

COORDINATION OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION IN STATISTICS

WHO statistical training activities

Report prepared by the World Health Organization

1. Every year, in response to specific requests from Member States, WHO sends consultants to advise on improvements in national health statistical and information systems, and train nationals in this field.
2. In 1988 a document was published entitled Training Modules for Household Surveys on Health and Nutrition (WHO/HST/ESM/88.1 - English only). These modules are intended for use in workshops to provide or increase the skills of statisticians in planning and implementing health survey programmes in collaboration with health authorities, and to make health managers aware of the potentials and limitations of health information available from household interview surveys. The Spanish and French editions of: Teaching Health Statistics: Twenty Lesson and Seminar Outlines have been published. Arabic, Chinese, Russian and Turkish translations are in preparation.
3. Training courses in epidemiology, which include a strong element of statistics, are offered in Africa in alternate years in French at Bamako, Mali, and in English at Nairobi, Kenya. These courses last for several months and are aimed at African graduate students.
4. As part of their training courses for mid-level managers, the Expanded Programme on Immunization and the Control of Diarrhoeal Diseases Programme have modules on estimating disease incidence, evaluating vaccination coverage and conducting household surveys on diarrhoea morbidity, mortality and treatment practices. These modules include survey design, sample selection and the analysis of results.
5. Training courses on the use of the International Classification of Diseases, 9th revision (ICD-9), including analysis of the data, have been held in China, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Brazil, Portugal and Fiji.
6. In 1989 WHO will carry out training in demography and vital statistics in Malta in collaboration with UNSO.

7. The Committee on Research Resources of the Special Programme on Research, Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction (HRP) has designed and implemented since 1985 a broad plan for strengthening biostatistical, epidemiological and data processing capabilities of collaborating institutions in developing countries. Up to the end of 1988, 48 research training grants had been awarded in those 3 areas, to institutions in 12 developing countries. In addition, 8 research training grantees, on return from study abroad, have spent 6-8 weeks with HRP in Geneva to acquire practical experience in the design, management and statistical analysis of clinical trials and epidemiological studies. Also, 24 courses on statistics and epidemiology or statistics and data processing were held in China, Thailand, Indonesia and 6 African countries.

8. The Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (TDR) held a workshop in Arusha in December 1988 to establish epidemiological field research study protocols on malaria and schistosomiasis. This workshop had a strong statistical component. The participants were all from African countries, and were trained in developing research protocols for submission for funding. As a followup, they will be trained in analysing the results of the research.

9. Epi Info Version 5, a general purpose micro-computer programme, has been designed and developed jointly by WHO and the Epidemiology Program Office, Centers for Disease Control, Atlanta, Georgia USA to facilitate the management and analysis of epidemiological data. It contains modules for defining data entry screens, performing data entry and editing, and for producing line lists, frequency distributions, crosstabulation tables, t-test, analysis of variance, multiple linear regression statistics, and simple graphs. It also includes utilities for importing from and exporting to other common data formats such as Lotus 1-2-3, dBase III, SPSS, and SAS. This software has been distributed (in an earlier version) to a number of countries.