



**REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE WESTERN PACIFIC
BUREAU REGIONAL DU PACIFIQUE OCCIDENTAL**

REGIONAL COMMITTEE

WPR/RC59/11

**Fifty-ninth session
Manila, Philippines
22–26 September 2008**

21 July 2008

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Provisional agenda item 17

**COORDINATION OF THE WORK OF THE WORLD HEALTH
ASSEMBLY, THE EXECUTIVE BOARD AND
THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE**

Three resolutions adopted by the Sixty-first World Health Assembly are presented with an explanation of their implications for the work of WHO in the Western Pacific Region. Members of the Regional Committee are requested to express their views on the relevance of these resolutions to WHO's programme of cooperation with countries and areas in the Region. A complete list of resolutions adopted by the World Health Assembly is attached as Annex 1.

The World Health Assembly resolution, which directly relates to an item on the provisional agenda of the current session of the Regional Committee, is mentioned in and annexed to the document covering that individual agenda item.

The draft provisional agenda of the 124th session of the Executive Board is attached as Annex 2.

WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS OF INTEREST TO THE REGION

The Sixty-first World Health Assembly adopted 21 resolutions, which are listed at the end of this paper (Annex 1). The attention of the Regional Committee is drawn to three in particular: resolution WHA61.4 on strategies to reduce the harmful use of alcohol; resolution WHA61.18 on monitoring of the achievement of the health-related Millennium Development Goals; and resolution WHA61.20 on infant and young child nutrition: biennial progress report. These are discussed below.

The agenda of the 124th session of the Executive Board is attached as Annex 2. This draft provisional agenda has been sent to Member States by the Director-General in a note verbale dated 20 June 2008. Following the receipt of comments on the proposed agenda from Member States, the Director-General will further consult with the Chairman of the Executive Board. This draft agenda is submitted to the Regional Committee for its information.

Resolution WHA 61.4. Strategies to reduce the harmful use of alcohol

Background

The disease burden attributable to the harmful use of alcohol is significant, and in many countries public health problems caused by the harmful use of alcohol represent a substantial health, social and economic burden. Reduction of the harmful use of alcohol is becoming a priority area at national, regional and global levels. Alcohol-related harm can be reduced through the implementation of proven alcohol strategies. The Sixty-first World Health Assembly adopted resolution WHA61.4 that calls for the development of a draft global strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol. The Director-General is requested to submit the draft global strategy to the Sixty-third World Health Assembly through the Executive Board.

Relevance to the Region

The adoption of the resolution represents a very important step in this area globally, which will be a great support for implementation of the Regional Strategy to Reduce Alcohol-Related Harm endorsed at the fifty-seventh session of the Regional Committee in 2006. Meanwhile, the experiences and lessons learnt through the process of developing and implementing the Regional Strategy will inform and contribute substantially to the consultations and development of the draft global strategy.

The majority of Member States in the Region have nominated a national focal point for the reduction of the harmful use of alcohol. The First Regional Meeting on Reduction of Alcohol-related Harm held in June 2008 brought together national focal points from 26 countries and areas. The participants have identified priority areas for country actions, regional cooperation and resource mobilization. The meeting also developed a draft Regional Plan of Action to Reduce Alcohol-related-Harm for broader consultation and finalization.

Recommended actions by Member States

The global strategy will be developed in close collaboration with Member States and input from other relevant stakeholders will be ensured. Resolution WHA61.4 urges Member States:

- (1) to collaborate with the Secretariat in developing a draft global strategy;
- (2) to develop national systems for monitoring alcohol consumption, its health and social consequences, and policy responses, and to report regularly to WHO's regional and global information systems; and
- (3) to consider strengthening national responses to public health problems caused by the harmful use of alcohol.

Resolution WHA61.18. Monitoring of the achievement of the health-related Millennium Development Goals

The resolution expresses concern about the relatively slow progress towards achieving the health-related United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It identifies some of the factors hindering progress, which include weak health systems; insufficient attention to the social determinants of health and their role in health inequity; lack of adequate progress towards the achievement of the targets for providing overseas development assistance by developed countries; and lack of progress by lesser developed countries for increasing their commitment to increase financing for the MDGs. The monitoring of the health-related MDGs will henceforth be included as a regular item of the World Health Assembly. WHO will support the United Nations Secretary-General's call to action, including the United Nations High-level Event on the Millennium Development Goals scheduled for 25 September 2008.

Individual country reports are part of the commitment of countries that signed the United Nations Millennium Declaration. Ministries of health are encouraged to participate fully in preparing these reports and ensuring their accuracy in regards to the health-related MDGs. In addition,

reporting on progress on the MGDs in Asia and the Pacific has been undertaken by a partnership among the Asian Development Bank, the United Nations Development Programme, and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, with the most recent report published in 2008. Member States are encouraged to provide information as required for these reports.

Resolution WHA61.20 – Infant and Young Child Nutrition: biennial progress report

Background

Despite what is known about the great benefits of breastfeeding that accrue to children, mothers, families, and society, and the risks of disease and morbidity associated with bottle-feeding, the practice of breastfeeding continues to decline globally. Resolution WHA61.20 reminds Member States of the need to ensure that their commitment and support for breastfeeding and optimal infant and young child feeding (IYCF) practices are not undermined by conflicts of interest. It urges Member States to strengthen implementation of the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes (the Code) and subsequent World Health Assembly resolutions; and reaffirms that powdered infant formula is not a sterile product and that it can contain pathogenic bacteria. It urges Member States to strengthen implementation of the Global Strategy on IYCF, increasing support for early initiation of breastfeeding and exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life, as essential for achieving the MDGs.

Relevance to the Region

Resolution WHA61.20 responds to the growing recognition by Member States of persistent malnutrition as one of the most severe public health problems, as indicated by the alarmingly high rates of under-five mortality. In full resonance with the key points raised by the resolution, a consultation on breastfeeding protection, promotion and support organized by WHO/WPRO and the UNICEF Regional Office for East Asia and the Pacific in 2007 noted the lax implementation of the Code. This has left room for the aggressive marketing efforts of companies selling breast-milk substitutes; the provision of inaccurate information and incentives to health workers and professionals for marketing breast-milk substitutes; and has undermined efforts to help mothers and families make the right choices for their children and themselves. To address these and related issues, four actions are recommended by Member States.

Recommended actions by Member States

- (1) To implement the recommendations of the Global Strategy on IYCF, which requires strengthening the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI), by improving monitoring of hospitals, making BFHI certification a requirement for all hospitals with maternity care; and ensuring continued support for breastfeeding mothers at the community level. To ensure exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months and continued breastfeeding up to two years and beyond particularly requires collaboration with workers' and employers' associations; ensuring adequate maternity and paternity leave and breastfeeding rooms in workplaces; improved access by mothers to their babies during working hours and access to breastfeeding counsellors and support groups.
- (2) To strengthen implementation of the international and national codes, by reviewing the status of national monitoring systems of code compliance and violations, building capacity and increasing understanding by health officials and workers of conflicts of interest in this area.
- (3) To ensure that the public is fully aware that powdered infant formula may contain pathogenic bacteria, by labelling powdered formula in conformity with the standards, guidelines and recommendations of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (as required by resolution WHA58.32); and to minimize the risk of bacterial infection by application and wide dissemination of the WHO/FAO guidelines on safe preparation, storage and handling of powdered infant formula.
- (4) To reduce the risk of intrinsic contamination of powdered infant formula by *Enterobacter sakazakii* and other pathogenic microorganisms during the manufacturing process, and the risk of contamination during storage, preparation and handling, through food-safety measures and appropriate regulatory measures; and to monitor the effectiveness of these measures.

**RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE SIXTY-FIRST
WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY**

Resolution number	Title of resolution
WHA61.1	Poliomyelitis: mechanism for management of potential risks to eradication
WHA61.2	Implementation of the International Health Regulations (2005)
WHA61.3	Health conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory, including east Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan
WHA61.4	Strategies to reduce the harmful use of alcohol
WHA61.5	Financial report and audited financial statements for the period 1 January 2006-31 December 2007
WHA61.6	Miscellaneous Income 2006-2007 and financing gap for strategic objectives 12 and 13
WHA61.7	Members in arrears in the payment of their contributions to an extent that would justify invoking Article 7 of the Constitution
WHA61.8	Special arrangements for settlement of arrears: Kyrgyzstan
WHA61.9	Report of the External Auditor to the Health Assembly
WHA61.10	Amendments to the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules
WHA61.11	Methods of work of the Health Assembly
WHA61.12	Multilingualism: implementation of action plan
WHA61.13	International Agency for Research on Cancer: amendments to Statute
WHA61.14	Prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases: implementation of the global strategy
WHA61.15	Global immunization strategy
WHA61.16	Female genital mutilation
WHA61.17	Health of migrants
WHA61.18	Monitoring of the achievement of the health-related Millennium Development Goals
WHA61.19	Climate change and health
WHA61.20	Infant and young child nutrition: biennial progress report
WHA61.21	Global strategy and plan of action on public health, innovation and intellectual property

WPR/RC59/11



EXECUTIVE BOARD
124th Session
Geneva, 19–27 January 2009

EB124/1 (draft)
20 June 2008

Draft provisional agenda

1. **Opening of the session and adoption of the agenda**
2. **Report by the Director-General**
3. **Report of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee of the Executive Board**
4. **Technical and health matters**
 - 4.1 Pandemic influenza preparedness: sharing of influenza viruses and access to vaccines and other benefits
 - 4.2 Implementation of the International Health Regulations (2005)
 - 4.3 HIV/AIDS and mental health
 - 4.4 Prevention of avoidable blindness and visual impairment
 - 4.5 Primary health care: 30 years of the Alma-Ata Declaration
 - 4.6 Commission on Social Determinants of Health
 - 4.7 Monitoring of the achievement of the health-related Millennium Development Goals
 - 4.8 Climate change and health
 - 4.9 WHO's role and responsibilities in health research
 - 4.10 International recruitment of health personnel: draft global code of practice
 - 4.11 Counterfeit medical products
 - 4.12 Human organ and tissue transplantation
 - 4.13 Public health, innovation and intellectual property: global strategy and plan of action

Annex 2

EB124/1 (draft)

5. Programme and budget matters

- 5.1 Programme budget 2006–2007: performance assessment
- 5.2 Implementation of Programme budget 2008–2009: interim report
- 5.3 Medium-term strategic plan 2008–2013 and Proposed programme budget 2010–2011

6. Financial matters

- 6.1 Unaudited interim financial report for the financial period 2008–2009
- 6.2 Assessed contributions
 - Status of collection, including Members in arrears in the payment of their contributions to an extent that would justify invoking Article 7 of the Constitution
 - Scale of assessments for 2010–2011
- 6.3 Amendments to the Financial Regulations and Financial Rules

7. Management matters

- 7.1 Partnerships
- 7.2 Multilingualism: implementation of action plan
- 7.3 Reports of committees of the Executive Board
 - Standing Committee on Nongovernmental Organizations
 - Foundations and awards
- 7.4 Provisional agenda of the Sixty-second World Health Assembly and date and place of the 125th session of the Executive Board

8. Staffing matters

- 8.1 Appointment of the Regional Director for South-East Asia
- 8.2 Appointment of the Regional Director for the Western Pacific
- 8.3 Human resources: annual report (including employment and participation of women in the work of WHO)
- 8.4 Report of the International Civil Service Commission
- 8.5 Amendments to Staff Rules and Staff Regulations [if any]
- 8.6 Statement by the representative of the WHO staff associations

9. Matters for information

9.1 Reports of expert committees and study groups

9.2 Progress reports

- A. Poliomyelitis: mechanism for management of potential risks to eradication
- B. Smallpox eradication: destruction of variola stocks (resolution WHA60.1)
- C. Malaria, including proposal for establishment of World Malaria Day (resolution WHA60.18)
- D. Implementation by WHO of the recommendations of the Global Task Team on Improving AIDS Coordination among Multilateral Institutions and International Donors (resolution WHA59.12)
- E. Prevention and control of sexually transmitted infections (resolution WHA59.19)
- F. Strengthening of health information systems (resolution WHA60.27)
- G. Universal coverage of maternal, newborn and child health interventions (resolution WHA58.31)
- H. Integrating gender analysis and actions into the work of WHO: draft strategy (resolution WHA60.25)
- I. Rational use of medicines (resolution WHA60.16)
- J. Better medicines for children (resolution WHA60.20)
- K. Health technologies (resolution WHA60.29)

10. Closure of the session

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