

September 1985

WHO
FOR ENVIRONMENTAL
HEALTH ACTIVITIES
CEHA DOC UNIT

National Seminar
on

Drinking Water Quality

Amman, Jordan

17-19 September, 1985

By

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CEHA DOC. UNIT

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	H.E Minister of Health
	Mr S Bishara, WHO

Note A complete set of papers is available on request from EMRO,
Alexandria, Egypt

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 A national seminar on Drinking Water Quality was held at the Department of Primary Health Care, Ministry of Health, Amman, Jordan from 17 to 19 September 1985. The purpose of the seminar was to introduce the WHO Guidelines for Drinking Water Quality and to acquaint Jordanian sector authorities with the new approach adopted in its formulation.
- 1.2 The subject of drinking water standards and the measures necessary to protect water sources used for potable supplies has been the cause of much debate in Jordan. In addition, the wide spread use of bottled waters led to discussions as to the adequacy of current standards. The holding of the seminar was seen then as both timely and a useful mechanism by which to draw together the views of different sector agencies.
- 1.3 The seminar was supported by the Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office (EMRO) of WHO and organised by the EMRO Centre for Environmental Health Activities (CEHA) which is based in Jordan. Mr. W.H. Lewis from Coventry and Dr B. Commins from Maidenhead, both in the United Kingdom, were appointed as short term consultants to prepare and present papers and Mr. P F Hillman, who was based in CEHA, was asked to assist with the organization of the seminar

- 1.4 The National Seminar on Drinking Water Quality was opened by H.E. Minister of Health.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by a large number of representatives from different Government Ministries, various Departmental Representatives of both the Yarmouk and Jordan Universities and also International Agencies.

Dr S. Qubain, the Director of Primary Health Care Department, Ministry of Health, introduced the theme of the Seminar and was followed by Mr. Shawky Bishara (CEHA) who described the objectives and aims of the WHO Guidelines for Drinking Water Quality, especially in relation to the International Drinking-Water Supply and Sanitation Decade.

H.E. Minister of Health in his welcoming address explained the role of the Jordanian Ministry of Health in ensuring the quality of drinking water supplied to the Jordanian people. H.E. in highlighting some of the problems of drinking water stressed that the Seminar should also discuss the quality of bottled drinking water, now on sale to the public, in Jordan.

- 1.5 The Seminar was attended by 23 senior staff from 11 sector agencies and government departments. In addition, there were 4 observers. (see Annex 1)

1.6 The Seminar received considerable media coverage both on television (the opening ceremony) and in the press. Texts of the opening addresses are given in Annex 3.

2. PROGRAMME

2.1 The programme was arranged to promote discussion and encourage exchange of views. Each presentation was followed by a period for clarification, and special panel discussion sessions were held for more open wide ranging debate. This format proved particularly good. The detailed programme is given in Annex 2.

2.2 Mr Lewis, presented a paper which dealt with the general philosophy underlying the compilation of the WHO Guidelines for Drinking-Water Quality. The presentation described the procedure adopted by WHO when compiling the previous water quality standards. The usefulness of previous drinking-water quality standards was highlighted but detailed reference was made to the numerous verbal and written comments and criticisms which, in total apparently limited the international application of such standards throughout the world

The new Guidelines philosophy was explained, emphasising that the recommended Guideline values are based on health-related considerations, cogniscence being taken of the levels of contaminants in the environment in allocating particular values to water. It was particularly stressed that the numerical

values given should not be abstracted and used as maximum admissible concentrations for water quality. Guideline values are not meant to be standards, each country must choose its own water quality data using the Guideline documents as basic health criteria. A Guideline value when exceeded is meant to be a signal to investigate the cause for such excess, to take remedial action to reduce the excess and to seek advice from persons responsible for public health.

2.3 The second day featured presentation from Mr. Dajani, Head of Department of Sanitary Engineering Ministry of Health, Mr. Omar and Mr. Al-Katib, both of the Water Authority of Jordan. These set the scene of current water supplies in Jordan, highlighted the administrative as well as technical difficulties faced by MOH and WAJ, and posed a number of questions with regard to the problems faced in meeting demand and water quality objectives up to the year 2000.

2.4 In his presentation on the final day, Mr. Lewis briefly outlined the innovative layout of Volume III of the WHO Guidelines and the value of this approach in addressing the problems of water supplies for small communities in the developing world.

2.5 Due to illness, Dr. Commins was unable to attend and Mr. Hillman presented his paper, choosing to highlight the vital importance of surveillance programmes in relation to water quality objectives. In particular, the design of surveillance

methods must take into account factors such as the appropriate frequency and extent of monitoring, the best use of available resources (manpower and facilities), and the need for training to all levels of personnel. A clear career structure needs to be developed within sector agencies which adequately recognises the importance of surveillance work.

2 6 The discussion periods and panel sessions led to open and frank debate on many issues related to water supplies and the establishment and maintenance of water quality objectives. The following topics were discussed at length;

- 1) Bottled drinking water, standards of quality and associated quality problems.
- ii) The use of surface water as source of water supply and the influence of quality on the final product.
- iii) Water resources and water supply systems in Jordan.
- iv) The role of all sections in water quality control.
- v) Surveillance procedures and responsible authorities, division of responsibility and problems.
- vi) The availability of suitable laboratory equipment to ensure integrity of water quality in Jordan.

- vii) The use and abuse of roof tanks to store water, the problems arising from their use and the need to abolish their future use.
- viii) Problems of virus contamination of water supply in Jordan especially the hazard to source water due to imported labour.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The exchange of views and impetus given to the subject of water supply quality in Jordan led the participants to make the following recommendation:

A small Committee of all interested parties within Jordan be convened for the purpose of discussing and making appropriate recommendations, if possible on all matters concerning Drinking-Water Quality including, availability and quality of resource water, operations, monitoring and surveillance as raised and debated by various members during the various discussion periods of the Seminar.

- 3.2 Further support would be worthwhile in the area of training, particularly in the surveillance of water supplies and the use of the simple techniques proposed in Volume III of WHO Guidelines.

NOMINATED PARTICIPANTS FOR SEMINAR

Water Authority Jordan

1. Engineer Abedel-Hameed Al-Khatib
2. Engineer Abdel-Rahman Omari

Ministry of Planning

1. Engineer Miss Muna Johari
2. Biologist Mrs Fardoos Shahbaz Adel

Royal Scientific Society

1. Engineer Subhi Abdulmajeed Ramadan
2. Dr Ismail Al-Baz

Jordan Valley Authority

1. Engineer Ziad Marji

University of Jordan

1. Dr. Ihsan Shofi, Civil Engineering Department
2. Dr. Fuad Hashwa
3. Dr. Kamel Qaisi
4. Dr. Mohammad Yacoub Khawaj

UNRWA

1. Mr. Mahmoud Abdullah
2. Miss Salam Kana'an

Amman Municipality

1. Dr. Ragheb Kamal
2. Dr. Zouhair Haddadeen

Names of Participants (Cont)

Ministry of Health

- a) Department of Primary Health Care
- 1 Dr. Suleiman Qubain
 2. Dr. Abdulrahim Jalal
- b) Laboratories of Ministry of Health.
1. Mr. Faisal Al-Soub

Ministry of Munciple and Rural Affairs

1. Engineer Lutfi S Theodosi

Yarmouk University

- 1 Mr. Mohammad Za'tar
2. Dr. Sa'eb Al-Sukoun

Trade and Industry - Standards and Specification

1. Mrs. Sawsan Beirouti
- 2 Engineer Mohammad Nazal

Observers

1. Mr. Billal Tall
2. Mr Khalil Dabbas
3. Mr. R Krafft
4. Mr. D. H. Kukuk

National Focal Point

1. Mr. Mohammad Dajani
2. Mr. Mazen Khalil (Assistant ,Repateur)

Administrative Officer

Mr. Mohammad Bakeer

Arabic Typist

Amah Imam

Messenger

Mr. Salem Khatimeh

Wednesday 18 September 1985

- 9 00 - 9.45 Drinking Water Quality Control in Jordan
(Mr. Mohammed Dajani, MOH)
- 9 45 - 10.30 Administration of Water Resources in Jordan
(Eng. Abed Al-Rahman Al-Omar, WAJ).
- 10 30 - 11.00 Coffee
- 11:00 - 11 45 Drinking Water Quality Control in Jordan with stress,
on Chemical Quality.
(Eng. Abed Al-Hamid Al-Khatib, WAJ).
- 11 45 - 12 30 Drinking Water Control in Jordan.
Pannel Discussion MOH, WAJ, Planning, WHO
- 12 30 - 14.00 Lunch
- 14:00 - 15 00 Open Discussion on Drinking Water Control in
Jordan.

Thursday 19 September, 1985

9 00	-	10.30	Drinking Water Quality Surveillance (Manpower and Facilities and their influence on Drinking Water Quality Control). (Dr. Cummins, WHO). (Amended and presented by Mr. Hillman).
10.30	-	11.00	Coffee
11.00	-	12.30	Resources, Legislation and Standards <u>Pannel Discussion</u> · MOH, WAJ, Planning, WHO.
12 30	-	14 00	Lunch
14.00	-	15.00	Plenary Discussion (Chaired by Mr. Dajani, MOH).
15.00	-	15.30	Closing Comments (Mr. Lewis, WHO)
			Closing Statement (Mr. Dajani, Ministry of Health)
15.30			Close

كما ذكرنا سابقا ان الهدف صعب التحقيق بوعدي في النهاه الى عدم
المحاوله للوصول اليه •

اسى ارحمنا وللذوه الحساح وارحمنا
الموفق في حدمه هذا التلسيد العرسر تحت رعايه ووجهه
صاحب الحلاله الملك الحسن المعظم وسكرا •