

**WORLD HEALTH
ORGANIZATION**



**ORGANISATION MONDIALE
DE LA SANTÉ**

EM ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON
BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH
Fifth Meeting

Nicosia, 10-12 September 1980

EM/5TH MTG.ACMR/8
EM/CONS RSR.MNGT/4

9 September 1980

Agenda item 7

REPORT OF THE
CONSULTATION ON RESEARCH MANAGEMENT

Nicosia, 8-9 September 1980

I OPENING OF THE MEETING

A Consultation on Research Management was convened by WHO/EMRO at Nicosia, 8-9 September 1980. The list of Participants is given in Annex I.

Dr M O Shoib, Director Programme Management, WHO/EMRO, welcomed the participants on behalf of Dr A.H. Taba, Director, WHO/EMR. He pointed out that one of the major constraints in the building up of capabilities for research in the countries of the Region was the lack of national expertise in managing medical research programmes and/or research centres, and ensuring effective utilization of resources available for medical research in consonance with stated research policy. Therefore, EMRO was considering to sponsor a Regional Workshop on Research Management, following which the participants would then plan and organize National Workshops on this topic. Some preliminary thinking on this subject has been summarized in a Discussion Paper. Before submitting it to the forthcoming meeting of the EM/ACMR, it was felt that this paper should be reviewed by a group of experts and, hence, the Consultation had been convened. Dr Shoib was confident that the recommendation of this Consultation would be instrumental in developing a programme on Research Management in the Region.

II. ELECTION OF OFFICER

Dr M. Abdussalam was elected as Moderator for the Consultation.

III ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The Provisional Agenda was adopted with minor modifications.
(Annex II)

IV ISSUES AND PROBLEMS IN MANAGING MEDICAL RESEARCH IN COUNTRIES OF THE EM REGION

The group felt that even though the infrastructure for medical research was not uniformly developed throughout the Region, the potential for research existed in all the Member Countries. It was agreed that in view of the commitment of the Member Countries to achieve the goal of "Health for All by the Year 2000", the management of research related to the achievement of this goal should be an important component of the Regional Programme in Research Management.

Based on the information provided by some of the participants on the issues involved in managing medical research in their countries, the following were considered as the main problems in managing medical research:

1. Medical Research within EMR countries, is generally not yet perceived as a vehicle for solving health and health-related problems.
2. The prevailing systems of education and methods of teaching do not generally emphasize problem-solving. This factor, to a large extent, hinders the development of interest in research in the students from the very beginning of their educational careers.
3. Shortage of manpower for medical research. Due to financial disparities in salaries and incentives, there is both internal and external "brain drain".

4. Even where an adequate research career structure exists, it is often not possible to attract medical research workers, since the institutional environment is often not conducive to productive work and also important facilities, necessary for the execution of research, e g equipment, libraries, etc. are missing or are inadequate.

5 Long-term and stable financial support for medical research is lacking. During periods of financial stringency, arbitrary cuts are often made in research budgets, thus diverting funds to more immediate goals.

6. Prevailing bureaucratic regulations and administrative procedures are often not conducive to managing medical research activities.

7 Plans submitted to the Governments for the development and financing of medical research activities, are often of poor quality, and thus stand a poor chance of being financed.

8 The decision-makers in the Government, specially in the Ministries of Finance, lacking an understanding of the contribution of research to health development, tend to award a low priority to medical research, and are not able to decide what is important and relevant to national needs

9. Under bilateral arrangements, research is often sponsored which is not of a sufficiently high priority for the country, and in which national scientists have no part in planning

10 Absent or poorly enunciated research priorities which have no or only marginal relevance to national research problems

11. The research infrastructure being developed or in existence is often an unrealistic imitation of models in the developed countries.

12. Co-ordination amongst national agencies dealing with research,

is non-existent or very weak

13 Effective links between the providers and the consumers of medical research, i.e. Research Departments and Health Ministries, and also between researchers and planners are generally weak or missing

14 The research carried out is hardly ever in response to the expressed needs of the health system, and is not subjected to proper evaluation, specially with regard to its eventual utilization

15 Information needs of the research workers, including that on ongoing research, within the country and in the adjoining countries, are not met, and the means for dissemination of results of research are inadequate.

16. Although biomedical research is an excellent subject for technical cooperation among developing countries, such cooperation is practically non-existent.

V POSSIBLE MEANS FOR IMPROVING RESEARCH MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN THE COUNTRIES OF THE EM REGION

The group appreciated the immense problems involved in managing medical research in countries of the Region, and realized that substantial WHO inputs over a prolonged period of time will be required to help countries to overcome most of them. However, initiation of a training programme in research management, perceived as an integral part of the Organization's overall attempts at strengthening national capabilities for research, would appear to be a step in the right direction

The Secretariat's proposal for a Regional Workshop in Research Management, as an initial step, was strongly endorsed. Furthermore,

it was recommended that the national participants should be encouraged and supported to conduct similar Workshops, with a view to developing a critical mass of scientists well-versed in research management, in their respective countries. The Medical Research Councils or analogous bodies should be the focal point for this activity.

VI COMPONENTS OF A TRAINING PROGRAMME IN RESEARCH MANAGEMENT

It was recommended that the main purpose of a training programme in research management will be to formulate systematic approaches which would be adapted to the nature of managerial tasks required in the field of medical research. Such approaches have to take into account the following four major functions:

- a.) Research Promotion and Development, which deals 'inter alia' with policies and strategies.
- b) Research Implementation, which deals with all factors concerned with implementation, such as research workers, facilities, logistics, etc.
- c.) Research Monitoring, where information and methodology play a predominant role, and
- d) Research Evaluation, perhaps the most difficult of all functions, where not only relevant techniques must be brought to bear, but also where experience and judgement must be used in the most judicious way.

In view of these functions, the training programme would comprise a number of discrete components, which may conveniently be structured as follows:

- 1 Relationship between medical research and national development and the impact of development on research
 - 1 1 Appreciation of the role and contribution of medical research to the development of comprehensive health services in the overall context of socio-economic development
 - 1 2 Expectation from and attitudes towards medical research emphasizing the educational effect of research in up-grading the quality of health personnel at various levels
- 2 Problems related to research policy
 - 2 1 Procedures for formulation of national research policy
 - 2 2 Defining broad research themes for the solution of prevailing and expected health problems
 - 2 3 Ranking priorities in the defined research themes
 - 2 4 Determination and organization of individual and cluster of research projects as components of a research programme with defined goals
 - 2 5 Coordination between various national policy-making bodies and research organizations/institutions
- 3 Assessment and development of research potential in the country for undertaking the identified research
 - 3 1 Manpower resources, training, emphasizing the use of team approach in research
 - 3 2 Physical resources, such as equipment and supplies
 - 3.3 Economic resources, recruitment and promotion procedures, incentives
- 4 Generation, formulation, execution and evaluation of research projects

Establishment of systems for.

- 4.1 Generation and appraisal of new research proposals and their modification
- 4 2 Monitoring and evaluating of on-going research activities
- 5 Mechanisms for the exchange and application of research information
 - 5.1 Systems for acquisition, processing, utilization and dissemination of research information
 - 5 2 Systems for the effective application of research information and research findings.
- 6 Introduction to select management techniques, e.g network analysis, programme planning and budgeting, delphi, and their application in managing medical research

VII PLANS FOR REGIONAL WORKSHOP IN RESEARCH MANAGEMENT

A Objectives

At the end of the Workshop the participants will

- (1) appreciate the scientific approach to the management of medical research and be committed to promote and implement this in their own countries,
- (2) have acquired relevant up-to-date knowledge of the elements of research management and be able to apply and disseminate this knowledge in their own work,
- (3) have developed appropriate criteria for the assessment of research management practices in their own institutions or countries,
- (4) have acquired the ability to organize and conduct national Workshops on research management.

B Criteria for selection of participants

1. Nominations for participants in this activity should be invited from those countries in the Region, which have an existing infrastructure for medical research, i.e. Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Pakistan and Sudan

2 Three participants from each country, who, on return, can work together to organize national courses

3 The participants should preferably be holding one of the following positions in their own countries

(a) Chief or Deputy Chief Executive Officer of the National Medical Research Council or analogous body.

(b) The principal scientist in charge of research in a medical institution, where the students have to carry out a research project, as a part of their training

(c) Directors (or their Deputies) from institutions, such as Public Health Laboratories, Research Institutes, specialized teaching hospitals and institutions, with an active research programme, relevant to health

(d) A Senior Health Planner with responsibility for medical research

C The format and learning methods to be employed

The Workshop will be residential and will last for 10 working days (7 hours a day) and tentatively be held sometimes during the middle of 1981

The format shall consist of:

- introduction of topics in plenary
- question - answer sessions

- small group individual work
- plenary discussions.

During the Workshop, participants should be given an opportunity to work on 3-4 case studies - each illustrating a major topic related to Research Management

The participants from each country should work together during some of the work sessions, for preparing plans on some topics of Research Management, for implementation on their return

Each national group of participants will be required to prepare, according to a given format, a situation analysis of the prevailing research infrastructure and the problems encountered in managing medical research in their respective countries.

A paper summarizing these country reports will be prepared by the Secretariat for presentation and discussion on the first day of the Regional Workshop

D Proposed outline of the programme including the topics to be covered
Day 1 and 2

- Registration
- Opening Session
- Address by the Director, WHO/EMR
- Role of research in Health Development
- Problems and issues in Research Management
 - a) General situation in countries
 - Summary Report
 - b) Highlights of country problems
 - by country groups
- Pre-course evaluation
 - Expectation of participants

Day 3

Plenary Session

- Research policy, strategy and planning, including research needs and priorities

Group discussion (individual country groups)

on national issues relating to above

Day 4 and 5

Plenary

Functions of a Research Manager

- Research promotion and development, including economic aspects
- Implementation
- Monitoring
- Evaluation
- Management techniques, principles and practices

Discussion

Group discussions (groups A. B. C.)

Day 6

Plenary

Formulation and management of research programmes

Discussion

Day 7

Appraisal of new projects, monitoring and evaluation of on-going research.

Day 8

- Assessment and development of "research infrastructure" (potential) in a country
- Discussion on components of research potential (infrastructure) and how to go about developing them

- Case study with emphasis on research manpower planning
- Participants formulate criteria to assess improvement in their performance as research managers, 6/12 months after the Workshop

Day 9

Plenary

Development of an outline of programme for National Workshop

Group discussion

Re-distribute groups, e g. by discipline.

Day 10

- Discussion on application/utilization of research findings
- Means for achieving effective technical collaboration with International Research Organizations, and with appropriate research organizations in adjoining countries
- Evaluation of Workshop.

E Faculty

The group recommended that faculty for the Regional Workshop include 3-4 persons with the following professional background:

- Experience in directing a Medical Research Council in a developing country
- System's Analyst with experience in teaching the use of management skills
- An Educational Technologist preferably with experience in medical research and/or medical education

In addition to the faculty the Chairmen of the Global and Regional ACMRs should also be invited to serve as faculty for at least part of the Workshop.

CONSULTATION ON RESEARCH MANAGEMENT

Nicosia, 8-9 September 1980

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Dr M. Abdussalam
Director
International and Scientific Cooperation
Institute of Veterinary Medicine
(Robert von Ostertag Institut)
Berlin
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

Professor S. Bergstrom
Chairman of the Global ACMR
Karolinska Institute
Stockholm
SWEDEN

Dr A.M. El Hassan
Director
Institute of Tropical Medicine
Medical Research Council
Khartoum
SUDAN

Dr W.A. Hassouna
Head
Social and Cultural Planning Centre
Institute of National Planning
Cairo
EGYPT

Dr Mohsen Zia
Professor of Paediatrics
Rochester Medical School
Rochester
USA

WHO SECRETARIAT

Dr M.O. Shoib	Director, Programme Management	WHO Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office, Alexandria
Dr A. Robertson	Director, Health Manpower Development	WHO Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office, Alexandria

Dr J. Hashmi	Regional Adviser, Research Promotion and Development, Secretary of the Consultation	WHO Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office, Alexandria
Dr B Mansourian	Medical Officer, Research Promotion and Development	WHO Geneva
Dr B A Jayaweera	Regional Adviser, Research Promotion and Development	WHO Regional Office for South- East Asia, New Delhi

Conference services

Mrs C Cartoudis-Demetrio	Conference Officer	WHO Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office, Alexandria
Mes C Putnoky	Secretary	WHO Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office, Alexandria

CONSULTATION ON RESEARCH MANAGEMENT

Nicosia, 8-9 September 1980

AGENDA

- 1 Opening of the Consultation
- 2 Election of Officers
- 3 Adoption of Agenda and working procedure
- 4 Issues and problems in managing Medical Research in countries of the EM Region
- 5 Possible means for improving Research Management practices in countries of the EM Region
- 6 Components of a training programme in Research Management
- 7 Plans for Regional Workshop in Research Management
 - a) Objectives
 - b) Criteria for selection of participants
 - c) Format and learning methods to be employed
 - d) Formulation of outline of the programme, including topics to be covered
 - e) Faculty
- 8 Preparation of the Summary Report
Conclusions and Recommendations