4. COLLABORATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES

As in previous years, the Regional Office has maintained close relations with other agencies working in the field of health by consultations, joint meetings and mutual participation in conferences on subjects of mutual interest. A most useful means of co-ordination is offered by the co-ordinating committees which have been set up by many of the health ministries.

4.1 United Nations

Efforts have continued to bring about even closer collaboration with the United Nations and with its specialized agencies. This subject was discussed in some detail at the Regional Director's annual meeting with the Area Representatives. Both the Regional Office and the Area Representatives have maintained close working liaison with the Resident Representatives. It is not only necessary to prevent any further reductions in the overall financial participation of the Organization in the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance, but, as and when possible, to support health projects by assuring them the necessary priority.

With UNICEF, which remains WHO's closest partner in this region, day-to-day co-operation is particularly necessary in view of the volume of supplies and equipment which UNICEF is providing for joint WHO/UNICEF activities. For 1959 the total UNICEF contributions to joint activities are in the neighbourhood of 14,038,500. This has had its repercussions on the workload of the Regional Office, which is responsible for technical advice and for technical approval of all supplies provided by UNICEF for these joint activities. These joint projects in fields such as tuberculosis, public health, maternal and child health, nursing, leprosy and malaria control, are being carried on in all countries of the Region except Nepal (with which UNICEF is now negotiating an agreement) and Portuguese India.

In addition to the joint WHO/UNICEF activities, the Regional Office has continued to give technical assistance to UNICEF with respect to a large number of supply projects for which WHO is not providing personnel (see Introduction to Part III, page 38).

WHO maintains co-operation with ECAFE. The Regional Office was represented at four ECAFE conferences or seminars - one on housing, one on statistics, another on industry and natural resources (session on housing and building materials), and a fourth on a hydrologic network.

In October a United Nations team of experts on land settlement, on a study tour of Asia and the Far-East, visited the Regional Office, and in December another such team came on a mission to evaluate community development in India. Because of its expanding programme in rural health and community development, WHO is vitally concerned with other national and international work being done on these subjects.
Other fields in which there has been continued co-operation with the United Nations have been social welfare, fellowships, statistics, public information, and community development. In community development, in addition to the joint UNICEF/WHO projects mentioned above, WHO took part in the "Six Countries" Seminar on the Planning and Administration of National Community Development, which was held in Bangkok in February/March under the auspices of the United Nations.

4.2 Specialized Agencies

The Regional Office has continued to co-operate with several of the specialized agencies of the United Nations in aspects of their work which relate to health, particularly FAO, ILO and UNESCO.

FAO

In November WHO was represented at the Regional School Feeding Seminar for Asia and the Far-East, which was held in Tokyo under the joint sponsorship of FAO and UNICEF. WHO's work in nutrition in Thailand has been carried out in conjunction with FAO.

ILO

The main result of co-operation with ILO during the year was the jointly sponsored Conference on Industrial and Occupational Health, which was held in the All-India Institute of Hygiene and Public Health in Calcutta in November/December (see under Part III, SEARO 6).

UNESCO

WHO maintains its interest in the UNESCO Research Centre on the Study of Social Implications of Industrialization in Calcutta. The Regional Office was represented at the Seminar on Visual Aids in Fundamental Education on Community Development in New Delhi in September.

International Atomic Energy Agency

Representatives of WHO met with members of a Preliminary Assistance Mission of IAEA, which visited Burma, Ceylon, Indonesia and Thailand in February. Since then, a programme has been started in Burma, where fellowships have already been awarded, and in Thailand, where an IAEA consultant has instituted a programme of instructions in the medical uses of radioisotopes. The course for health physicists organized by WHO in India is described elsewhere.

4.3 Bilateral Agencies

WHO's relations with two bilateral agencies in particular, the United States International Co-operation Administration (ICA) and the Colombo Plan, have become even closer during the year both in the Regional Office and in the field.
ICA

ICA has increased its assistance to health programmes in this region to a considerable degree, particularly in the field of malaria eradication. Close co-operation between ICA and WHO takes place first in the planning stage of malaria programmes at the regional and country level; then at the implementation and assessment stage at the peripheral level, and thirdly at the conference table. Other fields of joint work with ICA have been nursing, in which co-operation with WHO is also developing both at the higher administrative level and in the field, health education, health statistics, sanitation and the control of insect-borne diseases. ICA and WHO are now making plans to assist jointly with the Calcutta Water Supply Programme. Medical education is another subject to which ICA gives support, and a number of fellowships which cannot be accommodated under WHO programmes have been offered by ICA.

Colombo Plan

The Colombo Plan is providing substantial assistance to the same six countries by way of equipment to hospitals, training of nurses and fellowships. Its work in most countries is closely co-ordinated with that of WHO, and Colombo Plan and WHO experts have worked side by side. Co-operation with the Colombo Plan was particularly close during the cholera epidemic in Nepal. The assistance which the Colombo Plan is starting to give to medical libraries has been mentioned elsewhere in this report (see Part I, page 22).

4.4 Non-Governmental and Other Organizations

Contacts have been maintained with the local branches or affiliated regional associations (where they exist) of the forty-six non-governmental organizations which are now in official relations with WHO. Among such local associations are those working in the fields of tuberculosis, nursing, dental health, pediatrics, leprosy, health education, social welfare, and housing and town planning, as well as the Red Cross societies, the national medical associations and the world veterans' associations.

The Burma Medical Association was particularly active in organizing a Cancer Week in August 1958. The Indian National Red Cross gave appreciable assistance to Nepal during the cholera epidemic, and Nepal is now considering the possibility of joining the International Red Cross and setting up its own association.

Of the many other organizations with which useful work is being done, the most noteworthy are the Rockefeller Foundation and the Ford Foundation, particularly in the fields of medical education and fellowships. In India, the Rockefeller Foundation is, notably, assisting the All-India Institute of Medical Sciences, the Indian Institute of Child Health and the Medical Colleges in Ludhiana and Vellore. The Ford Foundation has given grants to Nepal and Thailand and substantial aid to India, where it has concentrated on orientation and training centres and research-cum-action projects in environmental sanitation. WHO has provided some advice on health education to these projects and was represented at the Conference on Environmental Sanitation organized by the Ford Foundation at Nadjafgarh in April.
Other organizations working in the field of health with which WHO has maintained contact are the Asia Foundation (which grants fellowships in Burma and is coming into the health field in Thailand), CARE (assisting with school-feeding in Thailand), and the India Aid Mission (which is giving some assistance to health programmes in Nepal).

For a complete list of meetings organized by other organizations in this region at which WHO was represented, see Annexes 3 and 4.

5. PUBLIC INFORMATION

The gap between the ever-increasing demand for information material on WHO and the capacity to supply it continued to be a problem during the year. The policy of meeting the shortage, at least partly, by stimulating production of material by private and public sources was found to work satisfactorily.

An example of this co-operation was the picture book "It Happened To Me", brought out by a publisher at very little cost to WHO. This booklet, aimed at promoting recruitment of eligible girls in the nursing profession, has had very favourable comments from health authorities and from nursing and health education workers in the Region as well as elsewhere. Further language editions - the booklet is already published in three languages - are to be produced.

On similar lines, another picture-book on health developments in Nepal, stressing particularly the economic benefits of malaria eradication, has been accepted by a firm of publishers for production entirely at their own expense.

The programme of publishing abridged language editions of "Mankind Against the Killers", launched in 1957, continued to make headway. The book is now available in four Indian languages; the Nepali edition is ready to go to press, and the publishers are negotiating publication of Burmese and Sinhalese editions. The Indian editions have been approved as textbooks or recommended for libraries by several State governments.

A film script on trachoma control, written in collaboration with the WHO trachomatoologist in India, has been approved by the Government of India and is now in course of production. WHO has no financial commitments in this case, but UNICEF has offered a certain amount of raw film.

Several Member Governments gave valuable support in distributing the picture-set "World Health Advances" and in overprinting it in their respective languages at their own expense. Private organizations such as medical associations, which were offered sets without captions, also brought out their own language editions of the set.

Orders were received for more than 10,000 picture sets. The suggestion to overprint the set in local languages - at the recipients' expense - was accepted. With captions in local languages the pictures can reach more people and have more meaning for the layman. Sets were produced in Burmese, Gujarati, Hindi, Marathi, Oriya and Sinhalese.