



REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE WESTERN PACIFIC
BUREAU RÉGIONAL DU PACIFIQUE OCCIDENTAL

REGIONAL COMMITTEE

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Manila
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Provisional agenda item 17.2

ANNUAL REPORTING BY THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The Twenty-eighth World Health Assembly adopted resolution WHA28.29, the full text of which is attached (see Annex 1); and the operative paragraphs of which considered it desirable that the Director-General should:

- "(1) publish in the Official Records in even-numbered years, beginning in 1978, a comprehensive report on the work of WHO during the preceding two years;
- (2) issue in odd-numbered years, beginning in 1977, a short report covering significant matters and developments during the preceding even-numbered year;"

The adoption of this resolution was the result of a recommendation of the Executive Board on a report presented by the Director-General to its fifty-fifth session.^{1,2} As well as setting forth financial considerations, the Report drew attention to the need to provide a better assessment of the Organization's work by evaluating it over a longer period of time, making it possible to view achievements and setbacks in a wider perspective and thus publish reports of greater quality.

In the same resolution (WHA28.29), the World Health Assembly requested the Director-General to:

- "(3) report on projects, hitherto listed in the Annual Report, in a separate document, in such a form as to facilitate evaluation of the Organization's programme."

¹ Resolution EB55.R38, WHO Official Records No. 223, 1975, page 24.

² WHO Official Records No. 223, 1975, Part I, Annex 8.

It also "considered it desirable that the Executive Board at its fifty-seventh session continue its review of the content and rationalization of the Director-General's Report and other documents on the work of WHO."

1.2 The Director-General presented the report on this review to the Executive Board at its fifty-seventh session.¹ Annex 2 contains an extract of that part of the report relating to the Annual Report of the Director-General and the project list, as a result of which the Executive Board, in resolution EB57.R37, recommended to the World Health Assembly that it adopt a resolution authorizing the Director-General to:

"discontinue publishing a report on individual projects on the understanding that the Director-General will make available to members of the Board and delegates to the Health Assembly, on request, full information on any project."²

The Twenty-ninth World Health Assembly subsequently accepted the recommendation of the Executive Board by adopting resolution WHA29.36 (see Annex 3).

2. SUGGESTIONS

Depending on its decision with regard to the frequency of its sessions (see document WPR/RC27/11) the Committee might consider the following alternatives:

2.1 The suggestions contained in paragraph 2.2 below follow the action already taken, and the reasoning behind it (see Annex 2), in respect of the Director-General's Annual Report. However, should the Regional Committee decide to hold a session only every even-numbered year, when it reviews the programme budget proposals, it will presumably wish the Regional Director to present a full report on the previous biennium at the same time (i.e. in even-numbered years) with no report in the intervening years when it does not meet. The suggestions below would, as a consequence, be nullified, with the exception of (c).

2.2 If the Committee decides to continue holding annual sessions it will wish, having reviewed the background information provided above under Section I, to consider whether it should follow the World Health Assembly by deciding that:

- (a) the Regional Director publish every other year (i.e. every odd-numbered year) a comprehensive report on the work of the Western Pacific Region during the preceding two years;

¹ WHO Official Records, No. 231, 1976, Part I, p. 105.

² See resolution EB57.R37 (WHO Official Records, No. 231, 1976, p. 27).

- (b) he issue in the intervening year (i.e. every even-numbered year when the programme budget proposals are reviewed by the Committee) a short report covering significant matters and developments during the preceding year; and
- (c) he discontinue publishing a report on individual projects on the understanding that the Regional Director will make available to members of the Regional Committee, on request, full information on any project.

The proposed programme budget for the Region is reviewed by the Committee in even-numbered years. Bearing in mind that the period covered by the Regional Director's Annual Report is at present July to June it would be structured in such a way as to highlight, as a short report in even-numbered years, the Committee's consideration of the proposed biennial programme budget and to review, in odd-numbered years, with a greater emphasis on evaluation, the entire range of activities since the proposals for the Region for the biennium were considered by the Committee and transmitted to the Director-General for inclusion in the proposed programme budget. The effect of the proposal on the documentation submitted to the Regional Committee may be illustrated by the following tabulation; 1978 would be the first year in which the proposed changes in the annual reporting cycle could be introduced:

Twenty-seventh session	Twenty-eighth session	Twenty-ninth session	Thirtieth session
Regional Committee (1976)	Regional Committee (1977)	Regional Committee (1978)	Regional Committee (1979)
Review of proposed programme budget for 1978 and 1979	Regional Director's Annual Report, 1 July 1976 to 30 June 1977	Review of proposed programme budget for 1980 and 1981	Regional Director's Annual Report, 1 July 1977 to 30 June 1979
Regional Director's Annual Report, 1 July 1975 to 30 June 1976	(as in previous years)	Regional Director's Annual Report, 1 July 1977 to 30 June 1978) (short document)	(covering preceding two years)

RESOLUTION OF THE WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

TWENTY-EIGHTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

WHA28.29

28 May 1975

ANNUAL REPORTING BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

The Twenty-eighth World Health Assembly,

Having considered the report of the Director-General on the subject of annual reporting by the Director-General, and the recommendations of the Executive Board thereon,

1. CONSIDERS it desirable that the Director-General should:

- (1) publish in the Official Records in even-numbered years, beginning in 1978, a comprehensive report on the work of WHO during the preceding two years;
- (2) issue in odd-numbered years, beginning in 1977, a short report covering significant matters and developments during the preceding even-numbered year;
- (3) report on projects, hitherto listed in the Annual Report, in a separate document, in such a form as to facilitate evaluation of the Organization's programme; and, further,

2. CONSIDERS it desirable that the Executive Board at its fifty-seventh session continue its review of the content and rationalization of the Director-General's Report and other documents on the work of WHO.

Twelfth plenary meeting, 28 May 1975
A28/VR/12

ANNEX 2

ANNUAL REPORTING BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL
AND OTHER DOCUMENTS ON THE WORK OF WHO

(Extract from WHO Official Records, No. 231, 1976,
Annex 11, pages 106-110)

4. The reports of the Director-General on the work of WHO (annual reports)

4.1 The comprehensive report dealing with a biennium, referred to in paragraph 1(1) of resolution WHA28.29, is envisaged as having a coverage essentially similar to that of the annual reports issued hitherto but with twice the time-span. This will permit a better appraisal of the progress made, although fully evaluative reporting may not be achieved until the evaluation process described in the Director-General's report on the Development of Evaluation in WHO¹ has come into operation. The two-year periods (1976-1977, 1978-1979, etc.) are the same as those of the programme budgets, and the structure of the reports could be linked to that of these volumes so that the work done during the biennium could be presented in relation to the programmes previously approved by the World Health Assembly. These reports will be submitted for a full review by the Health Assembly in even-numbered years.

4.2 The short report (resolution WHA28.29, paragraph 1(2)) is to be issued in odd-numbered years when the Health Assembly carries out an in-depth review of the proposed programme budget. It is seen as a means by which the Director-General makes a selective assessment of programmes, events or topics of particular importance in the preceding calendar year rather than attempts to give a full account of all aspects of the Organization's work. It may thus be viewed as an expanded version of the Introductions that have been a feature of the annual reports in the past.

4.3 Some members of the Board at its fifty-fifth session requested that an outline of the shorter report be submitted for consideration at the present session. It is hardly possible to sketch the contents of such a selective report a year in advance of events or to predict in what order such events may be discussed. Nevertheless, the following topics seem likely to be among those that may require special notice in 1977:

- (1) Implementation of resolution WHA28.76;
- (2) Response of WHO in connexion with the New International Economic Order;
- (3) Director-General's Development Programme;
- (4) Country health programming;
- (5) WHO's contribution to rural development;
- (6) Primary health care;
- (7) Specific aspects of disease prevention and control, such as smallpox, malaria, onchocerciasis, immunization; and
- (8) Research, including special programme of research and training in tropical diseases.

¹ WHO Official Records, No. 231, 1976, Part II, Appendix 7, pp. 225-263.

5. The project list

5.1 The project list stems from resolution EB11.R44, adopted by the Executive Board in 1953, at a time when there were fewer than 350 projects in operation and when the Organization took a more narrowly sectoral approach than it does today to meeting government requests for assistance in health matters. Twenty-one years later, when there were some 2000 projects, the Executive Board adopted resolution EB55.R26 - on the organizational study on the interrelationships between the central technical services of WHO and programmes of direct assistance to Member States - in which it drew attention "to the necessity of an integrated approach to the development of the Organization's programmes, all programme activities at all levels being mutually supportive and parts of a whole". The Board in this resolution, and the World Health Assembly in resolution WHA28.30, requested the Director-General to apply the conclusions and recommendations of the organizational study in future programmes of WHO. The organizational study itself contains the following passage:

" ... it is evident that, after its first 25 years of existence, WHO should not retain the concept of fragmented projects but must definitely orient its direct assistance to countries towards a single programme approach within which projects should be identified as specific sets of activities to be implemented in a given period but in relation to overall objectives".¹

5.2 In keeping with this, the Organization is seeking to develop new programming processes at the country level as a consequence of which projects will increasingly become integral parts of broader programmes for national health development. Indeed, this trend is already apparent in the proposed programme budget, where all projects are listed, but as components of the programmes they support rather than as individual activities.

5.3 On the other hand, the final subparagraph of paragraph 1 of the draft resolution contained in resolutions EB55.R38, and of resolution WHA28.29, calls for projects to be reported upon in a document separate from the annual report "in such a form as to facilitate evaluation of the Organization's programme". In the light of the views expressed by the Board and Health Assembly on the development of broader programmes, the continued issue of a list concerned solely with projects may need to be reviewed.

5.4 In connexion with the evaluation of the Organization's programme through project reporting, it will be seen from the Director-General's report on evaluation² that a revised evaluation system is being proposed by which evaluation should become an integral part of programme planning

¹ WHO Official Records, No. 223, 1975, Part I, Annex 7, p. 72.

² WHO Official Records, No. 231, 1976, Part II, Appendix 7, pp. 225-263.

and implementation at all operational levels; this will be based upon a revised information system. A salient feature of the latter is that not all information would be collected centrally; rather would the type and amount of information reported to and collected at country, regional and headquarters levels vary according to the respective needs. This notion of differential reporting is basic to the planning and conduct of the Organization's work and, indeed, is implicit throughout the draft Sixth General Programme of Work.

5.5 It is suggested that the most detailed information is required at the country level for country planning and for project operation, evaluation and review, constant contact being maintained on the one hand between the national health authorities and the project managers and WHO representatives and, on the other hand, between the latter and the regional offices. At the regional level, emphasis may appropriately be placed on intercountry activities. However, the information required for day-to-day project management (including assessment) may not be the same in kind and quantity as is needed at central level for the Organization's governing bodies to determine WHO policy and review the conduct of its programmes.

5.6 Pending the development of broader programmes, the Organization's technical cooperation with governments is still mainly achieved through a large number of relatively small projects. Within a country each of these may be of value in the situation for which it is designed, and together they have a greater or lesser total national effect according to how they are related and how successful each is. That total effect, however, cannot be brought out even by evaluative reporting upon the individual projects. It may be thought, therefore, that at the central level - i.e., the level of the Health Assembly and the Executive Board - the purpose of facilitating evaluation of the Organization's programme would best be served by review of the efficiency and effectiveness of programmes as a whole, on the basis of consolidated results of individual project evaluations that it is intended to feed into an Organization-wide evaluation system, rather than by a presentation of some 2000 projects individually. The appropriate vehicle for the presentation of the programme would seem to be the Director-General's comprehensive report on the work of WHO, covering a biennium (see paragraph 4.1 above).

5.7 The revised information system referred to includes the preparation of "project profiles" and of a budget-finance information subsystem¹ and is partly dependent upon a rationalization of project design and management. It will take time to bring these things about, but perhaps as early as 1978 succinct information will be stored and updated (probably with the aid of the computer) at headquarters, for the purpose of overall project management, on the duration, financing, objectives, targets and status of each project, and significant reports on them, together with data on the expenditure and on the original or revised budgetary estimates. It is expected that there would be no difficulty in making the information on an individual project

¹

WHO Official Records, No. 231, 1976, Part II, Appendix 7, Section 9, pp. 236-237.

or group of projects available on request as a computer printout in English. It would also be possible to print out the information on all projects as a project list, if that were required. An example of how one page of such a list might appear is shown in the Appendix below. This list could be accompanied by financial implementation tables so as to give the data hitherto included in Appendix 4 to the Financial Report.¹

5.8 A complete project list, with financial implementation tables, would probably have a minimum of some 500-600 pages. If it were needed as a Health Assembly document, it might require translation into Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish, a necessarily lengthy operation. The Executive Board may wish to consider how much project information needs to be issued for Board and Health Assembly purposes in relation to the intervals at which it should be provided and the cost.

5.9 If a report on projects is thought necessary, it would seem both logical and least expensive to issue it in even-numbered years, to coincide with the long report of the Director-General on the work of WHO, when the Health Assembly conducts its full review of that report.

5.10 The probable cost in 1978 of issuing a 500-600 page document of the type illustrated in the Appendix with accompanying financial tables cannot be accurately estimated but, on the basis of 1975 prices, the translation, typing and offset printing of 500 pages in the five languages mentioned would not be likely to be any less than US \$220 000.² This sum does not include the cost of computerization or of running off the printouts in English. If electronic storage and retrieval were not available, the total cost of preparing and editing the material in English, translating, and printing in six languages would be far greater, probably more than double the figure quoted; and the time required for the preparation followed by translation would in all likelihood be so long that much of the information would be out of date when issued.

5.11 If it is thought that the likely benefits to Member States and the Organization as a whole of the issue of this document in six languages are hardly commensurate with the time and cost involved, but yet that, as some members of the Board have suggested in the past, a closer scrutiny of projects is desirable even when evaluation becomes an integral part of them, consideration might be given to the following procedure. During their sessions, regional committees might conduct a systematic review of projects in a given country with which WHO is collaborating or of selected inter-country projects. In some regions, there are already procedures more or less of this nature. In addition, the Executive Board might select at appropriate intervals a particular group of related projects for detailed analysis at a later session. This review might apply to interregional activities or to a widely representative group of projects in one or two countries in which WHO is collaborating, and might be conducted by selected members of the Board rather than by the Board in corpore. Suggestions as to projects appropriate for the Board's scrutiny might emanate from regional committees; others might well arise from the Board's discussions of agenda items or might be proposed by the Board as it reviews the proposed programme budget, in which all projects are listed.

¹ See for example, WHO Official Records, No. 222, 1975, Appendix 4, pp. 67-121.

² For a revised estimate see summary record of the Board's twenty-fourth meeting in Official Records, No. 232, 1976, p. 327.

Appendix

SAMPLE PAGE OF A HYPOTHETICAL PROJECT LIST

NOTE: All information and financial data shown below are purely notional and intended merely to illustrate possible future project reporting.

3.2.4 NUTRITION

NUT 001	NATIONAL FOOD AND NUTRITION POLICY						
	DURATION:	1975-1985		FINANCING:	RB		
	OBJECTIVE:	Development and implementation of national food and nutrition policies					
	TARGET:	To have properly formulated and implemented policies in at least 20 countries by 1981 and 40 by 1985.					
	STATUS:	General plan prepared; trial formulation missions completed in Indonesia and Thailand in 1975. Expert committee on policy formulation planned for 1976 with subsequent preparation of guidelines and training courses in 1977, formulation missions and evaluation from 1978 onwards.					
	FUNDS (ALL)	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
	US\$ 000s	--	23	7	7	10	7
NUT 002	NUTRITION SURVEILLANCE						
	DURATION:	1975-1981		FINANCING:	RB		
	OBJECTIVE:	Development of methodology of surveillance based on simple indicators and their use					
	TARGET:	Use of the methodology in 30 countries by 1981 and in 60 by 1985					
	STATUS:	Preliminary work completed; expert committee in 1975 will define scope and application of surveillance; pilot studies to be undertaken in 5 countries in 1976, preparation of manual in 1977, publication in 1978, testing manual on 20 countries in 1979; evaluation in 1980; subsequently WHO will exercise coordinating role through headquarters and regional offices.					
	FUNDS (ALL)	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
	US\$ 000s	—	23	7	7	10	7
AFRO							
ICP NUT 001	REGIONAL FOOD AND NUTRITION COMMISSION FOR AFRICA (FAO/WHO/OAU)						
	DURATION:	1965-		FINANCING:	RB		
	OBJECTIVE:	To represent WHO in the work of the Commission					
	TARGET:	No specific targets have been set					
	STATUS:	WHO support through the assignment of a medical nutritionist began in 1965 and is expected to continue indefinitely; the duties are similar to those of a nutrition adviser in the regional office.					
	FUNDS (ALL)	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
	US\$ 000s	32	43	44	45	46	47
COUNTRY X							
NUT 001	NUTRITION TRAINING FOR HEALTH PERSONNEL						
	DURATION:	1974-1976		FINANCING:	DP		
	OBJECTIVE:	To give theoretical and field training in community and clinical nutrition to health assistants and public health nurses					
	TARGETS:	To train 60 staff in three years, in courses 6 months for 10 staff at a time					
	STATUS:	Recruitment of medical nutritionist delayed by 6 months in 1974, first course starts January 1975 (fellowships are at special local rate).					
	FUNDS (ALL)	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
	US\$ 000s	16	56	56			

ANNEX 3

RESOLUTION OF THE WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

TWENTY-NINTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

WHA29.36

17 May 1976

ANNUAL REPORTING BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL
AND OTHER DOCUMENTS ON THE WORK OF WHO

The Twenty-ninth World Health Assembly,

Having considered the report of the Director-General on the subject of annual reporting by him and other documents on the work of WHO, and the recommendations of the Executive Board thereon;

Considering that an improvement in documentation is one of the basic prerequisites for effective performance of the function of both the Organization and the Member States;

Believing that a rationalization of the Organization's documents and of the work of the Health Assembly would be achieved by discontinuing the publication of a global project list and its submission to the Health Assembly;

1. AUTHORIZES the Director-General to discontinue publishing a report on individual projects on the understanding that the Director-General will make available to members of the Board and delegates to the Health Assembly, on request, full information on any project;
2. REQUESTS the Executive Board to conduct a comprehensive study of the documentation of the World Health Assembly and Executive Board, and to report on this matter to one of the forthcoming sessions of the World Health Assembly.

Tenth plenary meeting, 17 May 1976
A29/VR/10