

HEALTH LEADERS FOR FIFTY YEARS



World Health Organization

Western Pacific Region

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WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION IN VIET NAM

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The World Health Organization (WHO) is the United Nations' specialized agency for health. It has more than 50 years' experience supporting countries and peoples to improve their health. WHO works with 193 countries and has worked in Viet Nam for more than 50 years, primarily with the Ministry of Health but also with other partners.

WHO has played a critical role in disease control and prevention for decades. It has led the battle to eradicate polio. Viet Nam was declared polio-free in 2000. In 2003, WHO collaborated successfully with governments and other partners to contain Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and since the first outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (H5N1) in December 2003, has worked closely with the Government and other partners in successful efforts to prevent and control the spread of the virus.

HEALTH LEADERS FOR FIFTY YEARS

WHO has also been at the forefront of efforts against other diseases. It has assisted the Government in achieving neonatal tetanus elimination status, devised strategies to combat public health threats and set standards for various public health issues, including maternal and child health. WHO helped shape Viet Nam's highly successful malaria programme, which resulted in a 90% drop in deaths in five years. A WHO-led strategy has also helped to almost eliminate leprosy in Viet Nam.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

HIV/AIDS

Supporting surveillance, harm reduction for injecting drug users and sex-workers; providing technical assistance to a large number of projects for HIV prevention and care/treatment of HIV/AIDS patients; advocating for internationally recognized interventions and to decrease stigma and discrimination.

MALARIA

Developing and applying a new model for the control and prevention of malaria in migrants in the Central Highlands of Viet Nam; Providing long-lasting nets and necessary equipment; developing an effective model for control and prevention of malaria in border areas.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE SURVEILLANCE

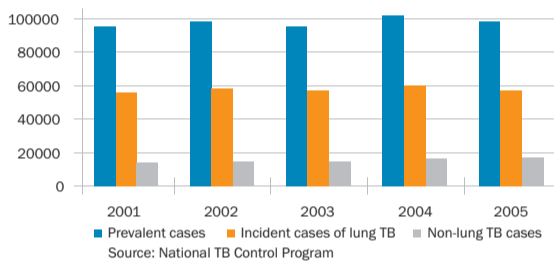
Providing technical advice to appropriate departments and laboratories responsible for disease surveillance and response; working to improve the surveillance system including the development of an Early Warning System; facilitating training for rapid response teams at the central, provincial and district level and assisting with National Pandemic Preparedness Planning.



COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

TUBERCULOSIS (TB)

Promoting the WHO global strategy to Stop TB; Contributing to the first National Tuberculosis Prevalence Survey; assisting in the development and implementation of the national strategy for HIV/TB collaborative activities; assisting the Ministry of Health in the development of a five-year National TB Plan.



HEALTH PROMOTION & NONCOMMUNICABLE DISEASES (NCDs)

COMBATING TOBACCO

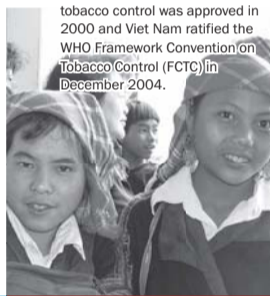
WHO has helped the Government to implement policy, conduct research, and support treatment and prevention activities. A national policy on tobacco control was approved in 2000 and Viet Nam ratified the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) in December 2004.

FOOD SAFETY

Food contamination at the production and processing stage has become a major concern. Food poisoning and diarrhoea-related diseases from consumption of unsafe and unhygienic food continue to be a major cause of morbidity. WHO has helped the Ministry of Health to formulate policy to train food handlers on hygienic food preparation. A network of food laboratories has been set up for food surveillance, monitoring and analysis.

INJURY CONTROL AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

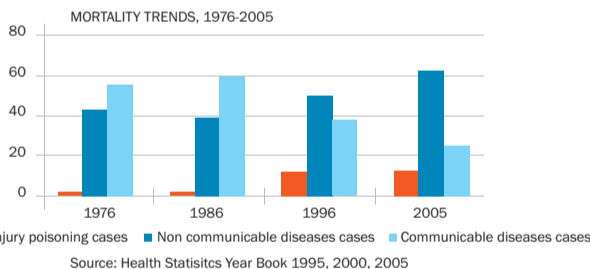
Providing technical assistance with primary focus on establishing a comprehensive injury surveillance system; developing standards for trauma care; and teaching curriculum for injury prevention. In the area of occupational health, WHO is supporting research on emerging occupational hazards that will eventually lead to the development of codes of practices for occupational health.



HEALTH PROMOTION & NONCOMMUNICABLE DISEASES (NCDs)

NONCOMMUNICABLE DISEASES (NCDs)

Developing community-based interventions to prevent and control NCDs, including surveillance activities; expanding NCD services from the provincial to lower level; and focusing on cost-effective interventions.



HEALTH SYSTEMS

BLOOD SAFETY

Formulating strategies and actions to speed up the development of a national blood transfusion service, increase voluntary blood donations, improve blood supply and blood safety and promote appropriate clinical use of blood. WHO is providing technical assistance to the World Bank-funded establishment of regional blood centres in Viet Nam.

PHARMACEUTICALS

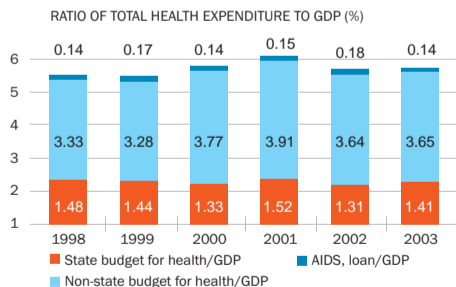
Working with government agencies to improve the technical capacity for the quality assurance of pharmaceuticals by acquiring appropriate technology, undertaking research, organizing meetings and conferences, supporting scientists and technicians to undertake higher education and conducting regular programme monitoring and evaluation exercises.



HEALTH SYSTEMS

HEALTH FINANCING

Assisting the Government in the development and institutionalization of a National Health Account System to be used as a tool for monitoring and health financing policy-making; capacity building for local and central staff on health financial planning and management, within the context of decentralization. Advocating for equitable and sustainable health financing approaches.



HEALTH SYSTEMS

HEALTH INSURANCE

Providing technical assistance to the Ministry of Health and the Viet Nam Social Security Agency, for policy formulation and implementation of the national social health insurance system.

HEALTH, HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER

Advancing health as a human right; promoting the use of a human rights-based approach to health development; supporting the health sector to play a role in the Government's country reporting on the implementation of international human rights conventions guaranteeing the right to health; supporting the health sector's input to relevant legislation in development (i.e. gender equality law, law on domestic violence).

HEALTH SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

Building and strengthening health sub-systems (human resources, health information, health financing, health legislation etc.) at various geo-political levels. Ensuring health equity for all, advocating for higher investment in the health sector and more effective utilization of resources for health.

MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH, ADOLESCENT HEALTH

HEPATITIS B VACCINATION

Hepatitis B is a serious problem in Viet Nam. The prevalence of Hepatitis B surface Antigen (HbsAg) carriers in Viet Nam ranges from 10-20% depending on the target group surveyed. Approximately 11% of pregnant women are infected and can transmit the virus to their baby. A programme to vaccinate babies against Hepatitis B began in 2002. WHO assisted in all areas, including helping secure international funds, conducting related surveys and training health workers.

HEALTHY SCHOOLS

WHO supports school health programmes focused on improving the health status and health knowledge and behaviours of Vietnamese students in primary schools. One important partnership between WHO, the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education is the Health Promoting Schools (HPS) Programme. It focuses on four key areas: Health education in classrooms, school health services, physical facilities especially water and sanitation, and healthy school policy. Another important school health intervention is the de-worming programme that has provided tablets to prevent worm infections in around three million students in primary schools across the country.

ADOLESCENT HEALTH

Supporting the collection of strategic information and policy development in adolescent and youth health. WHO, Ministry of Health and other partners initiated the first national survey on health, lifestyle and social behaviour (SAVY) and recently completed a Youth Health Master Plan 2006-2010. Efforts to improve services for young people through training health workers and focusing on management has prompted the development of draft National Guidelines for Youth Friendly Health Services.

MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH, ADOLESCENT HEALTH

IMMUNIZATION

Assisting in routine immunization and campaigns for polio, measles and other vaccine-preventable diseases; monitoring vaccine handling and promoting safe injection practices. Providing technical guidance on domestic vaccine production.

NUTRITION

Promoting the WHO new growth standard to the Ministry of Health; supporting the translation into Vietnamese of the WHO feeding manual; promoting breastfeeding within the Country National Action Plan for Child Survival.

MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

Supporting the implementation of safe motherhood activities, including newborn care; supporting child survival activities including integrated management of childhood illness (IMCI) and child nutrition; assisting the Government in adapting and implementing the joint WHO/UNICEF Regional Strategy for Child Survival.

