



REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE WESTERN PACIFIC
BUREAU REGIONAL DU PACIFIQUE OCCIDENTAL

REGIONAL COMMITTEE

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TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS

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SELECTION OF TECHNICAL DISCUSSION TOPICS FOR THE
TWELFTH (1961) SESSION OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE

The Chairman of the Technical Discussions, held during the seventh (1956) session of the Regional Committee, reported¹ that the discussion group made, inter alia, the following recommendation:

"In selecting topics for future Technical Discussions, consideration should be given to matters of regional interest which are particularly appropriate to the place of the Regional Committee Meeting."

The Technical Discussion group may wish to consider, among others, the following topics suggested by the Secretariat:

1 THE ROLE OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE IMPROVEMENT OF COMMUNITY WATER SUPPLIES

The Twelfth World Health Assembly recommended² that countries give priority to the provision of safe and adequate water supplies to their populations and mobilize all their resources to contribute to this end. Subject to availability of funds, WHO will provide leadership in a co-ordinated global programme of community water supply and provide technical and advisory services when so requested by governments.

The role of health services in Member governments should be clearly understood in the improvement of water supplies since the co-operation and co-ordination of many governmental agencies will be required to make such a programme successful. Although procedures will vary according to the political, legislative, economic and social structures of the individual countries, certain basic principles will apply to all national efforts in this respect.

/Environmental sanitation ...

¹Unpublished document WP/RC7/TD8

²Resolution WHA12.48

Environmental sanitation has never been the subject of a technical discussion at the Regional Committee meetings and the subject mentioned above or a variant of it might be both timely and appropriate.

2 DENTAL HEALTH

This topic is suggested in view of the considerable interest of many governments in the second Dental Health Seminar held in Adelaide in February 1959 and their desire to promote dental health programmes in their countries. The Seminar in Adelaide reviewed the accomplishments in dental health in the Western Pacific and South-East Asia Regions since the holding of the first Dental Health Seminar in New Zealand in 1954. It also identified the current dental health problems in the two regions and discussed the roles of the national health administration and the dental health professions in their solution. Furthermore, the Seminar discussed the standardization and reporting of dental health conditions.

The Seminar gave a new stimulus to public-health workers to expand their dental health activities and it would be useful to know how problems connected with this programme have been met by the governments. As the Regional Committee in 1961 will be held in New Zealand where progress in dental health is advanced, the governments might wish to consider this topic as the subject of the next technical discussions - two years and seven months after the Seminar in Adelaide.

3 IMMUNIZATION IN THE CONTROL OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

This topic is suggested because of the increasing importance being given to communicable diseases during World Health Assembly and Executive Board Meetings. Communicable diseases still remain a problem in most of the countries of our region. Discussion of the value of immunization in the control of communicable diseases may bring to the foreground not only the importance of immunization but also the need for health education of the public to obtain optimum results and focus attention on the subject at various levels of the national health administration. Epidemiological considerations, particularly the implications of the changing pattern observed in a number of communicable diseases, potency of vaccine and ways of conserving them in the field, the need for international standardization of vaccines, research, priority considerations, selection of groups to be immunized, the organization necessary and many other factors need to be reviewed in the light of present knowledge and experience. It is hoped that such a discussion will bring into light related problems as they occur in the countries of the participants and may well pave the way towards a realistic reorientation of views and approaches to national programmes, as well as serving as a conditioning factor when seeking WHO technical advice.