

# **New statutes of International Association of Rural Health and Medicine (IARM): Draft**

September 10, 2015

## **Article 1: NAME**

The International Association of Rural Health and Medicine (IARM) was originally founded under the name of "**The International Association of Agricultural Medicine and Rural Health (IAAMRH)**" in 1961. Its name has been changed into "International Association of Rural Health and Medicine" in 2009.

## **Article 2: OBJECTIVES**

The International Association of Rural Health and Medicine is an independent Association of Rural Health experts from different scientific disciplines. According to the WHO goal of "Health for All in the 21<sup>st</sup> century", it aims at the sustainable health development of people living in rural and remote areas in the fields of

- Health of the general population
- Rural occupational health
- Environmental health.

To achieve these aims, the tasks of the association are:

1. to publish professional journals and publications
2. to formulate the official opinion of the Association on professional questions
3. to provide professional advice and opinion to governmental or social organisations on the national and/or international level, on request or by decision of the executive board
4. to conduct professional competitions in various issues and aspects of rural health and medicine to establish awards, commemorative medals and prizes
5. to collaborate with expert individuals organizations, as and when required, in undertaking various tasks for realising the objectives of the Association
6. to establish regional, national organisations and specialised commissions for the improvement of this branch of science

## **Article 3: MEMBERSHIP**

3.1 The association recognizes four types of member:

1. **Full Members (individual and collective)**
2. **Honorary Members**
3. **Associated Members**
4. **Affiliated members**

**1. FULL MEMBERSHIP** is available for professionals and scientific bodies / organisations who are interested or involved in the field of rural health and medicine. Full members accept the statutes of the Association and pay a prescribed fee for a period of minimum three years. They are admitted by the Association by passing a resolution to this effect at its Executive Board meeting. They will have voting rights.

**2. HONORARY MEMBERSHIP** is given to individuals who, because of their work in the field of rural health and medicine are elected by the General Assembly after being recommended by the Executive Board. Such persons once elected become permanent life members of the Association. They will have voting rights.

**3. ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP** is available for public or private corporate bodies who support the aims of the Association. Such bodies are expected to pay the prescribed membership fees. Associate members may participate in the General Assembly and other meetings. They may move motions and participate in discussions. However, they do not have the right to vote and cannot be elected to the Executive Board.

**4. AFFILIATED MEMBERSHIP:** Other scientific societies with an interest in rural health and medicine shall be eligible for Affiliated Society Membership

3.2 Application for membership shall be submitted in writing. The executive committee decides on the admission. A letter of complaint may be filed against a rejecting decision within a month after delivery, which is decided upon on the next statutory meeting of the members. The complaint decision shall be delivered in writing. There is no right of membership.

3.3 All members are entitled to advantages, given by the Association. Any member of the Association or its Boards may submit a proposal through the Executive Board to award a prize to an outstanding member.

3.4. The membership ends

- a) in the case of death or dissolution (legal entity) of the member
- b) by withdrawal
- c) by exclusion from the association
- d) by exclusion due to removal from the membership list.

#### **Article 4: MEMBERSHIP FEES**

1.1 Individual members pay a membership fee valid for three years. The amount is decided on by the majority of the General Assembly (Art. 9) respectively effecting the following financial year.

1.2 Affiliated Societies and National Associations (Art. 6) pay an annual membership fee. The amount of the gross fee for these members is based upon the number of individual members they have, calculated from Jan. 1 to cover the year ahead. The amount of the fee is decided by the General Assembly with the proviso that the per capita fee charged to any Member Society will not exceed 10% of the fee for the individual membership of that Affiliated Society.

#### **Article 5: RESIGNATION**

5.1 Any member wishing to resign from IARM may do so by writing to the President or Secretary-General. Resignations have to be received before Jan. 1 of the year of resignation. Resignations are accepted by the Executive Board (Art.10) on the recommendation of President/Secretary.

5.2 Any Society or individual member can be removed from the membership list, if there are arrears of three (3) membership fees or if there exist other arrears of the member of at least this amount at the association.

5.3 A member can be excluded from the association, in case of a serious act against the interests of the association. Such termination is carried out by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Executive Board. The exclusion is decided on by General Assembly with 2/3 majority. The Executive Board shall send a copy of the request for exclusion, including justifications, to the concerned member at least two weeks before the General Assembly. If there is a written statement of the concerned member, it shall be brought to the attention of the meeting of the members. The exclusion decision shall be communicated to the members by the Executive Board in writing and becomes effective upon delivery.

## **Article 6: NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS**

6.1 Considering the peculiarities of rural health problems in different countries, National Associations may be established in the field of rural health and medicine. They organize activities in their country in association with other specialities and in accordance with the organisational framework of the country. They may hold independent meetings, collaborate with other organisations and elect their own Executive Board. National associations are acknowledged as members cooperating with the IARM.

6.2 The national associations may formulate their independent statutes and national programs. They acknowledge the Statutes of IARM and accept it. They coordinate their activities with the programs of IARM.

6.3 Representatives of the National Associations can participate in the Board Meeting of IARM with consultative rights

6.4 They shall remit an annual membership fee as prescribed by the Association. The membership will be cancelled if they do not pay the fee for three consecutive years (Art. 4.2).

6.5 The National Associations are actively involved in the activities of the Regional Divisions (Art. 7). The Presidents and Secretaries- General of National Associations have voting rights in the Regional Councils.

## **Article 7: REGIONAL DIVISIONS**

7.1 Considering the peculiarities of rural communities due to different on geographical, life and work conditions, the Association may decide on the establishment of Regional Divisions on the recommendation of the Board. The Regional Divisions assist with the establishment of National Associations or Special Committees and support their work. They coordinate the activities of organisations in the field of rural health and medicine in the region and collaborate with other like-minded associations. They may also hold independent meetings.

7.2 The Regional Divisions comprise individual members working in rural health and National Associations.

7.3 The Regional Divisions are directed by the Regional Council comprising the President

of the Regional Council, the Secretary-General of the Regional Council, the presidents of National Associations working in the region, Secretaries-General of National Associations and three to seven

elected members.

7.4 The President, the Secretary-General and the members of the Regional Divisions are elected by open vote by the Regional Assembly on the recommendation of the President of IARM.

7.5 Assembly Meetings of the Regional Divisions are held once a year . Members of the Association and representatives of National Associations have voting rights.

7.6 Regional Divisions shall remit an annual membership fee as prescribed by the Association (Art. 4.2). The membership will be cancelled if they do not pay the fee for three- consecutive years.

## **Article 8: BODIES OF THE ASSOCIATION**

8.1 The bodies of IARM are:

1. the General Assembly
2. the Executive Board
3. the Nomination Board

8.2 Only members of IARM may be appointed to one or more of this body.

## **Article 9: GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

9.1 The General Assembly is the main agency of the Association. It comprises all the members of the Association. It is responsible for all tasks, as far as they are not allocated to the Executive Board or other representative bodies of the Association.

9.2 The General Assembly is exclusively responsible for the following affairs:

- a) Authorization of the budget that is set up by the Executive Board for the next financial year
- b) Election of the auditors and the acceptance of the auditing report from the auditors
- c) Regulation of the amount and maturity of the membership dues
- d) Electing and recalling the members of the Executive Board
- e) Change of the Charter
- f) Liquidation of the Association
- g) Decision on the complaint against the refusal of an application for membership
- h) Exclusion of an Association member
- i) Nomination of honorary members
- j.) Decision on the establishment of further boards or representative bodies of the Association

9.3 The statutory meeting of the General Assembly takes place in conjunction with the International Congress which is normally held in every three years.

9.4 An extraordinary General Assembly may be held if requested by one third of the membership. An extraordinary meeting of the members shall be called up, if the Executive Board decides the summoning for urgent and important reasons or one tenth of the members demand the summoning of the Executive Board in writing to the President or Secretary-General while indicating reasons.

9.5 The General Assembly is called up by the Secretary-General of the Association in text form, complying with a term of at least one month, indicating the agenda. The invitation letter is considered as delivered to the member if it was directed to the address that was last given to the Secretariat of the Association.

9.6 Each member can demand the extension of the agenda until one week before the beginning of the meeting of the General Assembly by means of a message in text form. The Executive Board decides on the extension of the agenda. Afterwards and during the General Assembly requests for extending the agenda can only be accepted by decision of the meeting of the members with a 2/3 majority.

9.7 The General Assembly is led by the President, if prevented by the Vice-President. If no member of the board is present, the meeting determines the leader.

9.8 A decision of the General Assembly requires the assent of more than 50% of the valid members at the meeting. Such assent is shown by open vote.

9.9 The resolutions of the meeting have to be documented in a transcript. The person who takes the minutes is directed by the leader the meeting.

9.10 The transcript has to be signed by the chairman of the meeting. In case of multiple chairmen chairing the meeting, the most recent has to sign the entire transcript.

9.11 Every member is eligible to read the transcript.

9.12 The General Assembly can give itself bylaws.

## **Article 10: EXECUTIVE BOARD**

10.1 As the executive agency of the Association, the Executive Board implements the policy decided by the General Assembly. It conducts the business of the Association and deals with all administrative tasks, as far as they are not assigned to another representative body of the Association by the charter or by law. In particular, it has the following tasks:

- a) Execution of the resolutions of the General Assembly,
- b) Summoning and preparation of the General Assembly, the chairing of the General Assembly by the president, the president elect or the three vice presidents,
- c) Planning of the budget for each financial year
- e) Admission and participation in the exclusion of members,
- f) Conclusion and termination of contracts of employment,
- g) Summoning of committees
- h) Outlining plans for cooperation with other scientific Associations and establishing programs, workshops and ad hoc working groups

10.2 The Executive Board comprises the President, the President Elect, the Immediate Past President, , three Vice Presidents, the Secretary General, the Treasurer, Presidents and Secretary Generals of Regional Chapters, the Presidents and Secretaries of Special

Commissions as well as elected members. As a temporary member, it also comprises the Congress President of the Congress, at which the Executive Board meets.

10.3 The Executive Board is elected for three consecutive years by open vote by the General Assembly. It remains in office until the following election. If a member retires during the term of office, the full Board may elect a substituting member for the remaining term of office.

10.4 The Executive Board shall meet once a year. Between meetings of the Board, the President and the Secretary General are responsible for the administration of the Association. If necessary, they may consult with other members of the Board. The President reports on such work to the next meeting of the board.

10.5 In the Board meeting, the Board can make binding decisions if more than one third of its members are present. Such decisions are made by open vote with the President having a casting vote in addition to his/her substantive vote.

10.6 The third party authorisation of the Executive Board is limited. Acquisition, sale, burden and other liabilities of estate (and comparable estate based rights) as well as taking out a loan requires approval by the meeting of the members.

10.7 The Executive Board cannot alter the statutes of the Association. It can establish its own rules of procedure.

## **Article 11: THE PRESIDENCY**

11.1 The Presidency comprises the President, the President Elect, the Immediate Past President, the Congress President, the three Vice Presidents, and the Secretary General, the Treasurer. The function of the Presidency is to control the financial expenditure of the Association (see article 4).

- 11.2 The responsibility of the **President** is to
- represent the Association for matters which are the responsibility of the Association in all dealings with Third Parties
  - preside over the Executive Board and the Presidency.

If the President is indisposed, the President Elect or one of the Vice Presidents will serve in that capacity.

- 11.3 The responsibility of the **Congress President** is to
- organize and manage the next international scientific meeting of the Association
  - ensure accurate and complete financial accounting methods for the Congress as well as a balance sheet provided to the Board.

- 11.4 The responsibility of the **President Elect** is to
- represent the Association in absence of the President

- 11.5 The responsibility of the **Secretary General** is to
- provide operational support to the Association
  - summon and prepare the Executive board meeting in cooperation with the President
  - keep the minutes of the meetings and to distribute them to the members of the Executive Board, the Presidency and the General Assembly

- create the annual report and distribute it
- to ensure implementation of Resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, the Executive Board or the Presidency
- represent the Association for matters which are delegated to him/her in all dealings with Third Parties

11.6 The responsibility of the **Treasurer** is to

- carry out the routine operations of the Association`s bank account
- prepare a balance sheet for the Executive Board

## **Article 12: THE SECRETARIAT**

12.1 The Secretariat is composed of the Secretary General appointed by the General Assembly and staff members as may be necessary, appointed by the Secretary General, in consultation with the President.

12.2. The functions of the Secretariat are to

- execute all decisions of the President
- prepare the annual work plan and budget and submit it to the General Assembly for approval
- execute the work plan approved by the President and manage the activities of Association
- manage the personnel and financial resources of the Association and sign the commitment and disbursement authorisations in the name of Association
- prepare the annual meeting of the Association and the meetings of other Committees as may be instituted by the Association
- establish and implement regulations and procedures for the Secretariat
- present to the Association an annual report on the activities and operations of the Association after the close of each fiscal year
- prepare the report of the annual Meeting of the Executive Board
- perform such other tasks and functions assigned by the Board / President.

## **Article 13: NOMINATION COMMITTEE**

The Nomination Committee makes proposals for the nomination of the leaders / executives of the Association to the Board meeting. Proposals discussed and accepted by the Board are forwarded to the General Assembly. The Nomination Committee consists of three persons. The General Assembly on the recommendation of the Bureau elects them for three-years.

## **Article 14: MODE OF ELECTION**

14.1 The elections take place at the meeting of the General Assembly. Its mode is determined by the leader of the General Assembly. The election must take place in writing and/or secretly, if 1/3 of the present members entitled to vote should request so.

14.2 Elections of the Executive Board take the form of written elections.

14.3 The General Assembly is quorate if at least one third of the members entitled to vote is present. Each member has one vote. A delegation of votes is not allowed. Decisions are made with a simple majority of the cast valid votes. Abstentions are not taken in account.

14.4 The members of the Executive Board are elected individually, first the President, then the Vice-President and at last the remaining members. The candidate who received more than half of the cast valid votes is considered to be elected.

### **Article 15: COMMISSIONS**

The Executive Board may organise special commissions and approve their programs. Those convening such commissions are responsible for drafting their terms of reference, which must be approved by the Board. The Chairperson of the respective Commission is responsible for presenting an annual report of the work of the Commission to the Executive Board.

### **Article 16: FINANCE**

16.1 The financial expenses of the Association are met by subscription and membership fees. The amount of subscription (individual, national and associate) is determined by the General Assembly following a proposal from the Executive Board.

16.2 The Treasurer is responsible for the financial routine operations of the Association (11.6). The Treasurer shall get the Balance sheets of the Association audited by the registered Chartered Accountant or follow any other such rule which is the law of the land.

16.3 The Executive Board will take the stock of the financial situation of the Association every year and prepare a budget for ensuing year.

16.4 The Presidency is responsible for all expenditure incurred by the Association.

### **Article 17: COLLABORATION WITH OTHER ASSOCIATIONS**

17.1 The Collaborating Organizations / Associations will have reciprocal arrangements with IARM as regards the Executive Bureau. If the Collaborating Organization invites the IARM to become the Member of its Executive Committee / Board, then IARM shall also reciprocate the same. In case the Collaborating Organization offers any other position, e.g. observer to the Executive Committee, then IARM would also have the same and equa reciprocal arrangement.

17.2 This arrangement will not be applicable to any UN/WHO/ILO or similar organizations. Their official representatives will always be invited to join the Executive Bureau as its full-fledged members to perform an advisory function.

### **Article 18: CHANGES OF THE STATUTES**

18.1 Amendments to the charter require the approval of 3/4 of the individual members.



18.2 To change the Association`s purpose, one half of the members entitled to vote have to be present at the General Assembly. In the case of the absence of a quorum, the votes can also be cast by postal vote or by electronic vote during an election period defined by the Presidency in the interim time between two General assemblies.

### **Article 19: DISSOLUTION**

The dissolution of the Association will proceed with the agreement of the General Assembly 'when its objectives can no longer be achieved. The General Assembly may decide on its dissolution by a two -third majority of the members present at the General Assembly supporting this action following a secret ballot. Such ballots cannot be carried out unless all members have been given three months notice in writing of the intention to dissolve the Association.

### **Article 20: SIGNATURES**

All documents committed by the Association shall be signed by the President or his/her representative, except for the matters delegated to the Secretary General

### **Article 21: LIABILITY**

The Association is responsible for its liabilities on all its assets. Members and officers of the Association or its agency shall incur no personal liability in respect of the commitments of the Association