



SEMINAR ON SMALLPOX ERADICATION  
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OBJECTIVES OF THE SEMINAR

by

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endemic foci, the danger of reintroduction and possibility of re-establishment exist.

The smallpox-free stage has been achieved in those countries with many sacrifices and elaborate efforts, by spending money and energy and using man-power. It would be a pity to lose this status easily when it could be maintained permanently.

In the struggle against smallpox, all the smallpox-free countries are doing their best. Vaccines of different potency, whatever available, are used. A variety of techniques and tools are being employed. Surveillance activities of various severity are in practice; all for the sake of reaching an acceptable immunity level, and case detection, in order to prevent reintroduction.

Now times have changed and our outlook on the problem has been greatly modified. Though the concepts of epidemiology remain as they were ten years ago, methods and techniques have progressed tremendously.

The objectives of this Seminar are to examine values and familiarize ourselves with these new approaches in the field. We shall give an account of the present situation of smallpox in the world as well as in the Eastern Mediterranean Region, to review the new concepts in epidemiology of smallpox, to describe the technical points related to vaccination practice; to introduce new tools and techniques for a more effective vaccination; to discuss the importance and mechanism of surveillance and containment measures necessary to stop an epidemic; to present methodology of assessment of the immunity level in a given community.

In this Seminar, it is not intended to discuss the operational methodology of mass campaigns; we do not propose to examine in detail the steps of vaccine production or laboratory and clinical diagnosis

of smallpox, which are highly technical specialities which should be best left in the hands of highly qualified technicians in these fields, but only to touch briefly the above subjects for as far as they can be of use to the spirit of the Seminar.

Smallpox is no longer a one country's problem, but rather a regional one, which should be dealt with at the Regional level, as a part of the global programme for eradication. Regional coordination of activities will get enough emphasis in this Seminar, as without proper coordination, rapid exchange of information between neighbouring countries, prompt reporting and recording of cases, harmonized vaccination activities in border areas, achievement of our goal would not be possible.

I shall call this Seminar successful if we are able in the course of discussions to get a new answer to our old problem " How to maintain a smallpox-free status in countries where eradication has already been achieved, or which are to become smallpox-free in the near future".