

Evaluation: update and proposed workplan for 2018–2019

1. The Executive Board approved the WHO evaluation policy at its 131st session.¹ The policy requires the Secretariat to report annually to the Board on progress in the implementation of evaluation activities. Whereas the annual report will be presented to the Board at its 143rd session, in May 2018, the present report provides a brief progress update since the last annual report to the Executive Board² and the proposed evaluation workplan for the biennium 2018–2019.

PROGRESS UPDATE

2. Strengthening evaluation and organizational learning remains a critical component of the ongoing WHO reform process. The Evaluation Office continues to implement the framework for strengthening evaluation and organizational learning in WHO³ presented to the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee of the Executive Board at its twenty-first meeting. The framework has six key action areas: establishing an enabling environment and governance; evaluation capacity and resources; evaluation workplan, scope and modalities; evaluation recommendations and management response; organizational learning; and communicating evaluation work.

3. The evaluation workplan for 2016–2017⁴ provided the basis for ongoing evaluation work. Unless otherwise stated, all completed evaluation reports are available on the webpage of the Evaluation Office.⁵

4. The evaluation of the Secretariat's contribution to the health-related Millennium Development Goals, which was one of the priority corporate evaluations, was completed in October 2017 and aimed to inform WHO's strategy for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development based on organizational learning drawn from past experience. The evaluation, conducted by an external evaluation team, covered the entire lifespan of the Millennium Development Goals (2000–2015), identified strengths,

¹ Decision EB131(1) (2012).

² Document EB141/7.

³ A framework for strengthening evaluation and organizational learning in WHO. Geneva: World Health Organization (http://who.int/about/who_reform/documents/framework-strengthening-evaluation-organizational-learning.pdf?ua=1, accessed 27 October 2017).

⁴ See document EB138/2016/REC/2, summary records of the Executive Board at its 138th session, fourteenth meeting, section 3.

⁵ The Evaluation Office webpage is available at <http://www.who.int/about/evaluation/reports/en/> (accessed 27 October 2017).

weaknesses, challenges and good practices, and offered strategic recommendations to inform the Secretariat's approach in responding to the health-related Sustainable Development Goals.

5. The independent review of the implementation of the WHO evaluation policy and the framework for strengthening evaluation and organizational learning was also a priority corporate evaluation, commissioned by the Director-General's Office. This was a three-phase process comprising self-assessment by the Evaluation Office, an external assessment by an independent consultant and a review of the external assessment by a high-level panel composed of evaluation experts.¹ The objective of the evaluation was to assess progress in developing the evaluation function in WHO. The final report was delivered in June 2017 and provides an independent and formative assessment of progress in developing WHO's evaluation function both at the corporate and decentralized levels. The recommendations include: (i) update/fully implement the evaluation policy and related documents to reflect the changed environment for WHO and current best practice across United Nations organizations; (ii) with leadership from Regional Directors and senior managers, implement a major push on decentralized evaluations, which is strategically important for WHO; (iii) expand the resources for the Evaluation Office to enable it not just to produce corporate evaluations but also to provide the necessary leadership on other areas; (iv) further underpin organizational independence through revising some specifics on reporting and terms of appointment for the head of the Evaluation Office; (v) position evaluation so that it can play its full role on performance and results, for example by conducting a major evaluation on results-based management to complement that on WHO reform; and (vi) initiate a discussion on the distinction between, and complementarity of, organizational learning and evaluation. A management response is under preparation and will be discussed at the forthcoming meeting of the Independent Expert Oversight Advisory Committee.

6. The evaluation of the normative function of WHO was conducted in two phases with the support of independent external evaluators. The first phase focused on defining normative work at WHO and proposed a framework for its evaluation. The second phase drew on this framework to evaluate a selection of representative types of normative work and, on the basis of the findings, made a set of strategic and operational recommendations to strengthen WHO's normative role and function. The final evaluation report was delivered in July 2017.

7. The first country office evaluation, undertaken by the Evaluation Office, took place in 2017 in the Thailand country office. These evaluations focus on the outcomes/results achieved by country offices, as well as contributions through global and regional inputs in the country. The main purpose of the evaluation was to identify and document best practices and innovations of WHO in Thailand on the basis of its achievements over the period 2012–2016. The main expected use for this evaluation is to support the country office as it operationalizes the new country cooperation strategy 2017–2021 and develops its next biennial workplan. The report of the evaluation was delivered in August 2017.

8. The Executive Board will conduct an evaluation of the process and methods for the election of the Director-General during its 142nd session in an open meeting.² This work is being taken forward by an evaluation management group, composed of the Vice-Chairmen and Rapporteur of the

¹ The high-level panel comprised two heads of evaluation representing the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNICEF and ILO); a former senior adviser at the World Bank and Commissioner in the Board of the International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie), representing the Global South; and a senior inspector from the policy and operations evaluation department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Government of the Netherlands, representing OECD/EvalNet.

² Document EB141/6 and resolution WHA65.15 (2012).

141st session of the Executive Board, in addition to a member of the Board from the Eastern Mediterranean Region.¹ The Evaluation Office is supporting the evaluation management group in preparing for this evaluation.

9. The WHO global coordination mechanism on the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases is a global Member State-led coordinating and engagement platform, established in 2014 to facilitate and enhance coordination of activities, multistakeholder engagement and action across sectors at the local, national, regional and global levels, in order to contribute to the implementation of the global action plan for the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases 2013–2020. Its terms of reference included a preliminary evaluation by the Seventieth World Health Assembly in 2017 in order to assess its results and added value.² Oversight of the evaluation is performed by an evaluation management group, composed of the officers of the Seventieth World Health Assembly, and the Evaluation Office is supporting the officers of the Health Assembly in conducting the evaluation. The results of the evaluation will be submitted to the Seventy-first World Health Assembly in 2018, through the 142nd session of the Executive Board.³

10. At the request of Global Affairs Canada, the Evaluation Office has commissioned the summative evaluation of the WHO Rapid Access Expansion Programme, which is being conducted by an independent external evaluation team. This Programme supports high-burden countries to increase coverage of diagnostic, treatment and referral services for the major causes of death among children under 5 years of age (diarrhoea, pneumonia and malaria) through the scaling up of integrated community case management. The evaluation aims to assess the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, impact and sustainability of the results of the Programme in order to inform policy dialogue and future design and implementation of integrated community case management. The final report is expected to be delivered by March 2018.

11. On 21 January 2016, the geographical mobility policy⁴ for WHO international professionals on continuing and fixed-term appointments came into effect. In accordance with this policy, its implementation is evaluated annually during its voluntary phase (2016–2018). The report of the first annual evaluation of the implementation of the policy was issued by the Evaluation Office in January 2017. The Evaluation Office is currently undertaking the second annual evaluation of the implementation of the policy, which will examine how the policy is being implemented, what results have been achieved so far, whether the current implementation of the policy is likely to achieve its intended benefits once the policy becomes mandatory, and what lessons have been learned. The evaluation report is expected to be delivered in January 2018 and will be available to Member States upon request.

12. The Evaluation Office continues to provide technical backstopping and quality assurance for decentralized evaluations and was represented on the evaluation management group of the independent external evaluation of the International Coordinating Group on Vaccine Provision. The Group's mandate is to assure the equitable access, as well as the rapid and timely delivery, of the relevant vaccines during disease outbreaks and it also manages global emergency vaccine stockpiles.

¹ Decision EB141(1) (2017).

² Document A67/14 Add.1, Annex and Appendix 1.

³ Document EB142/15 Add.2.

⁴ WHO geographical mobility policy. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2016 (<http://www.who.int/employment/WHO-mobility-policy.pdf>, accessed 27 October 2017).

Covering the period 2006–2017, the purpose of the evaluation was to inform decisions aimed at improving the Groups’s governance, its mechanism related to the management and accessibility of disease-specific emergency vaccine stockpiles and their composition, the transparency of decision-making processes, as well as the Group’s internal and external communication. The final report of this evaluation was delivered in October 2017.

13. The Evaluation Office continues to facilitate reviews by the Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations System and this collaboration is reported separately in an annual report to the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee of the Executive Board at its May session.

14. The Evaluation Office also facilitates other reviews of WHO by external entities, and is currently facilitating the 2017–2018 assessment of the Organization by the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network.

15. WHO is strongly engaged in the United Nations Evaluation Group and participates regularly in its meetings of heads of evaluation offices and its various taskforces. WHO also participates in the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation Steering Group,¹ which promotes collective accountability for humanitarian results and ensures that lessons are captured and used. More specifically, it is responsible for the provision of guidance for, and the conduct of, evaluations of Inter-Agency Standing Committee humanitarian system-wide level 3 emergencies. As a member of the Steering Group, the Evaluation Office supports the implementation of the inter-agency humanitarian evaluations. The Organization also participates in the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action, a system-wide network that contributes to improving the quality of evaluation of humanitarian action and related research and learning activities.

16. Owing to budgetary constraints during the biennium 2016–2017, the proposed budget of the Evaluation Office was only funded to 86% to implement the approved evaluation workplan for 2016–2017. It was therefore not possible to complete: the evaluation of the utilization of national professional officers at the country level; the evaluation of the neglected tropical diseases programme, with a special focus on the current neglected tropical diseases road map for implementation; and two country office evaluations. These evaluations have therefore been carried over to the biennium 2018–2019.

PROPOSED EVALUATION WORKPLAN 2018–2019

17. The evaluation policy requires that WHO should develop a biennial, Organization-wide evaluation workplan as part of its planning and budgeting cycle. The biennial workplan ensures accountability and oversight of performance and results, and reinforces organizational learning in a way that informs policy and operational decisions.

18. The proposed 2018–2019 biennial workplan incorporates both the corporate/centralized and decentralized evaluations planned, and was developed in consultation with senior WHO colleagues across the Organization, especially for decentralized evaluations. The workplan was also discussed with the Independent Expert Oversight Advisory Committee during its meeting in October 2017.

¹ The Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation Steering Group is chaired by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and comprises the evaluation directors of FAO, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP and WHO, with the Active Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action, the International Council of Voluntary Agencies and UNFPA as observers.

19. In this regard, the proposed corporate/centralized evaluations will be managed, commissioned or conducted by the Evaluation Office, and will include programme evaluations, thematic evaluations and office-specific evaluations.

20. The decentralized evaluations proposed in the biennial workplan will be managed, commissioned or conducted outside the central Evaluation Office, that is, they will be initiated by headquarters clusters, regional offices or country offices and mainly comprise programmatic and thematic evaluations. In this instance, the central Evaluation Office would provide quality assurance and technical backstopping. Coherence and harmonization across the Organization is achieved through adherence to guidance provided in the *WHO evaluation practice handbook*¹ and through the Global Network on Evaluation.

21. The evaluations proposed in the biennial workplan respond to one or more of the following selection criteria identified in the evaluation policy: organizational requirements, organizational significance and organizational utility.

Corporate evaluations to be commissioned, managed or conducted by the Evaluation Office

22. The corporate/centralized evaluations planned for 2018–2019 are a combination of roll-over evaluations, carry-over evaluations from the 2016–2017 evaluation workplan and a set of new evaluations. Roll-over evaluations cover those started in 2017 and due to continue into the biennium 2018–2019: (i) evaluation of the process for the election of the Director-General; (ii) preliminary evaluation of the WHO global coordination mechanism on the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases; and (iii) summative evaluation of the WHO Rapid Access Expansion Programme.

23. The following corporate evaluations are proposed for 2018–2019:

- evaluation of the utilization of national professional officers at the country level;
- corporate evaluation of WHO's results-based management framework;²
- evaluation of one Grade 3 emergency;
- initial evaluation of the Framework of Engagement with Non-State Actors;³
- third annual evaluation of the implementation of the geographical mobility policy during its voluntary phase;

¹ WHO evaluation practice handbook. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2013 (http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/96311/1/9789241548687_eng.pdf, accessed 30 October 2017).

² To complement the recent evaluation of WHO reform, third stage, and given the Organization's increased results-oriented approach, the evaluation of WHO's results-based management framework will aim to provide an overall independent perspective of WHO's results and performance.

³ Resolution WHA69.10 (2016).

- evaluation of the neglected tropical diseases programme, with a special focus on the current neglected tropical diseases road map for implementation;
- evaluation of the Global strategy and action plan on ageing and health (2016–2020);¹
- country office evaluations (6–10).²

Decentralized evaluations³ to be commissioned or managed by regional offices,⁴ country offices and headquarters departments

24. The evaluation of tobacco control through MPOWER measures⁵ in the South-East Asia Region is a roll-over decentralized evaluation, the results of which are expected in early 2018.

25. The following decentralized evaluations are proposed for 2018–2019:

- evaluation of the implementation of the global action plan for the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases 2013–2020 (carried over from 2016–2017).
- evaluation of 10 years of implementation of the South-East Asia Regional Health Emergency Fund;
- evaluation of online language training;
- evaluation of the measles and rubella elimination programme in the European Region;
- external evaluation of the UNDP/UNFPA/UNICEF/WHO/World Bank Special Programme of Research, Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction (2013–2017);
- evaluation of the use and perceived impact of WHO guidelines on reproductive, maternal, neonatal, child and adolescent health at the country level in the South-East Asia Region;
- evaluation of the Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean's Regional Centre for Environmental Health Action;

¹ Resolution WHA69.3 (2016).

² Country office evaluations will focus on the outcomes/results achieved by the respective country office, as well as contributions through global and regional inputs in the country. In addition, the evaluations will aim to analyse the effectiveness of WHO programmes and initiatives in the country and assess their strategic relevance within the national context. Such evaluations will be organized in consultation with the Office of Internal Oversight Services and the relevant regional offices in order to avoid duplication of effort. Currently, country office evaluations are planned in India, Kyrgyzstan, Myanmar and Romania, with others to be defined.

³ This is a provisional list of decentralized evaluations, as further additions are likely to be made during the coming months. Future updates will be reported in forthcoming evaluation reports to the governing bodies.

⁴ For further information on the South-East Asia Regional Evaluation Workplan for 2018–2019, see document SEA/RC70/6-INF.DOC.2 (<http://www.searo.who.int/mediacentre/events/governance/rc/70/sea-rc70-6infdoc2.pdf?ua=1>, accessed 30 October 2017).

⁵ For further information on MPOWER measures, see the Tobacco Free Initiative webpage (<http://www.who.int/tobacco/mpower/en/>, accessed 30 October 2017).

- mid-term review of the Roadmap of WHO's work for the Eastern Mediterranean Region (2017–2021).

26. Further information on these corporate and decentralized evaluations is provided in the annex to this document.

ACTION BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

27. The Board is invited to note the report and approve the Organization-wide evaluation workplan for 2018–2019.

ANNEX

ORGANIZATION-WIDE EVALUATION WORKPLAN FOR 2018–2019

Evaluation type	Area of evaluation	Justification	Category in the Twelfth General Programme of Work, 2014–2019
Corporate/centralized evaluations			
Thematic	Evaluation of the process for the election of the Director-General (roll-over from 2017)	Requirement	6
Thematic	Evaluation of the utilization of national professional officers at the country level	Utility	6
Thematic	Corporate evaluation of WHO's results-based management framework	Significance/utility	6
Thematic	Evaluation of one Grade 3 emergency	Significance/utility	5
Thematic	Framework of Engagement with Non-State Actors – initial evaluation in 2019	Requirement/utility	6
Thematic	Third annual evaluation of the implementation of the geographical mobility policy during its voluntary phase	Requirement	6
Programmatic	Preliminary evaluation of the WHO global coordination mechanism on the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases (roll-over from 2017)	Requirement/utility	2
Programmatic	Summative evaluation of the WHO Rapid Access Expansion Programme (roll-over from 2017)	Requirement/utility	1 and 3
Programmatic	Evaluation of the neglected tropical diseases programme, with a special focus on the current neglected tropical diseases road map for implementation	Significance/utility	1
Programmatic	Evaluation of the Global strategy and action plan on ageing and health (2016–2020)	Utility	3
Office-specific	Country office evaluations (6–10)	Utility	6
Decentralized evaluations			
Thematic	Evaluation of 10 years of implementation of the South-East Asia Regional Health Emergency Fund	Significance/utility	5
Thematic	Evaluation of online language training	Utility	6
Programmatic	Evaluation of the measles and rubella elimination programme in the European Region	Significance/utility	1
Programmatic	Evaluation of the implementation of the global action plan for the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases 2013–2020	Requirement/utility	2

Evaluation type	Area of evaluation	Justification	Category in the Twelfth General Programme of Work, 2014–2019
Programmatic	Evaluation of tobacco control through MPOWER measures in the South-East Asia Region (roll-over from 2017)	Significance/utility	2
Programmatic	External evaluation of the UNDP/UNFPA/UNICEF/WHO/World Bank Special Programme of Research, Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction (2013–2017)	Requirement/utility	3
Programmatic	Evaluation of the use and perceived impact of WHO guidelines on reproductive, maternal, neonatal, child and adolescent health at the country level in the South-East Asia Region	Significance/utility	3
Programmatic	Evaluation of the Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean's Regional Centre for Environmental Health Action in 2018	Significance/utility	3
Programmatic	Mid-term review of the Roadmap of WHO's work for the Eastern Mediterranean Region (2017–2021) in 2019	Significance/utility	6

= = =