

PROCESS INDICATORS

These 38 indicators provide quantitative information on the mechanisms and activities by which a national drug policy is implemented. They monitor the main aspects of each key strategy/component of drug policy:

- ◆ legislation and regulation;
- ◆ essential drug selection and drug registration;
- ◆ drug allocation in the health budget/public sector financing policy;
- ◆ public sector procurement procedures;
- ◆ public sector distribution and logistics;
- ◆ pricing policy;
- ◆ information and continuing education on drug use.

Within each component/strategy, the process indicators allow assessment of the effectiveness and efficiency of the mechanisms and activities which have been put in place. This effectiveness is measured according to standards and targets set at national level, and which may be modified over time. For instance, a country may decide that in order to improve its drug procurement procedures in the public sector, 90% in value of the drugs will be bought by tender by the year 1999 (PR19); another country may decide to set its target at 70%.

The process indicators are measured by a percentage, using information available at the central level and/or obtained through surveys. For some indicators in certain specific situations, the figures used for calculating the percentages can also provide useful information. These indicators can be used for assisting national decision-makers and senior management staff in monitoring progress in the implementation of the national drug policy, by providing quantitative measures of achievement of targets set at the national level. Each year, the percentage measured should come closer to the national standard. Indeed, they allow comparison between the situation at the time the indicator is calculated the situation a few years previously or an ideal situation (e.g. PR23), and therefore give information on the progress achieved.

The results of the process indicators should be analysed together with the results of the structural indicators and this in the framework of each of the seven key strategies/components. It is considered that if for each component/strategy all the structures and systems are in place (structural indicators) and if they function properly (process indicators), it should be possible to achieve the main objectives of drug policy.

Field experience shows that data which have to be collected at central level for calculating process indicators can be obtained within two weeks — if the data