

directing council



PAN AMERICAN
SANITARY
ORGANIZATION

X Meeting

regional committee

WORLD
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION



IX Meeting

Washington, D. C.
September 1957

CD10/23 (Eng.)
22 August 1957
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Topic 34: ORGANIZATIONAL STUDY ON REGIONALIZATION, BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

The Director-General of WHO has requested that Resolution WHA10.35 adopted by the Tenth World Health Assembly on this topic, be brought to the attention of the Regional Committee, as follows:

"The Tenth World Health Assembly,

Having considered Resolution EB19.R59 of the Executive Board at its nineteenth session together with the report of the Director-General on the Organizational Study on Regionalization including the comments and observations of Regional Committees;

Concurring with the reasons given by the Executive Board at its nineteenth session, and

Having regard to the existence of differentiated areas within a single region in certain parts of the world,

1. DECIDES that the Study on Regionalization, as requested by the Ninth World Health Assembly, 1/ be deferred until the whole matter can be reconsidered by the Executive Board after the Eleventh World Health Assembly in the light of the Ten Years Report to be prepared as part of the Tenth Anniversary Celebration;
2. DECIDES that, if it is found necessary, each regional committee may meanwhile study for itself the delineation of areas having uniform geographical, sanitary or social characteristics within a single region, with a view to better utilization of the available resources; and
3. DECIDES that any such study shall be communicated to the Executive Board as a contribution to the organizational study concerned."

The subject of the regionalization study was submitted last year to the IX Meeting of the PASO Directing Council, as WHO Regional Committee for the Americas, pursuant to the decision of the Ninth World Health Assembly, which requested the Executive Board in 1958 to undertake a further study on regional organization and asked that all Regional Committees consider this topic at their 1956 meetings and submit their views for consideration by the Board.

The Directing Council considered the documentation presented by the Director, 1/ discussed the question of the regionalization study at its thirteenth and fourteenth plenary sessions, 2/ and adopted Resolution XXVIII, as follows:

"The Directing Council,

Recalling that the Sixth World Health Assembly in 1953 expressed its 'satisfaction with the development of the organizational structure and functioning of the regional offices';3/

Believing that the subsequent experience with the form of decentralization provided for in the Constitution of the World Health Organization has proved satisfactory;

Believing that the Agreement between the World Health Organization and the Pan American Sanitary Organization, whereby the Pan American Sanitary Conference, through the Directing Council, and the Pan American Sanitary Bureau serve respectively as the Regional Committee and the Regional Office of the World Health Organization for the Americas, continues to be adequate to ensure effective cooperation between the two organizations; and

Being of the opinion that improvements in the functioning of the regional offices can be achieved within the present framework of regional organizations as provided for in the World Health Organization Constitution and the existing Agreement,

RESOLVES:

1. To reaffirm the principle of regionalization.
2. To recommend that the existing pattern of regional organization, as provided for in the Constitution of the World Health Organization, be continued without modification.

1/Official Document No. 18, pp. 167-170

2/Ibid., pp. 103-105, 107

3/Resolution WHA6.44

3. To recommend that the Executive Board, in its study on regionalization, direct its attention to the day-to-day operation and administration of WHO programs, with a view to improving the functioning of both headquarters and regional offices, in order to increase the effectiveness of international health programs."

This resolution was transmitted to the Nineteenth Session of the WHO Executive Board, which after studying the WHO Director-General's progress report on the regionalization study and the comments of the Regional Committees, recommended that the study be deferred, a recommendation that was accepted by the Tenth World Health Assembly in Resolution WHA10.35, quoted above.

Attention is called particularly to paragraph 2 of that resolution, in which the Assembly, after deferring the regionalization study, suggested that "if it is found necessary, each Regional Committee study for itself the delineation of areas having uniform geographical, sanitary or social characteristics within a single region, with a view to better utilization of the available resources."

In this connection, it is fitting to point out that, in the Americas, experience has shown that the system of zone offices and field offices has provided an effective structure for carrying out the objectives of PASO/WHO within the Region. The activities of the Organization are decentralized through these offices, and the structure has afforded the opportunity to maintain with the health authorities of Member Governments the close relationships and consultation that are essential for the successful planning and implementation of well-balanced programs to meet the health needs and problems, at the national, interzone, and regional levels, in accordance with the resources available.

The active program of decentralization was undertaken by the Bureau in 1951, and by 1952 all zone offices had been established. The question of decentralization was the object of detailed study by the Committee on Economics and Decentralization, appointed by the Directing Council at its VI Meeting (1952); the report on the program of economics and decentralization 1/ was studied at the XIV Pan American Sanitary Conference (1954).2/ Since that time, the Director has informed the governing bodies of the continuing development of the zone and field office structure, through his annual reports and through the program and budget documents.

1/ Official Document No. 14, 602-610. (Proceedings, XIV Pan American Sanitary Conference).

2/ Ibid., pp. 257-260.