

WORLD HEALTH
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Agenda item 5

DIRECTORY OF RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS IN THE EM REGION

In the document "Establishment and Updating of a Directory of Institutions engaged in Biomedical Research in EMR" (document EM/4TH.MTG.ACMR/10) prepared for the Fourth Meeting of the EMACMR held in Tunis in 1979, the stages through which the development of the Directory had passed were explained in detail. In a nutshell, the Directory was made to include at least all schools of medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, public health and the university-level nursing institutions, together with other institutions that were proposed by the Governments, by Members of the Committee, or by other responding institutions. It was also mentioned that a sizeable number of responses were received from Governments/institutions following distribution of the Directory prepared earlier, and that the rate of responses to the questionnaire sent to institutions was higher for the countries with WHO Programme Co-ordinators than otherwise, indicating the effectiveness of serious follow-up at the country level in securing responses.

The Committee recommended to bring out an updated version of the Directory every three years.

A change in the structure of the Directory is proposed owing to new developments, viz., the Fifth Edition of the World Directory of Medical Schools was brought out by WHO in 1979, and the Regional Office issued its Directory of Education and Training Programmes of Health Personnel. This implies that another listing of all schools of medicine, etc., in the Directory of Research Institutions is unnecessary. Besides, it was noticed that many schools did not show in their responses any indication of specific research other than what might be done to meet the requirements of medical education. Responses were still not received from a large number of the institutions listed in the Directory. As was mentioned earlier, it is likely that many of these non-responses may be due

to the fact that the name of the institution has changed, or the address has changed, or the institution itself no more exists.

This year, a Directory of Selected Institutions Actively Engaged in Biomedical Research has been prepared. It is based on the previous basic Directory, but with some modifications, in the sense of being brief, and stresses identification of the institution itself and its research activities, particularly for the institutions with recognized relationship with WHO.

It should be reiterated here that the value of the Directory depends upon the information therein, and that, in turn, can be improved a great deal by assistance from member Governments as well as Committee Members and WHO Programme Coordinators, particularly from two points of view:

- (a) Coverage of institutions: the existence of a central body in the Government through which all institutions engaged in Biomedical Research can be identified would definitely improve the coverage of the Directory.
- (b) The quality of the information included in the Directory is as good as the quality of responses received from the Institutions, the more detailed and the more specific information the better.