

REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR AFRICA

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fiftieth session

Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, 28 August - 2 September 2000

RESOLUTION

**PROMOTING THE ROLE OF TRADITIONAL MEDICINE IN HEALTH SYSTEMS:
A STRATEGY FOR THE AFRICAN REGION**

The Regional Committee,

Recalling World Health Assembly resolutions WHA30.49, WHA31.33, WHA41.19, WHA42.43, WHA44.33, and WHA44.34 on the potential medical and economic value of medicinal plants, health human resources development and research on traditional medicine;

Recalling Regional Committee resolutions AFR/RC36/R9, AFR/R34/R8, AFR/RC40/R8, and AFR/RC49/R5 on the use of traditional medicines, legislation governing the practice of traditional medicine, promotion of traditional medicine, development of the traditional medicine system and its role in health systems in Africa and research on medicinal plants;

Aware of the fact that about 80% of the population living in the African Region depend on traditional medicine for their health care needs;

Recognizing the importance and potential of traditional medicine for the achievement of health for all in the African Region and that development of local production of traditional medicines should be accelerated in order to improve access;

Noting that some countries in the Region have established national bodies for the management of activities in traditional medicine, formulated national policies on traditional medicine, enacted legislations and codes of ethics and conduct for the practice of traditional medicine, and created associations of traditional health practitioners;

Further noting that research on traditional medicine is being carried out in some countries in the Region and that aspects of traditional medicine have been incorporated into the curricula of some training institutions;

- 1 APPROVES the report of the Regional Director on Promoting the Role of Traditional Medicine in Health Systems: Strategy for the African Region;
2. URGES Member States:
 - (i) to translate the regional strategy into realistic national policies on traditional medicine followed by appropriate legislation and plans for specific interventions at national and local levels and to actively collaborate with all partners in the implementation and evaluation of the regional strategy;

- (ii) to consider the development of mechanisms and establishment of institutions for enhancing the positive aspects of traditional medicine into health systems in order to improve collaboration between conventional and traditional health practitioners;
- (iii) to produce inventories of effective practices as well as evidence on safety, efficacy and quality of traditional medicines and undertake relevant research;
- (iv) to actively promote, in collaboration with all other partners, the conservation of medicinal plants, the development of local production of traditional medicines and the protection of intellectual property rights and indigenous knowledge in the field of traditional medicine;
- (v) to establish a multidisciplinary and multisectoral mechanism to support the development and implementation of policies, strategies and plans;
- (vi) to foster strong regional and sub-regional collaboration in information exchange;

3. REQUESTS the Regional Director:

- (i) to advocate for support from stakeholders for the creation of an enabling environment for traditional medicine and to facilitate the mobilisation of additional resources to assist countries in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this strategy;
- (ii) to propose to Member States the institution of an African Traditional Medicine Day for advocacy;
- (iii) to develop guidelines for the formulation and evaluation of national policies on traditional medicine, advise countries regarding the relevant legislation for the practice of traditional medicine and the documentation of practices and medicines of proven safety, efficacy and quality and facilitate the exchange and utilization of this information by the countries;
- (iv) to advocate for development of mechanisms for improving the economic and regulatory environments for local production of traditional medicines and nurturing of medicinal plants, strengthen WHO collaborating centres and other research institutions to carry out research, development of monographs of medicinal plants and disseminate results on safety and efficacy of traditional medicines;
- (v) to establish a regional mechanism to support Member States to effectively monitor and evaluate the progress made in the implementation of the *Regional Strategy on Promoting the Role of Traditional Medicine in Health Systems*;
- (vi) to submit to the fifty-second session of the Regional Committee a report on progress made and challenges encountered in the implementation of the *Regional Strategy on Promoting the Role of Traditional Medicine in Health Systems*.

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