



Memorandum

Date April 15, 1985

From WHO Collaborating Center for Research, Training, and Control of Dracunculiasis, CDC

Subject GUINEAWORM WRAP-UP #8

To Addressees

NATIONAL ACTIVITIESNIGERIAN NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON DRACUNCULIASIS

The First National Conference on Dracunculiasis in Nigeria was convened at Ilorin, in Kwara State, Nigeria, from March 25 to 27, 1985. The conference was sponsored by the Federal Ministry of Health, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the University of Ilorin. The main objectives of the conference, which were to assess the status of dracunculiasis in Nigeria and to recommend appropriate steps to control or eliminate the disease, were amply achieved. Over 250 participants attended the conference, including representatives of 17 of Nigeria's 19 States plus the Federal Capital Territory, and 6 consultants from India, the United Kingdom, and the USA.

Representatives of each of the States represented made individual presentations, describing the distribution of the disease and control measures directed against it in their endemic areas. A detailed map of the distribution of the disease by Local Government Area was prepared for the whole country; dracunculiasis was confirmed to be occurring in all 19 States and the Federal Capital Territory. Over 25 technical papers were also presented. The conference was reported extensively by national newspapers, radio and television.

The participants concluded that dracunculiasis is a serious national public health problem in Nigeria; that appropriate action against the disease is needed at Federal, State, and local governmental levels and at the community level in support of primary health care, and making maximum use of the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade; and that the health, agricultural, educational, and other benefits to be expected, and the less than 6 years remaining in the Water and Sanitation Decade, justify an intensive effort over the next several years to eradicate dracunculiasis from the country. Specific follow-up actions were outlined.

A summary of this meeting, including the recommendations, has been prepared for WHO's Weekly Epidemiological Record. Nigeria probably represents about 25 percent of the remaining cases of dracunculiasis outside of India.

INDEPENDENT APPRAISAL OF INDIAN GUINEAWORM ERADICATION PROGRAM

In January 1985, the Indian Guineaworm Eradication Programme underwent a thorough review by a team of public health experts who were not involved in administering the programme. Team members visited all endemic States, reviewed records of the Active Searches, evaluated the cooperation between water supply authorities and public health staff at State, district, and local levels, and noted the nature and extent of health education and vector control efforts. The final report is being prepared.

As a result of the November 1984 Active Search, Tamil Nadu State has been removed from the list of endemic States. No cases of dracunculiasis have been found there for three consecutive years. That leaves only 6 endemic States in India, including Gujarat, where only 428 cases were found in the latest search.

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES

SEVERAL AGENCIES BEGIN OR INCREASE ANTI-DRACUNCULIASIS ACTIVITIES

Since the previous issue of Guinea Worm Wrap-up, the U.S. Peace Corps has begun training 10 Peace Corps Volunteers each in Benin and Togo to assist anti-dracunculiasis efforts in association with water supply or health education projects in those two countries.

The Christian Medical Commission, a consortium of medical missionary groups, has indicated to the World Health Organization that CMC will request its membership to help in surveillance and other control measures against dracunculiasis in endemic countries where its affiliates have mission hospitals or clinics.

Working under a contract with USAID, Water and Sanitation for Health (WASH) has prepared an options paper outlining various possible control measures for use against dracunculiasis, ranging from a full-scale control program, to activities which could be added to ongoing water-supply, health education, or primary health care projects. This paper will be sent to all USAID missions in endemic countries for their consideration.

The World Neighbors Society has just completed an excellent 26-page flipchart designed to be used in teaching village audiences about guinea worm disease, its transmission, consequences, and control. The 8 1/2" x 11" flipchart, with black and white drawings and English and French texts on the reverse side of each drawing, was developed with community health workers in Ghana and Togo. They are available for U.S. \$4.00 each from: World Neighbors, Division of Communication and Education, 5116 North Portland Ave., Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73112, USA. A short film strip, "Where Does the Guinea Worm Come From?" will also be available soon in English or French from the same source.

The World Health Organization has officially notified the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), of CDC's designation as a WHO Collaborating Center for Research, Training and Control of Dracunculiasis.

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