
Report on hosted partnerships

Report by the Director-General

1. In accordance with decision EB132(10) (2013), the Executive Board is regularly updated on major developments and issues arising in connection with WHO-hosted partnerships.¹ This report provides updates on the following: the main findings and recommendations of the periodic review of hosted partnerships; and major developments in partnerships hosted by WHO.
2. In decision EB132(10), the Board requested its Programme, Budget and Administration Committee: to ensure that the arrangements for hosted health partnerships are regularly reviewed on a case-by-case and timely basis in respect of their contributions to improved health outcomes, WHO's interaction with individual hosted partnerships, and the harmonization of their work with the work of WHO; and to make recommendations for the consideration of the Board, as appropriate, through a standing item on the subject on the Board's agenda. In 2017, the Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research was reviewed.² This year Unitaid is proposed for review.
3. The Board also requested the Secretariat, in consultation with hosted partnerships, to develop and apply generic hosting terms to all WHO-hosted partnerships. Extensive consultations have taken place for the development of the hosting terms and led to their promulgation by the Director-General in March 2017.³ The hosting terms have been implemented in respect of all WHO-hosted partnerships.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS IN WHO-HOSTED PARTNERSHIPS

Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research

4. The twentieth anniversary of the Alliance's inception was commemorated in Stockholm in April 2017 in the presence of a wide range of donors, researchers, policy-makers, and other partners, at the headquarters of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. Participants stated their trust in the Alliance and requested that it continue its innovative and informative work. The event also marked the launch of the World Report on Health Policy and Systems Research.⁴

¹ See document EB132/2013/REC/1 (http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/EB132-REC1/B132_REC1-en.pdf#page=53 accessed 22 February 2018).

² See document EB141/9 (http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/EB141/B141_9-en.pdf accessed 22 February 2018).

³ http://www.who.int/about/collaborations/partnerships/hosted-partnerships/Generic_Hosting_Terms.pdf?ua=1 (accessed 22 February 2018).

⁴ See <http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/255051/1/9789241512268-eng.pdf> (accessed 22 February 2018).

5. Working to promote and increase health research synthesis, the Alliance increased support to rapid review centres and launched a guidance document, *Rapid Reviews to Strengthen Health Policy and Systems: A Practical Guide*,¹ at the Global Evidence Summit held in Cape Town, South Africa in September 2017, and at WHO headquarters in December 2017.

6. The Alliance also worked with partners to increase the demand for and uptake of evidence through embedded research, providing support for over 60 research projects in more than 15 countries.

7. Collaborating with the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation and WHO, the Alliance commissioned 11 country case studies on results-based financing to enhance understanding of how results-based financing could be developed from a scheme into a system. This seminal work was published in a special issue of the journal *Health Systems and Reform*, entitled “Taking results-based financing from scheme to system”² which was well received by development partners including the World Bank, and national policy-makers. Another successful example is the solar electrification implementation research which brought together the health and energy sectors in Ghana and Uganda to improve maternal and child health.

8. A new commitment for grant funding for the coming five years has been made by the United Kingdom Department for International Development, and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency has decided to increase its support to the Alliance.

European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies

9. The European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies continues to generate and communicate evidence for policy-makers, WHO, and national and international bodies under the guidance of its Steering Committee, of which WHO is an active member. It supports Member States by: monitoring country health systems and supporting comparisons through its Health Systems in Transition series and Health Systems and Policy Monitor platform; analysing key challenges in studies and in its health systems performance assessment programme; and brokering knowledge using policy briefs, policy dialogues, presentations and articles to unpack the evidence for practitioners.

10. In 2017, jointly with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the Observatory delivered a series of country health profiles of Member States in the European Union for the Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety of the European Commission, as part of the State of Health in the European Union initiative. This drew on the insights of its Health Systems and Policy Monitor network to address effectiveness, accessibility and resilience. The Observatory also published series of articles on governance for intersectoral action, working with civil society, caring for people with multimorbidity and the economic costs of unhealthy diets and low physical activity. It has also finalized studies on public health, people-centredness, ageing and antimicrobial resistance.

11. In December 2017, the Observatory Steering Committee appointed a new Chair, Mrs Liisa Maria Voipio Pulkki of the Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, who will be supported by two vice-chairs, Mr Frédéric Bousquet of the Caisse Nationale de l'Assurance Maladie, France and

¹ See <http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/258698/1/9789241512763-eng.pdf> (accessed 22 February 2018).

² See http://www.who.int/alliance-hpsr/projects/alliancehpsr_crosscountry_policybrief_english.pdf?ua=1 (accessed 22 February 2018).

Mr Stefan Eichwalder of the Federal Ministry of Health, Austria. The former Chair, Mr Charles Normand, will continue to provide advice and support.

12. The Observatory's partners commissioned an external evaluation to support planning for the partnership cycle for the period 2019–2023. The Observatory is currently finalizing the evaluation report and the Steering Committee will reflect on it in preparing the renewed Development Plan. The managerial collaboration between the Observatory's secretariat and the WHO Regional Office for Europe continues to grow, with useful meetings to support good practice, resolve issues and ensure that the Observatory is informed of and able to adapt to ongoing changes in management practice.

Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health

13. In 2017, the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health led efforts to improve alignment between various partners, including Every Woman Every Child institutions, in order to contribute to the efforts to achieve the aims and objectives of the Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health (2016–2030).¹

14. By supporting and enabling partners at the country level, the Partnership has strengthened multi-stakeholder platforms in several countries, through its four functions of advocacy, alignment, analysis and accountability. It has helped to enhance the capacity of advocacy and youth groups through advocacy toolkit development and implementation in Cameroon, India, Kenya, Malawi and Nigeria. The Partnership also facilitated the operationalizing of the "Unified Accountability Framework: Supporting country-led efforts with the Global Strategy for Women's Children's and Adolescents' Health".² This included coordinating the development and publishing of the Every Woman Every Child Global Strategy Progress Report,³ which was launched during the United Nations High-Level Political Forum in 2017. As part of its accountability-related mandate, the Partnership supports the Every Woman Every Child Independent Accountability Panel, which launched its report on transformative accountability for adolescents⁴ at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2017.

15. The Partnership coordinates advocacy and communications efforts linked to the Every Woman Every Child movement, through multiple activities, including the launch of the Advocating for Change for Adolescents Toolkit at the Adolescent Health Conference, which was held in Ottawa in May 2017. The Quality, Equity and Dignity working group was established to support the goals of the Quality of Care Network at the country level. As it prepared for 2018, the Partnership set the stage for the next Partners' Forum, in which around 1200 partners will be expected to participate, in New Delhi, in December 2018. To support the discussions at the Partners' Forum, a major new knowledge project has been initiated, entitled Success Factors, presenting case studies on cross-thematic and cross-sectoral collaboration, to be published in a special issue of the *British Medical Journal* in 2018.

¹ See <http://www.who.int/pmnch/media/news/2017/top-ten-review/en/#event-apartnership-on-the-move-2017-highlights> (accessed 22 February 2018).

² See <http://www.who.int/pmnch/activities/accountability/framework.pdf> (accessed 22 February 2018).

³ See http://www.who.int/pmnch/activities/advocacy/globalstrategy/ewec_gspr.pdf?ua=1 (accessed 22 February 2018).

⁴ See <http://iapreport.org/files/IAP%202017%20Exec%20Summary-EN-web.pdf> (accessed 22 February 2018).

Unitaid

16. During 2017, the Executive Board of Unitaid approved grants worth more than US\$ 303 million. These included extensions of successful projects in the fight against HIV, tuberculosis and malaria, as well as significant investments for new projects focused on malaria treatment during pregnancy, lifesaving emergency rectal artesunate for children with severe malaria, services for paediatric tuberculosis, and tuberculosis prevention for high-risk groups. Projects in development for 2018 will address HIV coinfections, and work to break down intellectual property barriers to lower the price of medicines in low- and middle-income countries.

17. Meanwhile, Unitaid has continued to strengthen grant selection and management processes through its new operating model, a change that has placed stronger emphasis on key partnerships. Unitaid has also adopted a more structured approach to its longstanding collaboration with other WHO departments through an “enabler grant”, under which Unitaid provides grant funds to WHO to give technical support to Unitaid projects. Unitaid also continues to collaborate closely with WHO’s Prequalification of Medicines Programme and provides funding support through a grant for its activities.

18. Unitaid is now pursuing a five-year Strategy (2017–2021), charting a clear path for the organization to serve the global response to health challenges and contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. There are three guiding principles at the heart of the strategy: innovation, access and scalability.

PERIODIC REVIEW OF WHO-HOSTED PARTNERSHIPS

19. The review of Unitaid¹ has built on the framework² for periodic review of hosted partnerships, with input from the secretariats both of the hosted partnership and the Secretariat.

20. The review highlighted that both Unitaid and WHO have benefited from the hosting arrangement, in particular through the enabler grant framework, as well as through Unitaid grants, which have generated valuable data that is contributing to the WHO’s normative function.

21. The partnership is well-focused, organizationally strong and supports a compelling programme of work that is aligned with and supportive of WHO’s overall goals. The review also confirmed that the platform provided by WHO as a hosted partnership gives Unitaid significant convening power among relevant stakeholders and a robust accountability framework. It enables Unitaid to access decision-makers at the global, regional and national levels through an extensive network of WHO regional and country offices.

ACTION BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

22. The Board is invited to note the report.

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¹ See document EB143/8.

² See document EBPBAC19/8.