

PREFACE

A regional consultation of senior decision-makers and professionals from national health and water supply authorities of Bangladesh and India as well as international experts on Arsenic in Drinking Water and Resulting Toxicity took place in the WHO South-East Asia Regional Office, New Delhi, India, from 29 April – 1 May 1997.

The consultation provided an opportunity for the participants to exchange experience and findings on the problems of arsenic poisoning on both sides of the border between India and Bangladesh. It also provided a forum to discuss the extent and the nature of the problem, as well as identify issues and possible solutions to the problem. The health and environmental engineering aspects were also discussed which led to recommendations for immediate and long-term actions.

Based on the conclusions of this consultation, the present document "Recommendations for Action" has been prepared. The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to national authorities to prepare national action plans for providing immediate relief to the victims and to develop long-term measures to tackle a major public health hazard arising out of the presence of arsenic in drinking water supplies in Bangladesh and India.