



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

EXECUTIVE BOARD
105th Session
Provisional agenda item 7.6

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Executive Board matters

Report by the Secretariat

1. The Chairman of the Executive Board has requested the Secretariat to prepare options concerning the terms of reference of the Programme Development Committee (PDC) and the Administration, Budget and Finance Committee (ABFC), with respect to their functions, periodicity of meetings and membership. These options are presented below.

PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Functions

2. Current functions include oversight of the process and effects of reforms initiated to implement the recommendations of the Executive Board Working Group on the WHO Response to Global Change (which completed its work in May 1993) and of implementation of the Ninth General Programme of Work, covering the period 1996-2001. These specific functions are now out of date. The fundamental functions of the Committee can be expressed as follows:

- (1) to assist in the process of programme development in WHO
- (2) to review the programme aspects of the programme budget in coordination with ABFC.

Periodicity of meetings

3. The Committee has met annually in January since it was established. However, since 1998, the Board members have participated in a retreat in October and have been able to discuss informally a wide range of programme development matters. To the extent that the retreats can be continued, and in the interest of economy, it may be worth considering holding PDC meetings in budget years only.

Membership

4. Membership is currently composed of six Executive Board members, one from each of the WHO regions, plus the Chairman or a Vice-Chairman of the Board.

ADMINISTRATION, BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Functions

5. The functions of ABFC are more complex than PDC. Current terms of reference assign two distinct roles to ABFC:

- to assist the Board in its consideration of management and financial matters (similar to the role of PDC with respect to programme development matters)
- to replace the former Committee to Consider Certain Financial Matters prior to the Health Assembly, in which capacity it acts on behalf of the Board in carrying out the relevant provisions of the Financial Regulations.

6. The functions relating to the first point in paragraph 5 remain valid, and can be expressed as follows:

- (1) to analyse administrative, budgetary and financial aspects of the programme budget in liaison with PDC, and to make comments or recommendations thereon to the Board
- (2) to review any other matters on the agenda of the session of the Board in the administrative or financial fields, in coordination with the Audit Committee where appropriate, and to make comments or recommendations thereon to the Board.

7. The functions relating to the second point in paragraph 5 can be expressed as follows:

- (1) to examine the Director-General's financial report and the report(s) of the External Auditor, and to consider any other administrative, budgetary or financial matter that the Director-General deems appropriate, taking into account the views of the Audit Committee
- (2) to make comments or recommendations thereon to the Health Assembly on behalf of the Executive Board.

8. These functions may need to be reviewed. In this connection questions arise as set out below:

- Bearing in mind that the Audit Committee reports directly to the Board and not through ABFC, is it appropriate for ABFC to transmit to the Health Assembly the Audit Committee's views on the financial report, albeit in its role as the Committee to Consider Certain Financial Matters, in which case it is acting on behalf of the Board and not as a Committee of the Board?
- ABFC (as the replacement of the Committee to Consider Certain Financial Matters) meets for one-half day prior to the Health Assembly. Is it economical for a Committee of seven to perform this work on behalf of the Board, or would it be better to revert to the previous practice of assigning this responsibility to four persons, i.e. the representatives of the Executive Board to the Health Assembly?

Assigning this responsibility to the four representatives to the Health Assembly designated by the Board would have the added advantage of enabling these representatives to present views to the Health

Assembly on financial matters, a task consistent with their role, which would be accomplished at no additional cost to the Organization.

Periodicity of meetings

9. Assuming the terms of reference of ABFC are revised to reflect only its role as an advisory committee of the Board and not the role as Committee to Consider Certain Financial Matters, it would meet annually before the January session of the Board.

Membership

10. Membership is currently composed of six Executive Board members, one from each of the WHO regions, plus the Chairman or a Vice-Chairman of the Board.

MERGING OF PDC AND ABFC

11. As a further economy, the Board may wish to consider merging PDC and ABFC. In this case, the functions contained in paragraphs 2 and 6 would be combined. The amalgamated Committee would meet annually before the January session of the Board. Membership could be limited to, say, nine members, plus the Chairman of the Board *ex officio*.

ACTION BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

12. Depending on the outcome of discussions, the Executive Board may wish to consider adoption of a resolution establishing new terms of reference for the committees.

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