

Multilingualism: implementation of action plan

Report by the Director-General

1. The multilingualism: plan of action was adopted by the Sixty-first World Health Assembly in May 2008.¹ The present report summarizes progress in implementing the action plan requested in resolution WHA61.12.
2. Efforts to increase multilingual content on the WHO website have continued. The multilingual team of web editors, working with the Secretariat's translation service, has reduced the gap in availability of technical content between English and the other five official languages of the Organization. The team has also made all corporate web content available in the six official languages. During the biennium 2016–2017, 1371 webpages were added in Arabic, 1918 in Chinese, 9739 in English, 2181 in French, 1747 in Russian and 1828 in Spanish. Some 150 million readers visited WHO multilingual website during that period.
3. As at February 2018, WHO's Institutional Repository for Information Sharing (IRIS) included more than 205 000 records in the official languages, comprising WHO information products and governing bodies documentation (including Health Assembly and Executive Board documentation from 1948 onwards). The Repository is currently tracking an average of 2.9 million downloads per month.
4. In 2017, the Russian Federation provided funds to support a second project for increasing the quality and quantity of WHO's technical and scientific information products available in the Russian language, and for improving their dissemination to Russian-speaking audiences: 19 publications will be translated and published in Russian at headquarters and in the Regional Office for Europe, and 20 existing print publications in Russian will be digitized and stored in IRIS. Two special issues of the *Bulletin of the World Health Organization* in Russian and four issues of the journal *Public Health Panorama* will be published. A *data and evidence* section in Russian will be created on the website of the Regional Office for Europe. A Russian language glossary of public health terminology will also be created. Citation analyses of WHO materials in Russian will be produced.
5. Work to ensure that WHO's information products are available in official and non-official languages has continued. During the biennium 2016–2017, WHO Press authorized external partners and regional offices to undertake 410 translations of 273 headquarters' products into 58 languages (five official and 53 non-official).
6. WHO continues to offer a distance-learning language programme for the official languages of the Organization, as well as for German and Portuguese.

¹ Document WHA61/2008/REC/1.

7. During the biennium 2016–2017, WHO continued to publish the following serials with multilingual content: *Bulletin of the World Health Organization* (English full text; abstracts in Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish); *Eastern Mediterranean Health Journal* (Arabic, English or French full text; abstracts in Arabic, English and French); *African Health Monitor* (English, French or Portuguese full text; abstracts in English, French and Portuguese); *Public Health Panorama* (English and Russian); *Weekly Epidemiological Record* (English and French); *Pan American Journal of Public Health* (English, Portuguese and Spanish); *Western Pacific Surveillance and Response* (Chinese and English); *WHO Drug Information* (English, with International Nonproprietary Names in English, French, Latin and Spanish).

ACTION BY THE HEALTH ASSEMBLY

8. The Health Assembly is invited to note the report.

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