



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

EXECUTIVE BOARD
103rd Session
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Staff development and support

Renewal process

Report by the Secretariat

BACKGROUND

1. Since 21 July 1998 the Director-General has made significant changes in the structure and management of WHO. These changes, which have far-reaching implications for staff and human resources policies, are described in the first progress report on the change process¹. Their objective is to strengthen the technical capacity of WHO. In addition, they:

C respond to requests from the governing bodies for transparency and more cost-effective administration, with greater emphasis on performance and results;

C implement the Director-General's election commitments;

C promote a unified WHO with increased capacity to respond to Member States' changing needs;

C encourage partnership and reaching out to external partners active in health.

2. The main changes, some of which are already reflected in the proposed budget, are described below.

3. **Organizational restructuring.** The Organization's 50 programmes have been grouped into nine clusters at headquarters, which better reflect WHO's business. The programmes were then reconfigured into 35 departments (see chart at Annex 1). A process of senior staff rotation or reassignment has been put in place to appoint heads of these departments and to fill other senior positions at headquarters and in the regions. The implications of restructuring on the organization of the regional offices will now be given priority. Consultations on restructuring have been held in three regions; others are scheduled for early 1999.

4. **The decision-making process.** The nine cluster heads and the Director-General make up the Cabinet. In all major issues the Director-General takes her decisions based on prior discussion in Cabinet and, where appropriate, in consultation with the Regional Directors and the Staff Association. The Director-General

¹ "A progress report on a hundred days of change", available on request.

meets the Regional Directors five to six times a year. Development of videoconferencing capacity is gradually intensifying contact and cooperation between regional offices and headquarters.

5. **Budget Process.** The proposed budget for 2000-2001 draws a clear link between management responsibility and budget holding. This provides the basis for sound performance monitoring.

6. **Methods of work.** New ways of working in teams across departments and clusters are evolving. Cross-cutting Cabinet projects which draw on several clusters and external partners are leading the way.

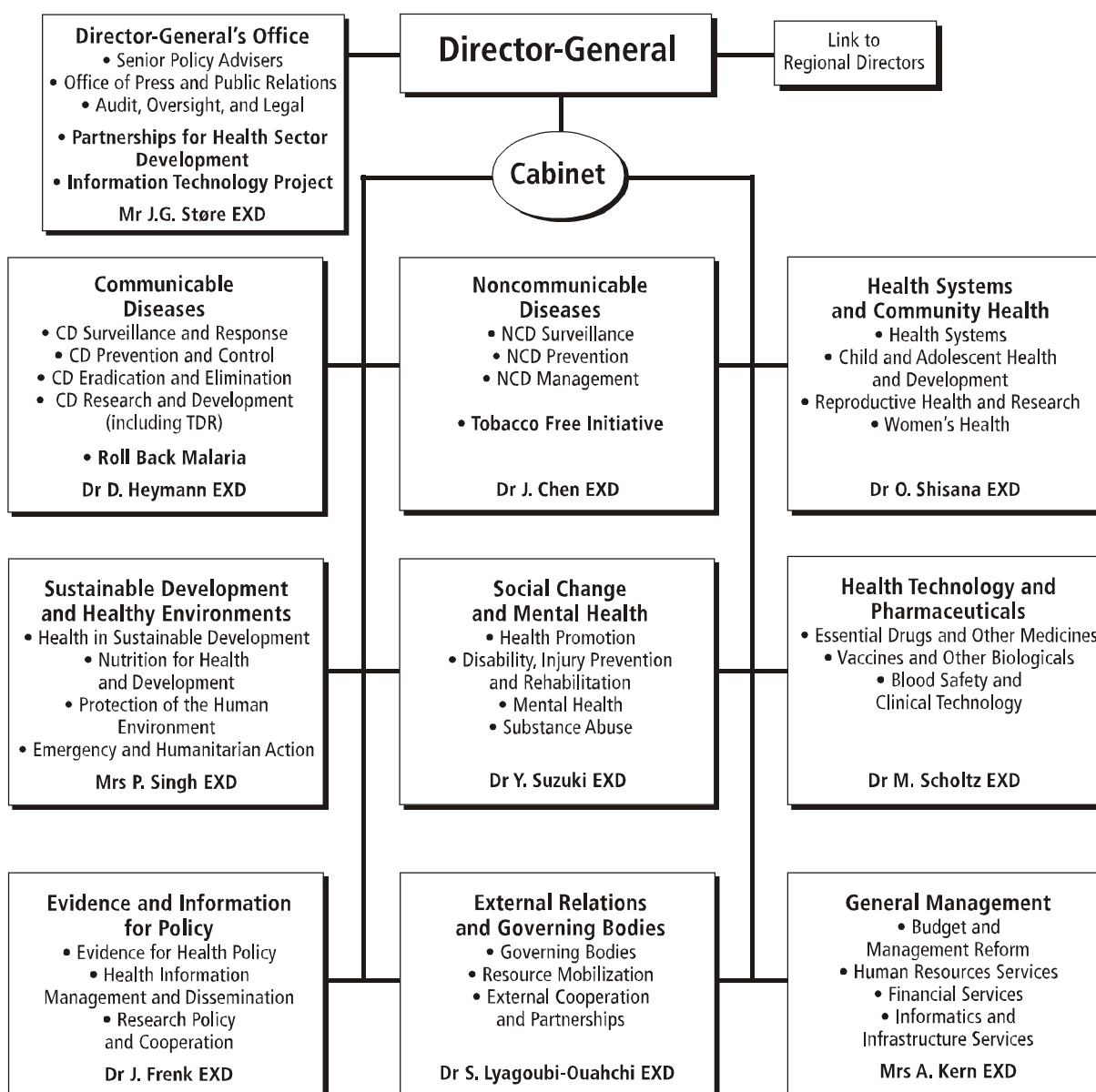
7. **Management Support Units.** To bring administrative services closer to their users, Management Support Units have been set up in the clusters by redeploying staff from central and other divisions. These units combine programme support, budget and finance management, evaluation, and human resources management. They are already working with central management to frame new management policies that will apply to all WHO staff.

8. **Staff/management relations.** A Global Staff/Management Council was established following a meeting in October 1998 which brought together representatives of management and staff from headquarters and all major offices. The Council will provide a forum in which to discuss major issues of relevance to staff of the Organization as a whole.

9. **Human resources.** The above changes have major implications for staff and WHO's human resources policies. Policy for human resources management is being developed and modified in a number of ways, as indicated in Annex 2, including a major change in mobility and rotation of staff at all levels. These modifications will be integrated in an overall human resources strategy which reflects the Organization's strategic vision. In order to allow sufficient time for full and meaningful consultations throughout the Organization, it is proposed that policy changes should be implemented progressively during 1999; a full progress report will be submitted to the Executive Board at its 105th session in January 2000. When fully implemented, they will modify the way staff are recruited, deployed and managed. This is expected to have a significant effect on the way the Organization operates, and thus on its responsiveness to Member States and to changing health needs.

ANNEX 1

WHO Structure at Headquarters



ANNEX 2

OVERVIEW OF REFORM OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AT WHO

Initiative	Purpose/outcome	Timeframe/output
Review of contractual arrangements	Better alignment with the Organization's emerging needs greater equity in treatment of staff more flexible recruitment/employment	To be reported to the Executive Board not later than its 105th session (January 2000)
Pilot senior executive service	Strengthened managerial capabilities/accountability building of corporate culture easier rotation and mobility greater flexibility in hiring rates	To be reported to the Executive Board not later than its 105th session (January 2000)
Rotation and mobility policy	Improved responsiveness to Member States' requirements increased versatility of staff improved skill base better sharing of skills and experience improved career prospects	Being implemented; to be reported to the Executive Board at its 104th session (May 1999)
New selection procedures	Improved skill base equity improved involvement of clusters, management and staff in selection process	Being implemented
New performance management package	Integrated package which handles performance within overall strategy for human resources management through development of agreed work, and measurement of performance against agreed outputs	Implementation by April 1999
Staff development and training strategy	More equitable approach aimed at refining staff knowledge and experience	Strategy in place early 1999; delivery under way
Work/family agenda	Better balance of professional and family responsibilities gender-sensitive institutional culture	To be reported to the Executive Board not later than its 105th session (January 2000)
Improvement of women's participation in the work of WHO	(See document EB103/10)	

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