed to recruit consultants at the beginning of 1990 to collaborate with governments in strengthening national programmes on alcohol abuse prevention. It is planned to implement this activity in Papua New Guinea for the first two months, and to extend it to other countries with similar problems, especially in the Pacific Basin, for the third.

Consultant (3 months)

US\$21 000

(c) National workshops

Local costs will be provided to support national workshops and training programmes in the field of drug abuse and alcohol-related problems in connection with the above-mentioned activities. Educational materials such as posters, manuals and relevant literature will be provided during the workshops.

Local costs

US\$18 000

(2) ESSENTIAL DRUGS AND VACCINES

US\$35 000

Many small countries are short of qualified personnel in the drug supply management field, which contributes to the overuse of prescribed drugs, especially antibiotics. In some countries this can cause low-income families to spend substantial amounts on unnecessary drugs. Such scarce resources could be put to better use if awareness of the public and of those prescribing and dispensing the drugs was increased.

(a) Rational use of antibiotics

Antibiotics are often not used properly, and in some countries the active intervention of the health authorities is needed in order to rectify this situation. This is particularly so in Viet Nam, where almost two-thirds of the drugs used are antibiotics.

It is proposed that the use of antibiotics should be reviewed and awareness of the problem increased through lectures and site visits. Subsequently a manual will be developed in the local language for the guidance of health professionals.

Activity/budget:

Consultant to organize a national workshop, review the use of antibiotics and build awareness (1 month)	US\$ 7 000
Local cost for the workshop	5 000
Translation, compilation and printing of the manual	5 000
Sub-total	<u>US\$17 000</u>

(b) Development and standardization of drug inventory control practices

The shortage of trained personnel is a serious constraint in drug supply management in small countries of the South Pacific. There has been a strong demand for upgrading the efficiency of drug inventory control through the use of microcomputers. A computer programme has been prepared by WHO and field testing will begin this year in Tonga. When the field trial is completed, in about July 1990, the programme is expected to be adapted and improved for use in other countries in the South Pacific. To disseminate the methodology, it is proposed to hold a one-week training workshop in the use of the programme and of microcomputers for chief pharmacists in the South Pacific.

Activity/budget:

Training workshop in computerized inventory control	US\$18 000
--	------------

**(3) OTHER NONCOMMUNICABLE DISEASE PREVENTION
AND CONTROL ACTIVITIES** **US\$50 000**

Diabetes education

Diabetes is a major public health problem in many countries in the South Pacific. The National Diabetes Centre, Fiji, has developed a programme for the education of health workers on prevention and control activities for diabetes. Several WHO fellows from neighbouring Pacific Islands have successfully attended a course for health workers.

It is proposed that consultants on diabetes education should visit the Marshall Islands, Samoa and Tonga to develop programmes for health workers and for the general public. Local costs will be provided for national workshops on aspects of diabetes control in the three countries, and for the preparation and printing of health education materials.

*Activity/budget:*National workshops on diabetes education
in the Marshall Islands, Samoa and Tonga

Consultants (3 months)	US\$21 000
Local costs for workshops	15 000
Local costs for preparation of educational materials	14 000
Sub-total	<u>US\$50 000</u>

(4) CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASES **US\$30 000**

Cerebrovascular diseases are a major cause of death in many countries in the Region, especially China, Japan and the Republic of Korea. A Scientific Group on Hypertension and Stroke Research in the Western Pacific Region was convened in Manila in 1982. No other activities directly related to cerebrovascular disease prevention and control have been undertaken in the Region.

It is therefore proposed that national workshops on the prevention and control of cerebrovascular diseases should be held in China and the Republic of Korea. Local costs and consultant support will be provided.

*Activity/budget:*National workshops on cerebrovascular
diseases in China and the Republic of Korea

Consultants (2 months)	US\$14 000
Local costs	16 000
Sub-total	<u>US\$30 000</u>

(5) TOBACCO OR HEALTH **US\$20 000**

In many countries and areas in the Western Pacific Region, smoking rates amongst women are still low, e.g. China 8%, Malaysia 2% and the Republic of Korea 7%. By contrast, in Papua New Guinea it is estimated that 80% of the women use tobacco regularly. In Australia 30% of the women use tobacco.

It is essential to develop programmes to ensure that in countries with low rates of smoking in women, the rates remain low, and that the high rates in other countries start to decline.

Research on behavioural aspects of tobacco use, especially in children and young women, will be undertaken. The aim will be to find ways, appropriate to local culture and conditions, to discourage young women and children from starting to smoke. Health education materials will be produced, based on the results of the research.

Research will be supported in countries such as China, Papua New Guinea and the Republic of Korea.

Activity/budget:

Research on behavioural aspects of
tobacco use and preparation of health
education materials

US\$20 000