

THIRD WHO MEETING OF EUROPEAN NATIONAL FELLOWSHIPS OFFICERS

Report on a Meeting

Bratislava
26-29 August 1980



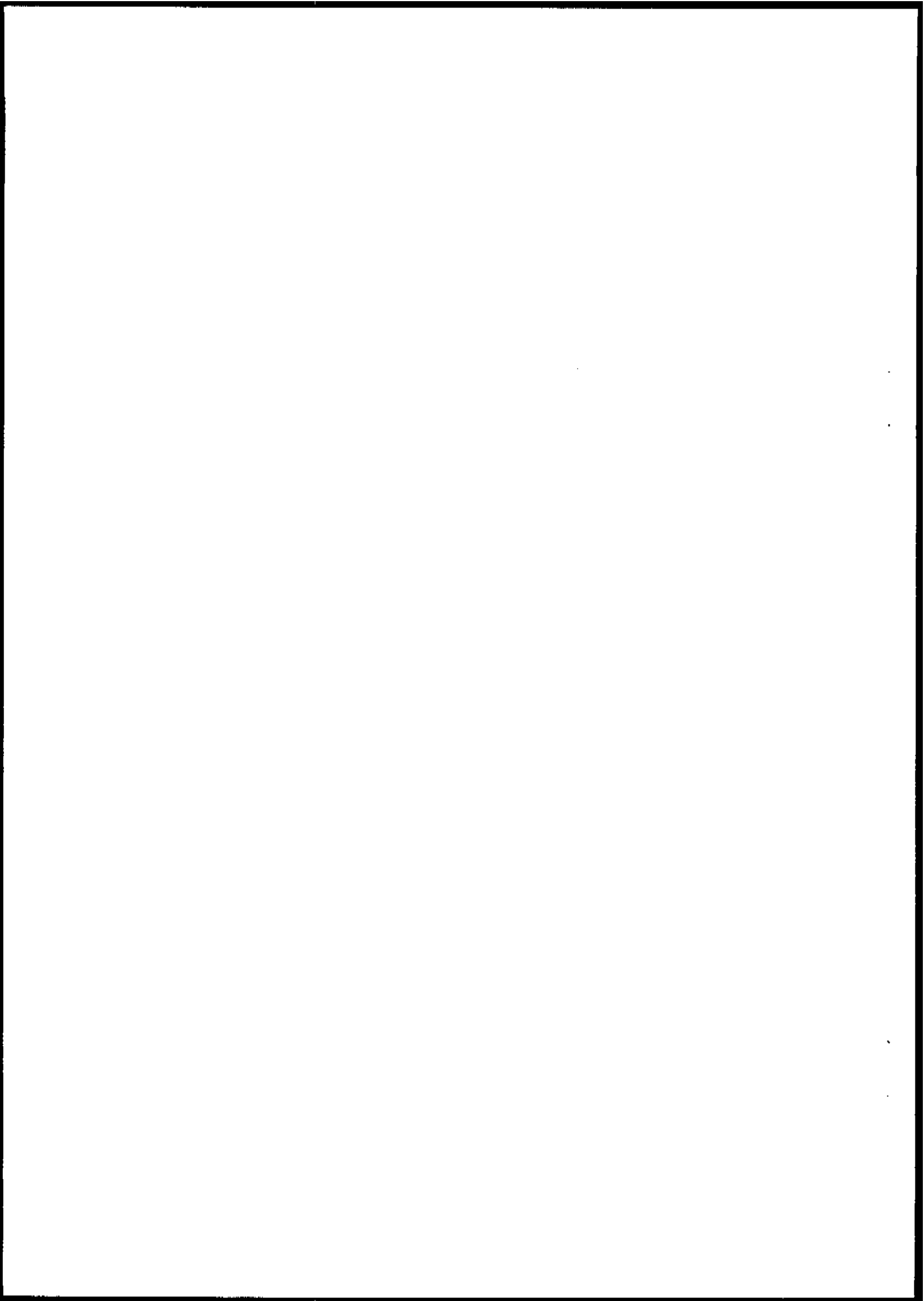
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1. Introduction

In view of the successful outcome of the Seminar of National Fellowships Officers of the European Region (Cologne, 27-30 April 1976), it was decided to hold a third such meeting, also attended by officers concerned with the WHO fellowships programme in other Regions, with a view to improving and streamlining the administrative arrangements and procedures for the exchange of fellows, and to discussing the place of the programme in the planning of government manpower development schemes. The meeting was attended by officers from 21 Member States of the European Region (either national fellowships officers or nominees considered by their ministries of health to be an integral part of the fellowships operation from the point of view of sending/receiving fellows to/from their countries). Also present were a representative of the Council of Europe, with specific responsibility for the Council's medical fellowships programme, two observers from Africa, and WHO staff members responsible for technical and/or administrative aspects of fellowships at WHO headquarters and the WHO regional offices for Africa, the Eastern Mediterranean, South-East Asia and the Western Pacific. A list of participants is attached as Annex IV.

Dr J. Červenka was elected as Chairman of the meeting, Dr S. Campbell as Vice-chairman, and Miss E. Wright as Rapporteur. Dr R. Manrique-de-Lara acted as Secretary.

Dr Imrich Hatiar, First Vice-Minister of Health of the Slovak Socialist Republic, welcomed the participants and referred to the fast growth in developments which had taken place in the Region and the necessity for mutual exchange of information. Dr A. Wojtczak, speaking on behalf of the WHO Regional Director, expressed thanks to the Governments of Austria and Czechoslovakia for making it financially and physically possible to hold the meeting, and the hope that in considering the problems of the sending and receiving countries, and the implementation of policy, points might emerge that would stimulate and even provoke the participants into bringing about more efficient fellowships administration.

Dr Wojtczak then described the fellowships programme in the context of WHO policy, emphasizing that the programme should form an integral part of the national health manpower development plans and that for this purpose the proper selection of candidates, the most appropriate placement and their correct utilization on return home were the prime elements of success and, as such, could be evaluated with an eye to future planning. The two prime considerations were whether countries used the fellowships programme according to the objectives agreed upon, and whether the candidates selected for study in the given fields were well chosen for the tasks envisaged. The discussions and deliberations of the meeting would go some way towards improving the administration and the technical quality and management of the fellowships programme for achievement of the goals of the respective countries as agreed by their representatives in the discussions of the World Health Assembly and formulation of the strategy for health for all by the year 2000. Cooperation and partnership between countries were vital if goals were to be achieved. It had to be recognized that there could be a problem of lack of relevance when applying the medical models and technology of developed countries without proper adaptation to the needs and possibilities of developing countries.

Dr Manrique-de-Lara explained that the main aim of the meeting was to exchange views on the everyday working of the fellowships programme in order to learn about each other's problems, difficulties and experiences. Therefore frank and free discussion was needed. Referring to the remarks of Dr Wojtczak, Dr Manrique-de-Lara distinguished three prime considerations, namely:

- (a) Whether countries use the fellowships programme according to the objectives agreed upon, the specific purpose of the awards, the formulation of national plans in line with health manpower needs and clarification of who is responsible for those plans.
- (b) The implementation of fellowships activities taking advantage of the existing facilities in the country of origin, and the correct placement of fellows in other countries according to the relevant cultural, traditional and financial factors and particularly with an eye to their future promotion.
- (c) The selection of fellows according to the actual health needs of the country and its staff requirements.

These three considerations would allow proper evaluation of the overall fellowships operation once clear objectives have been defined.

The discussions following the introductory statements ranged widely and covered in some depth most aspects of the fellowships exercise, such as selection, timing, communication, language testing, briefing of fellows and monitoring of progress during the training. The question of the thorough briefing of national fellowships officers in order to carry out the tasks efficiently was examined, sources of information were made known to all participants, and relevant documents and reference works were passed round for information.

Three working groups (two English- and one French-speaking) discussed problems relating to the day-to-day administration of the fellowships programme. They concerned such matters as postponement and cancellation of fellowships, delays in documentation, the timing of the fellowships process, (e.g. the minimum requirement of three months' notice), assistance and advice with accommodation, stipend rates, medical insurance, and the difficulties and experiences of individual countries in carrying out certain of the procedures.

2. Problems in the technical management and administration of WHO fellowships

Dr Manrique-de-Lara introduced a working paper on the subject, setting out the different primary and secondary problems in tabular form (Annex I).

He noted that the main purpose of the meeting was to review the problems encountered. That would help to make those responsible aware of the problems, and hence to find ways of avoiding them, as they could only seldom be solved once they were present.

3. Training facilities for placement of WHO fellows in the European Region

Participants from the countries represented described their training facilities. Discussion on the subject covered problems such as keeping track of new developments, and the means for so doing, and the timing of placements when information is not forthcoming or is late in being obtained. Many of the sources of information available were described. In general the importance of national fellowships officers fully acquainting themselves with the relevant information was stressed.

The fellowships officer from France described the complete reorganization of medical studies scheduled for 1983, whereby a special examination (CES), covering both knowledge of French and the specialization, will have to be taken at embassies abroad before an award can be considered. This will be bound to have a considerable impact on the French fellowships programme.

4. WHO policies and procedures regarding fellowships

Dr Manrique-de-Lara introduced a working paper (Annex II) on the subject, which was then analysed both in plenary and working group sessions.

4.1 National training opportunities

The matter of fellows being sent abroad for training when perfectly adequate and sometimes far more appropriate training can be obtained in their own country or Region, or can be had at far less cost to WHO and the government concerned, was discussed. The medium of instruction is an important factor to be considered and is sometimes overlooked. The precise definition of the subject matter to be undertaken by the applicant is essential if a fellowship award is to be meaningful. The participants described the difficulties encountered in their countries and regions, and noted particularly that it is not always possible to fall in with the wishes of the fellow himself for one reason or another, or to fit him to the training facilities of the receiving country.

It was generally agreed that the trend towards group arrangements in the future for short courses is a viable development and financially more feasible than individual placements.

4.2 Medical certification of candidates and medical supervision of fellows

Considerable concern was expressed by several of the participants as to the reliability and validity of certain of the medical clearance certificates attached to the fellowship application form. It was deemed necessary and desirable that proposed long-term fellows, particularly from other regions, should have medical certificates provided by the same physicians that WHO has designated in each country to certify the health status of its own staff. However, annual checks should be carried out in the host country, and this should be a formal part of any fellowship extension (if any is envisaged). For short-term fellowships various optional possibilities were

explored with regard to the medical certificates and the feeling was that it might not be necessary to demand certificates for short study visits. Essentially, however, fellows should be held responsible for their own medical state before beginning fellowship study.

4.3 Illness and accident insurance; reimbursement of medical expenses

The participants discussed whether WHO should provide medical insurance to cover fellows. It was strongly felt that the need for medical coverage fully justifies any financial outlay on personal health insurance for fellows and that this is in line with a recommendation made at the meeting of fellowships officers of agencies of the United Nations system (Geneva, March 1980). This recommendation is particularly applicable as WHO was one of the few United Nations agencies that did not provide automatic medical insurance cover. It was noted that medical insurance is not usually a problem in Europe for those fellows from other European countries, since most of them are covered by bilateral agreements, but it is a considerable problem for fellows from other WHO regions and even from a few countries in Europe.

4.4 Reception of fellows by host countries

The discussion covered a number of points including the need to improve facilities in the various countries as far as possible, the reception and arrivals procedure, and contacts between countries in the case of multiple-country placements. It was agreed that most fellowships officers are aware of what arrangements and facilities are most desirable for efficient interchange of fellowships, but they do not always have the means of achieving the ideal. The minimum data required include precise arrival details in order to set the wheels in motion. It was suggested that host countries should publish and distribute booklets for fellows on the local conditions, thereby eliminating considerable difficulties which are likely to be encountered later. The information required is normally available at embassies.

4.5 Choice of placement

On the subject of placements, it was felt that it should be WHO's initiative to choose the most appropriate host country for a candidate, taking into account all the information available. It is therefore incumbent upon the host countries to provide all the information to the regional offices. Lists of the principal training courses organized in each Member country would be welcomed by the Regional Office for Europe.

4.6 Fellowship application form (WHO 52)

It was generally recognized that the form is not just a formality in the process of a fellowship, but gives essential information and constitutes a legal document. Certain countries have experienced problems with the division of subject matter in the form, and it was felt that WHO headquarters should envisage redesigning it. For this purpose all fellowships officers should be sent a questionnaire asking for their opinion on the design of a new form, incorporating a numbered paragraph system which would enable immediate identification of paragraphs when necessary, and certain other changes in layout. The actual size of the form was discussed but it was acknowledged that for linguistic and economic reasons, at least one WHO region should not use the form printed in Geneva but continue to use the one produced locally. The language of the text was also a subject of debate and the use of a bilingual form was recommended.

Participants stressed the importance of attaching to each copy of the form a signed and up-to-date photograph of the candidate and of submitting a medical report with the application. Clear notes on the completion of the form should be included with the documents sent to the candidate in the hope that it will be properly completed and submitted.

4.7 Technical supervision and monitoring of fellows

The supervision and regular monitoring of a fellow's progress while holding a fellowship was generally agreed desirable. At present (except in one region) no formal means of supervision of the fellowship on a regular basis exists, except regular requests for six-monthly reports and, as a new feature, a "confidential report" to be filled in by the supervisor.

It was considered an essential part of the duties of national fellowships officers to take time to visit the institutions and people offering courses in their own countries - particularly with a view to collecting information in sufficient time to plan effective placements and to interview fellows studying there. This information should in turn be fed to the WHO Regional Office. It is most important to describe not only the courses and their precise cost, but the medium of instruction.

4.8 Extension of fellowships

Although in principle extensions of fellowships can only be granted in exceptional circumstances, considerable problems, mainly of finance, have been experienced by receiving countries while awaiting decisions on requested extensions. Requests for extensions should be submitted in sufficient time to allow for consultation with government authorities.

4.9 Financial arrangements

Much discussion centred on the so-called "after 60-days stipend" and, in view of WHO's budgetary constraints this high rate was considered extravagant. Moreover, it implies discriminations in the status of fellows. It was felt therefore that it should be used only on a limited and properly justified basis, after consultation between WHO and the national fellowships officers.

A new rule has been issued on the validity of the fellowship estimate form, whereby funds are now reserved for six months only, during which time the award must be issued. This means that acceptance is required within the six months or else the funds lost.

Concern was expressed that fellows' salaries should be paid while on a fellowship. Means of overcoming the stopping or reduction of salaries during the period of an award were considered.

5. Conclusions

The participants stressed the importance of streamlining day-to-day administration and ironing out any problems to ensure that the fellowships operation at global level is as cogent as possible to support planning for future health requirements.

It was noted that a similar meeting held in the not too distant future would provide not only the chance to overcome problems of an administrative nature but an unrivalled opportunity for the officers - especially those more recently appointed - to meet and benefit from what was also a training exercise. The strength of the fellowships operation lies in the availability of concerned and well briefed fellowships officers who can maintain contact with each other on a regional and interregional basis.

6. Recommendations

- (1) An application for a fellowship should be turned down by the national fellowships officer in the country of origin if there is no guarantee that the prospective fellow's home salary will be paid regularly throughout the period of the fellowship.
- (2) All fellowships officers should be sent a questionnaire asking for their opinions on the design of a new fellowship application form, incorporating a numbered paragraph system which would enable immediate identification of paragraphs when necessary, and certain other changes in layout. It was acknowledged that for linguistic and economic reasons, at least one WHO region should not use the form printed in Geneva but continue to use the one produced locally. With regard to the language(s) in which the form was printed, the use of a bilingual form was recommended.
- (3) It was recommended that, because the reliability of medical clearance certificates attached to applications is uncertain, long-term fellows should have medical certificates provided by the same physicians that WHO has designated in each country to certify the health status of its own staff. Essentially, however, fellows should be held responsible for their own medical state before beginning fellowship study.
- (4) The "after 60-days stipend" rate should be used only on a limited and properly justified basis, and after consultation between WHO and the national fellowships officers.
- (5) It was recommended that formal means of monitoring a fellow's progress during fellowship study be investigated, and the conclusions be submitted to the Regional Office.
- (6) Requests for extensions of fellowships should be submitted in sufficient time to allow for consultation with government authorities.

- (7) It was recommended that the report and papers relating to the meeting be translated at least into French and be distributed to the countries and regions with the relevant working language.
- (8) As one of the responsibilities of the national fellowships officers is to counsel enquiries on awards from sources other than WHO, it was recommended they be provided with the UNESCO publication "Study Abroad", which gives information on national awards, and also international opportunities.
- (9) Regarding the fellowships programme of the Council of Europe, it was recommended that the paper presented by the representative of the Council be annexed to the report on the meeting. Attached as Annex III.
- (10) The meeting strongly reiterated the recommendation made by the previous seminar (Cologne, 1976), to the effect that meetings of national fellowships officers should be held every two years, and requested that if budgetary constraints exist, they should be carefully studied and hopefully solved.

Annex I

MAIN PROBLEMS IN THE TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT
AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF WHO FELLOWSHIPS

by
Dr R. Manrique de Lara
Regional Officer for Fellowships and
Promotion of Training,
Regional Office for Europe

From a practical point of view, the subject of this paper can be seen as the main reason for this meeting, since our review of the problems together will help to make us aware of them and to find ways to avoid them - since in most cases they can be avoided but only very seldom be solved once they are present. To allow a systematic review of the problems, the attached table has been prepared, showing the most common primary problems encountered in both the technical management and the administration of WHO fellowships, and the secondary problems that arise. The table was originally prepared for the Conference on Regional Cooperation in the Implementation of the WHO Fellowships Programme, New Delhi, 26 to 29 September 1979, and was also presented at the Meeting of National Fellowships Officers of the Eastern Mediterranean Region, Amman, 6 to 8 November 1979.

Some problems may have been overlooked in the table, which any of the participants in this meeting may consider important; in that case, they are required to bring them to the meeting's attention for inclusion in the list for discussion.

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY PROBLEMS IN WHO FELLOWSHIPS

PRIMARY PROBLEMS	SECONDARY PROBLEMS			
	For the fellow	For the country of origin	For WHO	For the receiving country and/or institutions
1. Incomplete WHO.52	The fellowship arranged may not be what he expected	Problems in selection of candidates and advice on placement	Problems in designing study programme and related placement	Problems in organizing the study programme requested by WHO and related placements
2. No language certificate	Delay in implementation of fellowship	Selection of wrong candidates (face losing)	Idem as above	Idem as above
3. Insufficient time to process the application (short notice)	Inadequate preparation at work and at home	Inadequate planning for release and/or placement	Idem as above	Idem as above
4. Changes in the programme	Insecurity and dissatisfaction. Lost credit	Maladjustments in the health manpower planning process	Work load increase, budget imbalances, deteriorating working relations with receiving countries	Work load increase, wastage of scarce training places, deteriorating working relationships with institutions of study
5. Insufficient knowledge of the country of study	Maladjustment, dissatisfaction and/or even cultural shock affecting studies, health and even life (suicide)	Loss of opportunities, loss of prestige and even overall object of fellowship destroyed	Remedial actions when possible and critical situations requiring repatriation, burial, etc	Problems of fellow's maladjustment and/or dissatisfaction, and in extreme cases cultural shock affecting studies, health and even life (suicide) requiring special remedial action such as counselling, hospitalization, repatriation, etc

SECONDARY PROBLEMS				
PRIMARY PROBLEMS	For the fellow	For the country of origin	For WHO	For the receiving country and/or institutions
6. Accompanying dependants	Lack of study time, insufficient money, increased problems on housing, schooling, medical care, family relations, etc	Children suffer academically, psychologically and sometimes physically. Currency problems	Administrative arrangements for fellows become more complicated, even if WHO does not take care of the family	Inability to provide adequate accommodation and social services for visiting dependants, who often become an economic charge for the taxpayers
7. Accidents or sickness Travel by car	Economic repercussions, accidents, increased responsibilities	Issuance of documents	Work load increase	Traffic accidents and related problems
8. Inadequate handling of finances	Financial troubles	Loss of prestige	Embarrassing situations	Embarrassment, annoyance, dissatisfaction, problems with training institutions
9. Fellows not returning to their country	Loss of job Loss of citizenship	Loss of trained person	Waste of a fellowship	Immigration problems posed by the new-comer
10. Marriage in the country of study	Often interferes with studies	Either loss of a trained person or immigration problems for new dependant spouse		Immigration problems
11. No reports or delayed reports by fellows and former fellows	Inadequate guidance	Lack of information for planning and supervision purposes	Fellow's supervision and guidance becomes more difficult and less effective. No feedback on study programme designs	No feedback on the efforts made to organize study programmes

Annex II

WHO POLICY ON FELLOWSHIPS

1. Introduction

Under its Constitution, the Organization is required:

- to assist in strengthening health services;
- to promote cooperation among scientific and professional groups which contribute to the advancement of health;
- to promote improved standards of teaching and training in the health, medical and related professions;

and thereby help national administrations to raise the level of health of their peoples.

One of the ways in which WHO seeks to achieve these aims is through its programme of fellowships and related educational activities which enables health workers:

- to go abroad for training and study in health matters which cannot be undertaken in their own country or, when appropriate, to attend courses in their home country;
- to participate in the international exchange of scientific knowledge and techniques relating to health.

Awarding fellowships to health workers of the Member States is a well-established policy, backed by a programme which has been in continuous operation since the first year of the Organization's existence as an independent body within the United Nations system. Indeed, one of the six WHO regions already had a fellowships programme. The first WHO fellowship was awarded to a citizen of India in 1948. Since then, World Health Assembly and Executive Board resolutions, based on experience acquired and/or the expressed desires of Member States, have provided the framework in which concrete WHO policies on fellowships have been developed by the secretariat and approved by the Director-General.

Provision for fellowships is made in the proposed programme budget. They may be included in a project as one of several different forms of assistance to a government or, if they are the only form of assistance being provided, they are considered as a project in themselves.

Fellowships administered by the Organization may be financed from WHO regular funds, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, or the Voluntary Fund for Health Promotion.

The facilities of the Organization are at the disposal of governments for the administration of fellowships provided in whole or in part by them as part of their national health programmes.

On the basis of agreements reached with WHO, facilities are placed at the disposal of the United Nations, the specialized agencies, other intergovernmental organizations (e.g., UNICEF), and nongovernmental organizations, for the administration of fellowships in the field of health provided in whole or in part by them, and such facilities may be requested by WHO from other organizations.

The award of a WHO fellowship means that an appropriate programme of advanced study abroad is planned and arranged by the Organization, or agreed upon by the Organization, for an individual and that he is provided with the necessary financial assistance to carry it out.

Fellowships are granted for either individual studies or for group training. In the former category, the studies are arranged to suit the needs of the fellow; in the latter, the type of activity and its contents and the composition of the group are first determined and the fellows chosen to fit its requirements.

Fellowships for individual studies

A fellowship for individual studies is defined as an award for advanced study abroad made to an individual on the recommendation of his government, to fit him for a specific assignment on his return home.^a In thus assisting in the development of the health programme in his own country, he is at the same time furthering the objectives of WHO.

The application for and the award of a fellowship constitute a joint undertaking by WHO, the host country, the fellow and his government; thus:

- WHO, in agreement with the government and the fellow, makes appropriate plans for study abroad, makes the necessary arrangements with countries and places of study, and provides financial assistance, according to its regulations;
- the host country agrees to provide the course of study prescribed for the fellow to monitor his progress and to help him with necessary administrative arrangements;
- the fellow places his services at the disposal of his national health administration upon his return to his home country;
- the government, as specified on the application form, gives its assurance that it will make full use of the knowledge and experience gained by the fellow, and that during his absence his status, seniority, salary, pension and similar rights will not be adversely affected.

Fellowships for group training

A fellowship for group training may be granted to an individual nominated by his government to enable him to take part in:

- a training course, which is defined as a set programme of instruction, sometimes terminated by a qualifying examination, to which candidates who fulfil certain conditions may be admitted;
- a study tour (sometimes called "travelling seminar" in the past), which is defined as a visit by a group of health workers or scientists to one or several countries to study local problems and methods of dealing with them.

A study tour is both a fact-finding mission and an educational experience. The findings and impressions may be described in a report for which all the participants assume collective responsibility or in a report signed by one or more of them.

A training course may be either a course normally available at an educational establishment, which may or may not be appropriately modified for WHO purposes, or a course specially organized and sponsored by WHO.

Both training courses and study tours may be sponsored jointly by WHO and another organization.

2. Types and duration of awards

Awards of fellowships are normally made to qualified persons to enable them to:

- attend courses or similar group training activities organized or assisted by WHO;
- attend other courses, especially those leading to a postgraduate certificate, degree or diploma;
- observe practices and techniques with which they are not familiar or to carry out research.

Awards may also exceptionally be made to:

- students from countries which lack facilities for undergraduate study in health subjects to enable them to study abroad;

^a In this document, terms referring to fellows in the masculine gender apply equally to men and women.

- nationals of a country to enable them to attend a course organized in their country by WHO;
- nationals of a country to enable them to study within their own country;
- persons without medical or allied qualifications to study public health administration and related subjects, to enable them to perform functions that are neither strictly technical, nor purely managerial, but which are more often carried out by persons with medical or allied qualifications;
- persons who would benefit from exchange of experience with a person occupying a corresponding post in another country.

Fellowships are not normally awarded for:

- the study of WHO headquarters, or of regional or other offices;
- studies which complement or supplement studies abroad sponsored by other agencies, unless there are special reasons for fully justifying the exception.

Awards are not given for the purpose of attending meetings, conferences or congresses. However, attendance at one of these activities on the subject of a WHO fellowship and during its tenure may be authorized:

- when it has been agreed from the beginning that this would form part of the fellowship and adequate travel funds have been allotted for the purpose;
- when it does not interfere with the programme of study;
- when the Regional Director of the region of study has authorized it on the basis of a written request from the fellow, supported by a letter of recommendation from his adviser, and the request is received in the regional office of the region of study well in advance of the last date of registration.

Fellowships are normally awarded for the total duration of the proposed study but exceptions to the rule may be made. The authority to pay is renewed annually subject to receipt by the regional office of a satisfactory report on the performance of the fellow.

The period for which a fellowship is granted includes the time required for study, international travel and travel in the country or countries of study. If, for any reason, a fellow finishes his studies earlier than expected, the fellowship is considered to have ended on the day he reaches, or could have reached, his country of origin by the quickest route. WHO's liability for stipends and expenses ceases on the date of expiry of the fellowship; any amount overpaid is reimbursed to WHO.

Cancellation or termination

WHO may at any time cancel or terminate a fellowship if, for no valid reason, the recipient does not begin it on the date indicated in the letter of award, or if for any reason it is inadvisable for him to continue to hold the fellowship. Such reasons include ill health, changes in the subject for which the fellowship was awarded, unsatisfactory academic performance, personality problems, etc. Any conviction for a violation of the common law, whatever the nature of the offence, should also be reason for cancelling a fellowship. If a fellow carrying out basic professional studies lasting for more than one year fails twice in his end-of-year examinations, or is obliged to repeat a year because of unsatisfactory performance or because of failure to present himself for examinations, he may lose his fellowship award unless there are shown to be exceptional reasons justifying its continuance. If an award is cancelled or terminated, the continuation of the fellow's studies would be a matter for his government and for himself.

Extensions

Extensions to a fellowship can be granted only in exceptional circumstances. Extensions of more than 30 days can be considered only if recommended in writing by a senior staff member of the institution in which the fellow is studying and approved in writing by the fellow's national health administration after due consideration of the needs of other applicants for WHO fellowships.

The recommendation for extension by the institution where the fellow is studying and the approval by the fellow's government should be obtained by the regional offices for the region of study and the region of origin respectively. Decisions to grant extensions not exceeding 30 days are made by the Regional Director for the region of study, provided that sufficient funds are available. Decisions to grant extensions of more than 30 days are made by the Regional Director for the region of origin.

Extended stay abroad after end of fellowship

If for any reason a fellow's stay abroad exceeds the period for which his fellowship was granted by 30 days or less, approval to hold open the return passage may be given by the Director of the regional office for the region of study. If the stay exceeds the duration of the fellowship by more than 30 days, the approval of the fellow's government is also required and must be obtained by the Director of the regional office for the region of origin.

3. Eligibility for WHO fellowships

WHO fellowships are available to nationals of Member States and Associate Members of WHO and to nationals of trust and other territories for whose international relations WHO Member States are responsible, or which are administered by international authorities established by the United Nations. Applications sponsored by non-selfgoverning territories should be backed by a request from the Member State of WHO which is responsible for the territory's international relations. If there is a choice between candidates who are equally qualified, preference should be given to the nationals of the territory or those who have taken residence in it.

Normally, fellowships are granted only to persons:

- who are, or who will be, engaged in medical or health work in their national health organization (national health administration; health service of another government administration, local authorities, research and educational institutions), and whose applications are supported by their national health administration (ministry of health or equivalent authority);
- for whom the national health administration is prepared to certify that, if a fellowship is granted, full use will be made of the fellow in the field covered by the fellowship;
- who have not less than two years' experience in the subject they wish to study (except for undergraduate studies);
- who have exhausted the opportunities available in their own countries for studying that subject;
- who propose to study subjects which are directly connected with the country's health programmes;
- who undertake in writing to continue in, or place their services at the disposal of, their national health organization for at least three years immediately following their fellowship (fellows who are to undergo basic professional training must, in addition to the three years mentioned above, give one further year of service for each year of study over three years);
- who are in good health and, normally, are not over 55 years of age if the retiring age is 60 or above, or over 50 if the retiring age is below 60 (if a candidate is over age, the Regional Director should accept the application only after he has explained the special risks entailed to the government, and it has declared itself ready to take the responsibility of meeting those risks; for fellowships of less than three months' duration, observation of the above age limitations is at the discretion of the Regional Director; when such fellowships are granted to persons over 50, the service rule referred to above may be waived);
- who are able to speak, read and write a language which can be used for the proposed studies. A statement from a reliable source confirming the proficiency of the applicant in the language needed for his studies is an essential requirement. (The fees for language tests arranged by internationally recognized institutions like l'Alliance française, the British Council, the Educational Testing Service and the Goethe Institut are reimbursed by WHO.)

If a country has no suitable candidates for a fellowship among its nationals, consideration will be given to persons of other nationalities employed in the national health organization. The mutual obligations of such candidates and of the requesting national health administration are the same as for other fellowships.

When fellowships are granted for undergraduate studies the government concerned is asked to undertake that, if for any reason WHO cannot continue the fellowships in subsequent years, it will make financial provision for the students to complete their studies.

4. Applications for fellowships

Applications for fellowships are invited at the beginning of the year preceding a budgetary cycle, on the basis of the proposed programme budget document. It is the aim of regional offices to

have received all applications six months in advance of placement. This early submission of applications makes it possible for the most suitable arrangements for study to be made and for fellows to be informed about them in good time.

Requests must be submitted using the WHO fellowship application form (WHO 52), which is provided to national health administrations. So that a study programme suitable to the needs of the fellow can be prepared, it is essential that he should provide all the information asked for on the form and especially that he should clearly indicate his educational background and carefully describe the work performed in the successive posts he has occupied. He should also give details of the work he would be doing after his return home from the fellowship and state which service, programme or project in his country would benefit from the knowledge he would gain through his studies. The applicant should submit the completed application, which includes a medical report, to the national health administration of his country. Where the medical report is more than six months old at the time of commencement of the fellowship, a second medical report is required.

National health administrations may wish to submit applications to a national selection committee which will identify suitable candidates on the basis of written proof of their qualifications and, when pertinent, of personal interviews of them and/or their supervisors. A selection committee should be established by the national health administration, and would then appoint a person to be responsible for communications with WHO.

5. Acceptance of applications; programmes of study; placement; award of fellowships

The regional offices review all applications in the light of the current programme and budget and related documents. Incomplete applications are returned to the government concerned before any further action is taken. All applications should be fully completed, dated and signed, and should have a recent photograph attached on the space reserved for this. Applications should be typed.

The Regional Director may reject an application if he is not satisfied that the proposed fellowship is justified in terms of the study programme; if he is not satisfied that the qualifications of the candidate, his technical background and his knowledge of the language of study will permit him to draw full benefit from the fellowship; if he thinks that the candidate's health is questionable; or if for any other reason he considers that the application should not be accepted or should be postponed.

When an application has been accepted by the regional office, a study programme for the fellow is prepared, taking into account:

- the contribution of the candidate's proposed studies to the strengthening of health services in his country;
- the candidate's previous education, training and experience, the language(s) in which he is able to study, and what he needs to study in preparation for a specific assignment on his return home;
- the training facilities and vacancies;
- the desirability of the candidate studying in countries where conditions are close to those of his country of origin, if appropriate training facilities are available;
- the public health and preventive medicine aspects of the subject of study, whenever applicable;
- the inclusion, only when it would be of clear educational benefit to the fellow, of visits to the field for two or three months at the end of the academic year, or as a part of the academic programme, preferably to an area where conditions are similar to those in the candidate's country of origin;
- the educational and economic undesirability of excessive travel and the requirement that the fellow should preferably stay for a longer time in a few institutions than a short time in many, and not be sent to distant countries for short periods;
- the need for planning the fellowship so that it does not begin during a vacation period;
- the desirability of planning a joint schedule if two or more fellows are to follow a similar programme.

Fellowships officers may arrange for fellows to call at the regional office for the region of origin or for the region of study and at WHO headquarters if there are justifiable reasons for them to make contact with the technical units dealing with their specialties, provided that this can be done with little or no extra expense to the Organization.

Changes in a fellowship study programme

Changes in a fellowship study programme after it has been established, even if the award has not yet been issued, are undesirable primarily because of the difficulties which they cause to the countries and institutions of study.

Normally minor changes or changes made at short notice when a fellow is already studying may be authorized by the Director of the regional office for the region of study, but changes which are likely to involve additional expense must be authorized by the Director of the regional office for the region of origin, who will consult the fellow's government if necessary. The time necessary for this process should be taken into account by national fellowships officers requesting extensions for fellows studying under their responsibility.

Arrangements with the government or an institution in a country of study are made by the regional office for the region of study, and all correspondence, even of an informal nature, about fellows must be sent through the regional office concerned. This does not apply to general information on the country of study, which is normally sent directly to the fellow by the national fellowships officer once the programme has been established.

Letter of Award

After placement has been arranged and funds have been obligated, the regional fellowships officer prepares a Letter of Award (form WHO 53). To this he attaches a copy of the WHO fellowship information booklet and, when appropriate, the following:

- fellow's reports (form WHO 54)
- travel claim for fellows (form WHO 51)
- notification of travel arrangements, etc. (form WHO 236)
- notification of expected arrival (form WHO 237)

The Letter of Award (form WHO 53) is the only document relating to the studies issued by WHO.

Transfer of awards

When a person to whom a fellowship is awarded is unable to start his studies, the Regional Director may transfer the award to another candidate proposed as a replacement by the national health administration for the same studies, provided that the new candidate has the required qualifications and is acceptable to the country or countries of study.

6. Financial arrangements for fellowships

Each fellowship normally covers (a) the cost of travel, both international and local in the country of study; (b) a stipend or monthly living allowance; (c) tuition fees, i.e. registration fees for courses, etc. It may also provide for (d) a book grant. Further information on points (a) to (d) is given below. All other expenses are a matter for the fellow himself.

The Organization will not be responsible for the transfer of funds for a fellow from one country to another.

Travel expenses

To carry out the programme outlined in the fellowship award, WHO pays for:

- (1) International travel (i.e. from the fellow's own country to other countries and return) to the extent that the government does not undertake to pay for it.

During such travel, fellows are entitled to a baggage expense allowance calculated according to the duration of their fellowship, as follows:

- for fellowships awarded for periods of up to two months: nil,
- for fellowships awarded for periods of more than two and up to 12 months: an amount equivalent to the cost of sending 10 kg excess baggage by air one way,
- for fellowships awarded for periods of more than 12 months: an amount equivalent to the cost of sending 30 kg excess baggage by air one way.

- (2) travel in the countries of study plus, in cases where the travel is made by air, the despatch of up to 10 kg excess baggage by air;

(3) visas required for the approved itinerary which are not obtainable in the country of origin, and alien head tax;

(4) airport taxes.

The Organization is not responsible for:

- expenses for travel in the country of origin, except when the fellow's home town is more than 50 km from an international airport;
- the cost of passport photographs and passports;
- fees for visas obtainable in the country of origin;
- expenses incurred because of avoidable delays in travel, or travel by routes other than those authorized;
- taxi or airport bus fares or tips;
- packing, insurance, portorage of baggage, or customs duties as well as loss of, or damage to, a fellow's baggage.

In view of the difficulties and risks to the fellow, travel by private car is not authorized unless the programme arranged for him permits it and the journey is not a long one. In these circumstances the Regional Director may authorize payment to the fellow of the cost of the fare to his destination by the most direct route and by the most economical means of public transport. Authority to travel by private car must be obtained before departure, or payment will not be made. Tickets already bought by the Organization cannot be cancelled for part of the round-trip travel if this entails a loss to the Organization. If tickets can be cancelled without loss, payment will not be made to the fellow until the Organization has been reimbursed by the travel agency.

When a fellow is granted permission to use his private car, it must be made clear to him that he is responsible for taking out insurance against the risk of damage to the car, persons or property. The following disclaimer is included in the Letter of Award:

"Permission to travel by private car is given on the understanding that:

- the traveller is responsible for any claims for injuries, damage or loss involving the persons or property of third parties as well as of any passengers;
- the Organization declines all responsibility for any damage to or loss of the vehicle."

Travel arrangements and cancellations

The Letter of Award indicates how the fellow is to obtain tickets for authorized travel. As far as may be feasible, arrangements are made in countries of study for special agencies (the British Council, for instance, in the United Kingdom) to provide the tickets, thus making it unnecessary to reimburse the fellow. Fellows must not buy their own tickets unless they are asked to do so.

Travel to the places mentioned in the Letter of Award is automatically authorized. Additional travel in the country of study may be authorized by the person responsible for the fellow's programme.

Return or round-trip tickets for all international travel are purchased at the beginning of the fellowship if they will be valid for its duration.

When a government pays for all or part of the international travel, it is expected to make all arrangements in consultation with the regional office for the region of origin and provide the ticket. Where a government pays only a part of the international travel expenses, the Organization will pay for that part not paid by the government.

When a government does not provide for any international travel, the regional office for the region of origin makes the arrangements and pays for the ticket.

WHO does not accept any liability for expenses incurred through late cancellation of travel reservations. Fellows should therefore be urged to acquaint themselves with the regulations regarding cancellations.

WHO will not be responsible for any loss or additional charge resulting from the expiration of validity of return air tickets. Fellows on one-year fellowships should ensure that they commence their journey home before the date on which the validity of the ticket expires. If WHO approves an extension of the studies beyond the validity of the ticket, fellows should ask the regional office for the country of study for revalidation of the ticket at least two months in advance of its expiry.

Timetable; notifications; hotel reservations

Fellows are required to conform to the dates given in the Letter of Award. If at any time a date cannot be met, it is essential that the fellow notify direct, if necessary by cable, the person, institution or office expecting him, as indicated by the Letter of Award, and also the regional office for the region in which the delay has occurred.

As early as possible before travel to the first or any subsequent place of study, fellows are required to complete a notification of travel arrangements and/or change of address (form WHO 236), to be sent to the WHO regional office for the region of study. At the same time, a notification of expected arrival (form WHO 237) must be sent to the person named as "person to contact" in the Letter of Award at least two weeks in advance of the expected date of arrival.

Fellows are required to make their own arrangements for hotel accommodation. They are responsible for paying their hotel bills, including cancellation fees, whether or not the cancellation is due to circumstances beyond their control.

Hotel accommodation may be reserved, on request, in the United Kingdom by the British Council, and in Washington, DC, by the Regional Office for the Americas.

Reimbursement of travel expenses

Fellows are reimbursed for tickets they have been authorized to purchase themselves. No reimbursement is made for amounts spent on local travel, commuting or occasional short trips.

Claims for tickets which the fellow has been authorized to buy himself, for visas not obtainable in his country of origin, for alien head tax and for any other travelling expenses, which he has been authorized in writing by WHO to incur, should be made on the fellow's travel claim (form WHO 51). The purpose of, and authority for, any expenditure should be stated clearly on the travel claim and, on completion, the form should be sent to the regional office for the region where the fellow is at the time. Reimbursement is normally made to the fellow in the country of study within a month of receipt of the claim. When there is insufficient time before the departure of the fellow to settle claims made in the last month of the fellowship, payment is made in the country of origin.

On receiving the claim, the fellowships officer at the regional office concerned certifies that the travelling and other expenses are in accordance with the programme of the fellow, and sends it for payment to the budget and finance officer who, before settling it, verifies with the travel officer that the amounts claimed are correct.

Before returning to their home country, fellows are given an amount equivalent to the baggage expense allowance for international travel. WHO is not responsible for insurance of baggage and fellows must make their own arrangements for its dispatch.

Stipend

A stipend is not a salary or an honorarium; it is an allowance for room, board and incidentals paid to a fellow while on official assignment for study abroad. The amount varies from country to country because of differences in the cost of living, but in principle it does not vary from fellow to fellow in the same country and exceptions to this rule, although they occur, are avoided as far as possible. The stipend paid by WHO is not supposed to cover the fellows' routine expenses at home for himself or his family and should therefore not be considered as a substitute for any salary paid to a fellow at home.

To ensure that the stipends of all fellows in a country are uniform, whatever the United Nations agency or source of funds, stipend rates are established by interagency agreement through the United Nations Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions, which routinely revises the rates each April.

The stipend system provides for a travel rate and a resident rate, to allow for variations in the programme of studies arranged for each fellow. Rates are established and expressed in the local currency and payments are normally made in that currency.

The rates applicable to all WHO fellows, whatever the source of funds, are those of the Common Schedule of Stipend Rates (issued by the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme) in force at the time payment is due.

If a fellowship programme calls for a series of study or observation periods at different places, the fellow is considered as being in travel status, and is paid at the travel rate except during any period of stay in one place in excess of 30 days, when he is paid at the resident rate. If, however, it should prove administratively impractical to make a reduction when a fellow stays in one place for a few days beyond 30 days, payment may be continued for that period at the travel rate. If the home town of the fellow is among the places where he is required to spend a period of study, the stipend is reduced by 50% during that period.

If the programme calls for a prescribed course of study at a single place, the fellow is considered as being in resident status. He is paid at the travel rate for the first 30 days and thereafter, for the duration of the study, at the resident rate.

Fellows in resident status whose study requires them to be away from their base for short periods (less than 30 days) are normally paid at the travel rates for such periods. Where the travel rate does not cover the extra cost of maintaining lodging at the base, and other related expenses, an additional payment may be authorized by WHO.

If accommodation and/or board are available to fellows at no cost or at rates considerably below the average on which the stipend has been based, the Regional Director may establish stipend amounts at an appropriate ad hoc rate. The stipend is similarly reduced by the Regional Director if a fellow receives a subsidy in cash or kind from another source (organization, institution, government, etc.) while holding a WHO fellowship, or if he receives free hospitalization which includes subsistence. Regional Directors may also establish a reduced stipend for undergraduates, after consultation with the appropriate teaching institution. The Regional Director for the region of study establishes the ad hoc rates, and informs the Regional Director for the region of origin.

If the fellow travels between his country of origin and the country of study, or vice versa, by ship, the stipend is paid only for the length of time the travel would have lasted by the normal and faster means of transport. If travel by sea is unavoidable, the stipend is paid for the whole period of the journey to and from the fellow's home country, but is reduced to \$5 for each full day that is spent at sea. If a fellow takes a holiday during his fellowship, his stipend is stopped for a period equivalent to the duration of the holiday. This rule does not, however, apply to normal breaks of a few days in organized courses during public holidays.

Fellows following a course of undergraduate studies lasting for three years or more are authorized to spend one annual vacation in their home country every two years. Such leave is normally granted provided that:

- two academic years have elapsed since the start of the fellowship;
- the candidate has successfully carried out his programme up to that time;
- one further academic year of theoretical study remains to be completed before the end of the course.

Fellows for whom programmes are arranged in more than one country during the period of a month are paid for that month a "combination stipend". This represents a rough weighted average of the stipends for these countries and is payable in a currency which may be utilized in all.

Tuition fees

WHO pays tuition fees for courses included in study programmes, when such fees have been established by host governments or host institutions. Fees should normally not be paid by the fellow himself, and bills should be sent to the regional office of the region of study. Where the presentation of a thesis is a prerequisite for graduation, the cost of final typing and binding and related work, if required, may be paid by WHO. An estimate of these costs should be sent to the regional office of the region of study, who may then authorize the fellow to have the thesis typed and/or bound. When printing is expressly required, only the least expensive process acceptable is authorized. Payment may be made to the fellow on receipt of an account certified by the faculty adviser or similar responsible person up to a maximum of \$400. In exceptional cases, the Regional Director may authorize the payment of costs higher than this. No other costs for typing or reproduction, for instance of drafts, are payable by WHO. When it is compulsory for all students to pay fees for such items as health or medical insurance or laboratory or breakage insurance, they are regarded as part of the tuition fees and are paid by WHO.

Book grant

A book grant of \$20 a month may be paid at the discretion of the regional office of the region of study, for fellowships of one or two months' duration. For fellowships of more than two months and up to six months, a grant of \$100 is made which may be paid to the fellow with the second stipend. For fellowships lasting more than six months and up to one year, the book grant is \$300; and for each subsequent academic year, a further grant of \$300 is made. When a fellow is entitled to a book grant at the \$300 rate, to obtain reimbursement he must submit a list of books endorsed by his supervisor in the training institution for the approval of the regional office; exceptions to this requirement may be made when warranted by individual circumstances. To ensure that they purchase the most suitable books, fellows should ask guidance from the national officials making the arrangements for their studies or the heads of the institutions where they are studying.

Medical expenses

WHO is not responsible for payment of a fellow's expenses resulting from illness or accident (including dental and optical expenses), or compensation for death or disability resulting from illness or accident or any other cause. However, a Regional Director may authorize, at his discretion, the payment by the Organization of illness and accident expenses (including expenses in providing an escort to accompany an ill or disabled fellow back to his country) which are incurred during the period for which the fellowship was awarded and cannot be paid from the stipend.

Payment arrangements and currency

Stipends are paid in the currency of the country of study. If, during a stipend period, a fellow is required by his authorized programme to leave a country of study whose currency may not be exported or transferred, the stipend for the period in question may be paid in travellers' cheques.

7. Reports

Reports on fellowships are made by the fellow during and at the end of his study, by training institutions during the study and by the fellow and the government on the subsequent use made of his services.

Reports during the fellowship

Undergraduate fellows receive special instructions on reporting which vary according to the country of study. Graduate fellows pursuing studies lasting more than six months are required to submit reports in duplicate after each academic term, or at six-monthly intervals, on form WHO 54. The reports should be sent to the regional office of the region of study. Reports serve to maintain contact between the fellow and WHO, provide him with a record of his activities which will be useful when he prepares his termination of studies report, and provide WHO with material for evaluation purposes.

Training institutions may be requested to submit an interim confidential report on fellows pursuing academic studies lasting six months or more.

In order to keep the national health authorities informed of a fellow's progress, the region of origin sends to the government of the fellow, as required, any relevant information contained in the fellow's reports or received from the region of study or from the institution in which he is studying.

Reports at the end of the fellowship

At the end of their fellowship, fellows are required to submit a termination of studies report, typed or in dark copying ink suitable for photocopying, on form WHO 635. This report should be sent to the regional office for the region of origin, which will send copies to the regional office for the region of study; the latter may in turn forward a copy to the training institution through the host government.

Reports on subsequent use of the fellow's services

For all fellowships lasting three months or more a report on the utilization of the fellow's services (form WHO 55) must be completed in duplicate by the fellow and his national health administration twelve months after the end of the fellowship. At the appropriate time, the national health administration sends form WHO 55 to the fellow who completes side 2 and returns it to the government. The government adds its comments on side 1, retains one copy and sends the other to the regional office for the country of origin.

Publication of fellow's reports

WHO may publish extracts from any report in the WHO Chronicle or, after obtaining the permission of the fellow (and, where appropriate, of the government concerned), may publish a report in extenso.

8. Publications by fellows

Fellows are required to submit to WHO, for possible publication in one of the Organization's periodicals, any papers on the work they have performed during the fellowship period. Papers which are not retained for publication will be returned to the fellow. Such papers, if published elsewhere, must state that the work was done during a WHO fellowship, and must indicate that the statements made and the opinions expressed are not necessarily those of WHO; the author must not claim the authority of, or any direct connexion with, the Organization, nor claim to speak for his country unless so authorized.

9. WHO publications

Fellows may receive the WHO Chronicle and World Health free of charge for a certain time after the end of their fellowship. To obtain the WHO Chronicle, fellows, soon after returning home, complete the special request card (WHO 348) sent to them by the regional office for the country of origin with their Letter of Award and post it to WHO headquarters.

Fellows may also be given a list containing the titles of all WHO publications and the addresses of the booksellers in the various countries at which these publications may be purchased in local currency. By sending their order to the nearest WHO regional office, fellows may obtain a 50% reduction in the price of a publication or a 25% reduction in the subscription rate for a periodical.

10. Group training

Individuals nominated by their governments to take part in group training courses or study tours are treated as fellows if the course or tour lasts for more than about four weeks, and the conditions applicable to their fellowships are the same as those for fellowships for individual study. However, exceptions to the normal stipends shown in the Common Schedule of Stipend Rates may be authorized by the headquarters officer concerned for headquarters or interregional group training fellowships, or by the Regional Director concerned for regional or intercountry fellowships.

If the course or tour lasts for about four weeks or less, those invited to attend it are known as participants and are treated in the same way as those attending meetings such as seminars or symposia. This difference in terminology has the following main consequences: nominations from governments are invited on the first three pages of form WHO 52 only, thus omitting any reference to the future use of the nominee's services; neither a selection committee nor a medical examination is normally required; the Letter of Award may be replaced by a letter of invitation; instead of a stipend, the participants receive a daily subsistence allowance to cover their expenses, at a rate which is determined, with due regard to the conditions of the particular course or tour, by the headquarters officer or the Regional Director concerned.

Organization of training courses or study tours

When a training course is to be held at a recognized educational institution, plans for the attendance of WHO fellows or participants are made by the responsible headquarters technical unit in cooperation with the regional offices concerned for interregional courses, and by the regional fellowships officer for intercountry courses, either through the national health administration or direct with the institution concerned.

Certificates

The Organization does not issue certificates to participants in group training activities unless (a) WHO is entirely responsible for the organization and staffing of the course, and (b) there is a terminal examination by which the technical competence of the trainees can be assessed. Participants in training courses held under the auspices of national institutions and to which WHO is only lending technical or administrative support may, however, be given a certificate by the institution, in which a minor reference is made to the course being in part supported by WHO.

When approval is given for the issue of a certificate by WHO, it may be drawn up in advance and sufficient copies printed for one to be given to each participant passing the terminal examination. The certificate is signed by the WHO officer responsible for the activity.

11. National courses under resolution WHA6.35

WHO may assist a government to establish training courses for its nationals at training institutions within its own borders under the terms of resolution WHA6.35, by which the World Health Assembly provided that the Organization would pay a proportion of the costs of attendance at national training courses organized with WHO assistance. These courses are known as "national courses" and mention should always be made of resolution WHA6.35 when referring to them.

A national course may be organized when the award of fellowships for study abroad is impracticable for one or more of the following reasons:

- so many persons need training that the government can afford neither the expense nor the loss of manpower resulting from large numbers of its staff being out of the country at the same time, with a possible danger of their losing contact with the health situation at home;
- the training to be given is concerned primarily with local conditions or local practices, such as that required by auxiliaries of all kinds, e.g. medical, nursing, midwifery and sanitary assistants or aides;
- the candidates lack adequate knowledge of a required foreign language;
- the facilities abroad are inadequate in both quantity and quality for students to obtain training of the type required by the health situation in their country.

The WHO contribution is made in the form of a study grant paid to a training institution. The institution pays out of the WHO study grant the travel and living expenses of a number of students who would not otherwise be able to follow the course.

At the end of a course, all those taking part are invited to complete an appraisal form.

Annex III

Contribution

by

Miss S. Mandel

Medical Fellowships, Public Health Division, Council of Europe, Strasbourg

May I take this opportunity to thank WHO for inviting the Council of Europe to be represented at this meeting. I am glad that following the Cologne meeting of 1976 I have once more been designated to participate. I wish also to extend my thanks to the authorities of the host countries, Czechoslovakia and Austria.

In Cologne I reported on the Council of Europe's medical fellowships programme as given in the annex to the report of that meeting. Since then three countries - Portugal, Spain and Liechtenstein - have joined the Council of Europe, thus bringing the membership up to 21. Finland also participates in our fellowships programme.

At the request of the European Public Health Committee we are revising the regulations to bring them up to date, taking into account the experience gained from the various fellowships programmes and also synthesizing several information booklets distributed to the fellows. Draft regulations prepared by the Secretariat were worked out by the Selection Committee, on which Mr Fricke is an active member. These draft regulations are now being submitted to the European Public Health Committee and, if approved, will be submitted for adoption by the Committee of Ministers at the end of this year or beginning of next. They should therefore enter into force towards the middle of next year and in any case for the 1982 fellowships programme. The regulations should facilitate the administrative work concerning the fellowships and relations with the fellows.

In defining the objectives of the fellowships programme, two new forms of fellowship were brought up, the first being the bringing together in a given country of a small number of fellows wishing to extend their knowledge of a specific subject (such as therapy for a particular disease, anaesthesia techniques or the management of health units). This will facilitate the task of the host country which, instead of having to find suitable study centres for each fellow with different interests, could concentrate its efforts on one sphere. The second is a priority fellowship; i.e., within each annual individual fellowships programme a few months will be set aside for fellows studying a subject chosen by the European Public Health Committee. These priority fellowships will enable the collection of information and material which could be useful for the European Public Health Committee to investigate whether the covered field constitutes a matter for intergovernmental cooperation. If so, the European Public Health Committee could create the necessary committee of experts, which could begin its work on the basis of this concrete information and data covering several member states visited by the fellows.

Furthermore, within the framework of the programme of North-South cooperation at present under elaboration at the Council of Europe, and if special funds are allocated to it, specific training courses on blood problems and histocompatibility are proposed, at the request of southern countries such as Greece, Portugal, Spain and Turkey. The courses would take the form of either special fellowship programmes in blood problems or seminars held locally in these countries. This would allow a fairly large number of medical and paramedical personnel to receive further training.

The main objectives of the course should be the training of trainers. The form of courses proposed in the blood field could also be emphasized in the near future in other fields such as hygiene.

In a parallel direction with the new regulations, the European Public Health Committee decided that Fellows should submit, at the end of their studies, a two-part report, one part being the usual report on studies, to be sent in triplicate to the Council of Europe within two months, a copy of which will be sent by us to his country of origin; and the other part being a form issued by the Council of Europe. The form has been drawn up on the basis of that used by the WHO discussed during the last meeting in Cologne. This form, which the fellow will have to complete and return to the Council of Europe immediately after his study in each country, will enable an assessment to be made of the study programme drawn up for him. It will be of practical value to the Council of Europe, his country of origin and his host country. The form will be adopted together with the new Regulations and will enter into force for the 1982 programme.

At the invitation of the Spanish Government, the Council of Europe is convening the first European Conference of Ministers responsible for Public Health, to be held in Madrid from 22 to 24 September 1981. Its purpose is to examine the possibility of defining and devising a European model for the promotion of health. This Conference may well effect a rapprochement between the health policy aims of the various countries of Western Europe and reveal the main lines of a European health policy geared to current problems. The definition of health given by WHO - "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely an absence of disease or infirmity" - and the conclusions of the International Conference on Primary Health Care at Alma-Ata provide the starting point for a realistic strategy aiming at optimum health for all.

The main topics to be discussed at the Conference will be preventive medicine, education for health, and health and the environment.

I wish to stress that the WHO, which we are bound to by cooperative agreement, supported this initiative from the outset and it is cooperating closely in the form of technical assistance in preparing the Conference. WHO is and will be represented both at all the preparatory meetings and at the Conference itself.

To conclude, I wish to pay tribute to the close collaboration with WHO in all our activities concerning health, I refer especially to the WHO meeting held last March in Copenhagen with a view to coordinating efforts by international organizations working on health problems in different ways everywhere in Europe: Northern, Southern, Eastern and Western Europe. The coordination arrangements agreed upon enable educational and health programmes to be properly planned between international organizations. The Council of Europe is ready to work in this direction, in particular in the field of medical fellowships. I also wish to stress how much I appreciate the help I always find when completing the fellowships programme and in particular during the selection and assessment meetings where either Mr Fricke or Dr Manrique-de-Lara participate not merely as observers, but as real participants with all the duties and work that this involves.

Annex IV

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

PARTICIPANTS

ALGERIA

Mr K. Feddag
Ministry of Public Health, Algiers

AUSTRIA

Dr Sieglinde Weinberger
Fellowships Officer, Federal Ministry of Health and Environmental Protection, Vienna

BULGARIA

Dr Vera Beneva
Medical Officer, Department of International Health Relations, Ministry of Public Health, Sofia

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Dr J. Červenka
Director-General, Research Institute of Preventive Medicine, Bratislava (Chairman)

Mrs M. Grznarova
Senior Officer (Fellowships), Ministry of Health of the Slovak Socialist Republic, Bratislava

Mrs L. Otevřelova
Ministry of Health of the Czech Socialist Republic, Prague

DENMARK

Dr Elisabeth Raaschou-Nielsen
Fellowships Officer, National Board of Health, Copenhagen

FINLAND

Mrs P. Summerhill
Secretary, International Relations, National Board of Health, Helsinki

FRANCE

Dr Geneviève Bonis-Charancle
International Relations Division, Foreign Fellows Department, Ministry of Health and of the Family, Paris

GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

Mr W. Kaplonek
Scientific Assistant, Department of International Relations, Ministry of Public Health, Berlin

Dr Maria Gürtler
Senior Staff Member, Academy for Postgraduate Medical Education, Berlin

GERMANY, FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF

Mr D. B. Eggert
Fellowships Officer, International Relations Section, Federal Ministry for Youth, Family
Affairs and Health, Bonn

HUNGARY

Mrs Z. Jakab
Department of International Relations, Ministry of Health of the Hungarian's People's
Republic, Budapest

MALTA

Mr C. Zammit
Assistant Head, Government of the Republic of Malta, Ministry of Health and Environment,
Valletta

NETHERLANDS

Mrs C. H. Schaap
Fellowships Officer, Office of the Director for International Affairs, Ministry of Health and
Environmental Protection, Leidschendam

NORWAY

Mrs M. Alsrød
Fellowships Administrative Officer, The Health Services of Norway, Oslo

POLAND

Mrs B. Bitner
International Relations Department, Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, Warsaw

PORTUGAL

Mr F. Cabrita Matias
Department of International Relations, Ministry of Social Affairs, Lisbon

SPAIN

Dr M. de la Mata
Chief, International Health Affairs, Ministry of Public Health and Social Security, Madrid

SWEDEN

Mrs E. Allgulander
Fellowships Administrative Officer, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Stockholm

SWITZERLAND

Miss S. Bornand
Fellowships Officer, Fellowships Department, Medical Division, Federal Office of Public
Health, Bern

TURKEY

Mr S. Cezikturk
Fellowships Officer, Ministry of Health and Social Assistance, Ankara

UNITED KINGDOM

Dr S. Campbell
Senior Medical Officer, Department of Health and Social Security, London (Vice-chairman)

YUGOSLAVIA

Dr Ljiljana Stojanovic
Junior Fellowships Officer, Federal Committee for Labour, Health and Social Welfare,
Novi Beograd

REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Council of Europe

Miss S. Mandel
Medical Fellowships, Public Health Division, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, France

OBSERVERS

Dr P. Okungbowa
Assistant Director of Public Health Services, Lagos, Nigeria

Mrs H. Mabuza
Chief Nursing Officer, Ministry of Health, Mbabane, Swaziland

TEMPORARY ADVISER

Miss E. Wright
Fellowships Department, The British Council, London, United Kingdom (Rapporteur)

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

Regional Office for Europe

Mr E. C. Fricke
Fellowships Officer

Dr R. Manrique-de-Lara
Regional Officer for Fellowships and Promotion of Training (Secretary)

Mrs Y. Shaw
Liaison Assistant, Government Office for WHO, Ankara

Dr A. Wojtczak
Director, Research, Planning and Human Resources

Headquarters

Dr A. Mejia
Chief Medical Officer, Health Manpower Systems, Division of Health Manpower Development

Regional Office for Africa

Mr F. Quevison
Fellowships Officer

Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean

Mrs S. Gebril
Fellowships Assistant

Regional Office for South-East Asia

Dr Z. Jadamba
Fellowships Medical Officer

Regional Office for the Western Pacific

Dr J. P. Menu
Fellowships Medical Officer