

WHO reform processes, including the transformation agenda, and implementation of United Nations development system reform

Prioritization of proposals for inclusion on the draft provisional agenda of the Executive Board

Report by the Director-General

1. The Director-General has the honour to transmit to the Executive Board for its consideration the report by the Officers of the Board (see Annex) on the use, on a trial basis, of the proposed amended prioritization tool, as set out in Appendix 2 of document EB143/4, for the preparation of the provisional agenda of the 144th session of the Board, as requested by the Board in decision EB143(6) (2018).

ACTION BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

2. The Board is invited to consider the report by the Officers of the Board contained in the Annex, including (i) the proposed discontinuation of the use of the proposed amended prioritization tool, and (ii) the suggested development of a template by the Secretariat in order to facilitate the analysis by the Officers of the Board of proposed agenda items.

ANNEX

REPORT BY THE OFFICERS OF THE BOARD ON THE PROPOSED AMENDED TOOL FOR THE PRIORITIZATION OF PROPOSALS FOR INCLUSION ON THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

1. The Executive Board in decision EB143(6) requested the Officers of the Board to apply, on a trial basis, the proposed amended prioritization tool, as set out in Appendix 2 of document EB143/4, for the preparation of the provisional agenda of the 144th session of the Board; and to report on its use to the Board at its 144th session.
2. The Officers were provided with the proposed amended prioritization tool, as well as with worksheets prepared by the Secretariat to facilitate its use, before the meeting at which the provisional agenda of the 144th session of the Board was prepared. When invited to communicate the scores assigned to the 14 proposals for items received within the deadline of 18 September 2018 to the Secretariat, the Officers noted that they faced challenges in applying the tool. While acknowledging that a scoring system might be useful in principle, they reported that they found the proposed amended prioritization tool to be of marginal utility and time-consuming to use. Furthermore, they considered that the grading system was difficult to apply to a subjective process of analysis.
3. In the light of their experience, the Officers decided to propose that use of the tool should be discontinued. In their view, a prudent way forward would be to revert to the criteria for inclusion of proposed additional items previously endorsed by the Board in resolution EB121.R1 (2007) – which specifies that proposals should address a global public health issue, or involve a new subject within the scope of WHO, or an issue that represents a significant public health burden; and revert to the practice that had developed with respect to the use of those criteria. Accordingly, unless instructed otherwise by the Board, future Officers of the Board would consider proposals for items on the basis of practice established prior to the trials of the prioritization tool.
4. In an effort to facilitate the analysis by the Officers of the Board of proposed agenda items, the Board may wish to request the Secretariat to develop a template which could include, inter alia, questions on when the issue was previously addressed by the governing bodies, the existence of ongoing WHO work on the subject or pending reporting requirements.

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