



REGIONAL OFFICE FOR

**World Health
Organization**

Africa

AFR/RC51/R2

29 August 2001

REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR AFRICA

ORIGINAL: FRENCH

Fifty-first session

Brazzaville, Republic of Congo, 27 August–1 September 2001

RESOLUTION

BLOOD SAFETY: A STRATEGY FOR THE AFRICAN REGION

The Regional Committee,

Having considered the report of the Regional Director on the strategy for blood transfusion safety in the African Region;

Considering World Health Assembly resolution WHA 28.72 recommending that Member States promote the development of national blood transfusion services based on voluntary non-remunerated blood donations and enact legislation governing them;

Recalling resolution AFR/RC44/R12 on HIV/AIDS control which urges Member States to take urgent steps to enact blood safety policies, mobilize resources for blood service infrastructure development at central and district hospitals and set goals and targets for the attainment of HIV-free blood transfusion in health-care settings;

Noting with concern that only 30% of the countries in the Region have so far formulated a blood transfusion policy, and the need in all countries for systematic screening of blood for the main transmissible infections, especially for blood transfusion;

Recalling also that the transmission of HIV, hepatitis B, hepatitis C, syphilis, malaria and other parasitic infections through the blood can be effectively prevented by adopting a sound blood transfusion policy and carrying out systematic screening for such infections in all units of donated blood;

Concerned by the fact that, since the adoption of resolution AFR/RC44/R12 in 1994, the changes that have taken place in most of the Member States in this area are hardly perceptible and that the current economic situation has contributed to a worsening of the health situation in the countries of the Region;

Convinced that Member States in the African Region can achieve blood safety;

1. **APPROVES** the regional strategy for blood transfusion safety as proposed in document AFR/RC51/9:
2. **COMMENDS** the Regional Director for action already taken to improve blood transfusion safety in the Region;

3. URGES Member States:

- (a) to formulate, adopt and implement a national blood transfusion policy consistent with national needs and WHO technical recommendations, especially for:
 - (i) the establishment of safety norms and standards and a quality assurance programme in order to provide all patients, who so require, with blood that is safe;
 - (ii) the formulation of human resources policies which ensure the training, promotion and retention of the staff of blood transfusion centres and the training of prescribers in the judicious use of blood;
 - (iii) the promotion of research in the area of blood transfusion safety, including the use of blood and blood products;
- (b) to allocate adequate funds for developing the infrastructure of blood transfusion services and creating an enabling environment for the establishment of a reliable blood transfusion system, including the cold chain;
- (c) to promote voluntary and benevolent blood donation on a regular and permanent basis;
- (d) to mobilize bilateral and multilateral partners as well as nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to provide technical and financial support for the establishment of reliable and sustainable blood transfusion services;

4. REQUESTS the Regional Director:

- (a) to play a leadership role in instituting blood transfusion and AIDS control programmes in the WHO African Region;
- (b) to support Member States in drawing up and implementing national blood transfusion policies;
- (c) to promote and support training programmes for the staff of blood transfusion centres and prescribing physicians;
- (d) to facilitate the use of reference centres in blood transfusion in the Region for the training of appropriate staff from Member States;
- (e) to mobilize resources from international partners to finance blood transfusion safety in the Region;
- (f) to strengthen technical cooperation and collaboration between Member States and WHO so as to improve the management of blood transfusion centres and the quality of blood and blood products;
- (g) to ensure the follow-up and implementation of this strategy and report to the fifty-fourth session of the Regional Committee.