

**OFFICIAL RECORDS**  
**OF THE**  
**WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION**

**No. 51**



**THE WORK OF WHO**  
**1953**

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL**  
**TO THE**  
**WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY**  
**AND TO THE**  
**UNITED NATIONS**

**WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION**

**PALAIS DES NATIONS**

**GENEVA**

**March 1954**

prepared by the National Drug Company, Swiftwater, Pennsylvania, were approved by WHO for the issue of international certificates of vaccination or revaccination against yellow fever.

Campaigns against *Aedes aegypti* and other insect vectors of disease were carried out in Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama. At the same time WHO has continued to recommend systematic vaccination of populations exposed to the yellow-fever virus.

### Smallpox

The laboratory investigation of four dried smallpox vaccines to determine the rate of loss of potency has continued during the year. ~~The long series of tests was almost completed in 1953,~~ but final results will not be available until statistical analysis has been carried out. This investigation is preliminary to further laboratory experiments and to field trials on man. Work has continued on the field study on the use of gamma globulin in the seroprotection and serotherapy of smallpox, which is being undertaken by the Hooper Foundation of the University of California with the co-operation of the Director-General of Health of the Government of India and the health authorities of New Delhi and Madras. The results are promising, but more field work must be done before any definite conclusions are reached. The Organization has contributed to this work and is closely watching developments.

Regional committees, panel members and other experts were consulted on technical questions which might influence the conduct of a smallpox campaign such as was envisaged by the Sixth World Health Assembly.<sup>14</sup> The regional committees have also been consulted, in conformity with resolution WHA6.18, and a paper was prepared for submission to the Executive Board at its thirteenth session.

### Virus Hepatitis

The report of the first session of the Expert Committee on Hepatitis, held in 1952, was published during the year.<sup>15</sup> An investigation was started into the possibility of collecting infectious material from different parts of the world, in the hope of finding a strain of virus that could be studied in the laboratory.

<sup>14</sup> See resolution WHA6.18, *Off. Rec. Wld Hlth Org.* 48, 23.

<sup>15</sup> As *Wld Hlth Org. techn. Rep. Ser.* 1953, 62

### Typhus

A study of typhus in northern India was made with a view to planning control measures. Projects for controlling typhus were continued in Afghanistan and Peru.

### Trachoma

After the publication of the first report of the Expert Committee on Trachoma<sup>16</sup> (see Annual Report for 1952), an increased number of requests came in from governments for assistance in trachoma control. As a consequence, WHO consultants carried out a series of important surveys in Iran, Morocco (French Zone), Taiwan and Yugoslavia, and the consultant sent to Taiwan also made preliminary surveys in other countries of the Western Pacific Region: Brunei, Cambodia, Hong Kong, Malaya, North Borneo, the Philippines, Sarawak, Singapore and Viet Nam. Pilot control projects were started, in collaboration with UNICEF, whose Executive Board agreed, during 1953, to include measures against trachoma among UNICEF's activities. Mass treatment projects have also been started on a limited scale in Morocco, Tunisia and Taiwan. It is too early to judge the success of these projects, but WHO consultants, who again visited those in Morocco and Taiwan some months after they had begun, have given encouraging reports.

WHO has stimulated and assisted research in trachomatology, in accordance with the recommendation of the expert committee; it has started a programme of co-ordinated studies extending from virological research to investigations on the effect of cortisone in cases in which clinical cure has apparently been obtained, with the aim of establishing a possible test of cure, and to histopathological investigations, of practical importance for the solution of pathological and therapeutic problems.

Another important activity in trachoma which has been newly started is the exchange of research workers between Tunisia, Morocco (French Zone), Japan, Egypt and Iran. Through this programme, now under way, it is hoped to clarify many debated points in the etiology, epidemiology and therapy of this disease which are essential to better control.

<sup>16</sup> *Wld Hlth Org. techn. Rep. Ser.* 1952, 59