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The International Epidemiological Association (IEA) supports the programme directions of the WHO Western Pacific Region, as embodied in the document *New Horizons in Health*. The IEA especially supports preventive and promotive health activities, particularly in the developing areas of the world.

The purposes of the IEA are: to promote the exchange of scientific information in epidemiology, to provide necessary and appropriate data for planning health policies and prevention of diseases, and to provide training programmes for younger epidemiologists in developing countries. The final goal is of course to prevent all health hazards, to minimize disease sequelae, and to attain "Health for All" with a high quality of life.

Epidemiology has always been in the forefront of the search for new knowledge. Knowledge of disease, knowledge of human intervention, and especially knowledge of how to sustain the health and development of people. In this constant search for new knowledge, health and management information systems comprise a growing specialized concern of epidemiology. The aim of health and management information systems should be to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of national health service systems, and the equitability of access to health services.

Medical informatics, which includes computer technology, comprises an essential dimension of health and management information systems, which is, the "management of information". Two other dimensions deserve emphasis, however. Information sociology, which is "information ON management", must involve the active search for models of good health management, especially by and for community groups. Information economics, which is "information FOR management", must involve the active use of information for optimizing the utilization of scarce resources for health.

It is interesting and significant for the IEA to note that the operationalization of the *New Horizons in Health* concept covers three major themes, or components or phases, namely "preparation for life, protection of life, and quality of life in later years". Each component will require the monitoring and evaluation of several indicators. On a more lasting basis, this highlights the need to strengthen the health and management information systems of the member nations. WHO support in this regard would probably be well spent.

In this and other endeavours, the IEA pledges the assistance and expertise of its members in the several countries of the Region. Indeed, the IEA has been granting financial support for convening regional meetings in developing countries, which includes the travel expenses of some participants from these countries. The IEA membership is to be found in the academe, in public service, and in private practice.