Provisional Agenda Item No. 9

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION'S
ACTIVITIES IN AFRICA IN FIELDS RELATED TO
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
Introduction:

Since the establishment of WHO in 1948 its activities in the African continent have been steadily increasing. The first activities in countries such as Egypt, Ethiopia, Liberia and Libya have enabled the Organization to gain the initial experience to prepare itself for later expansion of advisory services. By now the work of the Organization has covered practically all of Africa. The activities are administered through three regional offices, namely: The Regional Office for Africa in Brazzaville, The Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean in Alexandria and The Regional Office for Europe in Copenhagen.

Efforts have been made to assist governments in training medical and health personnel, particularly the nurses, midwives, medical assistants and other auxiliary personnel. In view of the limited educational opportunities the training of auxiliary workers has proved to be very important in helping to extend health services to rural areas.

All health work which is being carried out in local areas in a great number of countries and territories in Africa is ultimately concerned with the improvement of rural welfare and has an immediate impact on raising levels of living.

The following is a list of WHO-assisted projects which can be recognized as integral parts of community development.

I PROJECTS ADMINISTERED BY THE REGIONAL OFFICE FOR AFRICA

1. Basutoland

**Nutrition Survey and Control of Deficiency Diseases:** Basutoland

This project commenced operation in 1956. In its first stage its purpose was to carry out a special survey in order to estimate the prevalence of malnutrition diseases, and to establish an accurate base for their diagnosis, prevention and control. The WHO team has worked in close collaboration with the Department of Agriculture.

The Government have requested the continuation of WHO-assisted activities and that the project be enlarged by a training centre for rural extension workers, as well as a land-use survey in order to establish a land-use future planning. In the overall project emphasis should be laid on production of protein-rich foods, fish farming, dairy farming and environmental sanitation.

**Number of Experts:** one WHO medical officer, and two FAO experts.
Collaboration with other agencies: this project would during 1960/1961 be assisted by WHO, FAO and UNICEF. Subsequent to a request made by the Basutoland Government to FAO for technical assistance in the field of agriculture, a FAO/WHO/UNICEF team visited the country. The members of this team considered that this project had reached the stage to go on to practical control, and that a combined attack on the nutritional problems of Basutoland should be envisaged. It was clear then that a WHO officer very well qualified in nutrition would be essential and that the project be extended. The above information was expanded and included in a draft plan which was discussed with the UK Resident Commissioner in Basutoland and others. UNICEF have been approached, with a view to the Government receiving assistance inter alia in the form of iodisation units for salt consumed in Basutoland, following the results of investigations made by the WHO Medical Officer regarding the goitre incidence. In addition the public Health and Community Development Programme so urgently needed in Basutoland has prompted the Government to request five fellowships. Moreover, this project has acted as a real catalyst and Basutoland have now requested WHO/UNICEF assistance in the broader field of rural health, MCH, and training of medical personnel.

2. Gambia

Nutrition Programme and Long Range School Feeding

Nature of the Project: the plan of this project entails the joint participation of UNICEF, FAO and WHO, and also, envisages carrying out the UN expert recommendations in connection with an agricultural development plan. In addition to providing foods to compensate for vitamin deficiencies in the locally produced rice, the plan of the project also evokes the impact which such a project should have on community development as a whole. The plan also shows that a variety of officials having to do with the community will have to play their part in the project.

Duration of project: arrival of the first year’s supply of skim milk powder from UNICEF took place in September 1955. The project started in 1955 and is projected at present through 1961, but it is foreseen, because of the importance of these activities, that the project will continue for several years after.

Number of experts: one nutritionist, one assistant nutritionist and one dietitian will be in the field in early 1960, it is hoped, in accordance with the request for extension of this project by provision of a WHO team.

Collaboration with other agencies: UNICEF, FAO and WHO.
3. Kenya:

Maternal and Child Health:

Nutrition:

Health Education of the Public:

Nature of projects: these projects are covered by a common Plan of Operations which provides for:

1. extension of Maternal and Child Health Services and the training of health auxiliaries;
2. nutrition survey for the purpose of collecting data for instruction of local candidates in the proper techniques of food improvement in relation to malnourished children;
3. promotion of Health Education;
4. assistance to government health services to nomadic tribes.

A proposal to include an environmental sanitation aspect to this project is under consideration.

Number of experts: the plan involves the provision by WHO of the following staff:

- one Medical Nutritionist (from 1959)
- one Assistant Nutritionist (from 1959)
- one Dietitian (from 1959)
- one Short-term Consultant in Health Education (4 months in 1959)

WHO will also provide equipment and supplies for nutritional aspects of this project. One fellowship each in child health and nutrition is provided for in 1959.

Collaboration with other agencies: WHO and UNICEF

4. Nigeria

4.1 Rural Health Services, Eastern Region

Nature of project: to assist in the integrated plan for rural health services, with emphasis on maternal and child health. The site chosen for this project is in proximity to one of the main community development centres in Eastern Nigeria.

Duration of project: this project has been in operation since 1957. WHO assistance will continue through 1960.
Number of experts: four experts - one public health administrator, one
maternal and child health specialist, one health visitor tutor and one health
inspector tutor. In 1960 a medical officer for the training of medical aux-
iliaries will join the team.

Collaboration with other agencies: the project is assisted by UNICEF and
WHO. Assistance from UNICEF is in the form of supplies such as training equip-
ment, equipment for health centres, skin milk powder and transport vehicles.

4.2 Rural and Urban Health Services, Western Region  Nigeria 21

Nature of project: WHO will assist in a scheme to consolidate rural
health services and to train Nigerian staff for urban health services in West-
ern Nigeria.

Number of experts: Rural Health Services team and Urban Health Services
team, each composed of three experts, one public health adviser, one public
health nurse and one sanitarian.

Duration of project: three years, from 1961.

5. Seychelles

Public Health and Sanitation: Seychelles 1

Nature of project: the work of the team which advised on public health,
and environmental sanitation was completed in 1957. The sanitary engineer's
services have been retained to help with a project for the construction of
aqu privies and to advise on the improvement of water supplies.

Number of experts: one sanitary engineer

Duration of project: expected to continue through 1960.

II PROJECTS ADMINISTERED BY THE REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

1. Ethiopia

Public Health College and Training Centre, Gondar Ethiopia 9

Nature of project: this project started in 1954 in collaboration with
the United States International Cooperation Administration and UNICEF. It
has as its main objective the training of three categories of auxiliary public
health personnel to staff the static and mobile health units established by
the Government. These categories are:
(a) Health Assistants - three-year course  
(b) Community Nurses - two-year course  
(c) Sanitarians - one-year course  

Number of experts: the WHO team consists of an epidemiologist, a sanitary engineer, a medical officer and a public health nurse.  

Collaboration with other agencies: UNICEF provides the required equipment and supplies.  

2. Sudan  

Rural Health Demonstration Area  

Nature of project: this project commences in 1963 and has as its aim the development of rural health services in the Menagil Extension to the Gezira Irrigated Area. It will form part of a community development scheme aimed at providing services to the population within the new extension to the irrigated area. It is still in the planning stage, but other agencies are expected to assist.  

Duration of project: at least two years.  

Number of experts: one public health advisor, one sanitary engineer, one statistician and one public health nurse-midwife.  

3. Tunisia  

Maternal and Child Health Demonstration and Training Centre  

Nature of project: a demonstration and training centre has been established during 1959 to assist the Government in expanding its maternal and child health services throughout the country and in training professional and auxiliary personnel.  

In 1963 the WHO team will include a senior medical officer, a public health nurse and a nurse-midwife.  

4. United Arab Republic  

Province of Egypt  

4.1 Health Demonstration Area, Qalyub  

Nature of project: this project was designed to assist the Government to
co-ordinate the work of the various ministries concerned with the health of the people. It provides all types of services in a co-ordinated scheme of "combined units" from which services in health, social welfare, education and agriculture are rendered to a population of about 22,000 in the area. WHO assistance to this project started in 1953. Since 1958 WHO participation has been limited to providing advice and rendering assistance in specialized activities.

Collaboration with other agencies: the project has been assisted by FAO, ICA, WHO.

Province of Syria

4.2 Rural Health Demonstration and Training Centre: Syria 16

Nature of project: to help the Government to provide health services in the populated rural area near Damascus. To render any assistance and guidance required by other rural health centres which the Government plans to set up in similar areas. Close collaboration will be established with the services of other ministries, namely, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Economic and Social Affairs, during both the planning and operational phases of the project through a special committee which will include appointed members from these ministries and from the Ministry of Health and which will be formed at the Mahya and/or at the Qada level to deal with the questions of common interest and decide on the best ways of promoting community development in the area of the project.

Number of experts: at present two experts are in the field, namely, one public health administrator and one public health nurse. In 1959 a sanitarian will join the team.

Duration of project: the project started in 1958 and is planned to continue for five years.

Collaboration with other agencies: the project is at present assisted by WHO only, but it is a potential area for participation of other agencies in the field of community development.

5. Inter-Country Programme:

Arab States Fundamental Education Centre, Sirtel-Layyân: EMRO 7

Nature of project: WHO's assistance to this project started in 1954. The Organization provides $5,000 for the services of the national staff who
assist the public health administrator working with the project. WHO undertakes the training of students in the public health aspects of the programme.

**Number of experts:** at present there is one WHO expert whose services will continue through 1960. (Public Health Advisor).

**Collaboration with other agencies:** the project is assisted by the UN Bureau of Social Affairs, UNESCO, ILO, FAO as well as by WHO.

**III PROJECTS ADMINISTERED BY THE REGIONAL OFFICE FOR EUROPE**

**1. Morocco:** a WHO representative has recently been assigned to Morocco. He will assist the Government in the planning of activities related to community development in the country.