
Evaluation: update

1. The Executive Board approved the amended WHO evaluation policy at its 143rd 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 145th session, in May 2019, the present report: (a) provides a brief progress update on ongoing work and, specifically, on measures to take forward the organizational learning component of evaluation; and (b) outlines, for consideration by the Board, the scope and framework for the review of 40 years of primary health care to be carried out in 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 WHO² 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 2018–2019³ provides the basis for ongoing evaluation work. The following is an update on progress since the last report to the Board at its 143rd session in May 2018.

4. The second country office evaluation undertaken by the Evaluation Office, and the first in the African Region, took place in Rwanda.⁴ Country office evaluations focus on the outcomes/results achieved by country offices, and on contributions from the regional and global levels to the country programme. The purpose of the evaluation was to identify achievements, challenges and gaps, and to document WHO best practices and innovations in Rwanda over the period 2014–2017.

5. At the request of Global Affairs Canada, the Evaluation Office commissioned the summative evaluation of the WHO Rapid Access Expansion Programme, which was conducted by an independent

¹ Decision EB143(9) (2018).

² 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 22 October 2018).

³ Document EB142/27, Annex, approved by the Executive Board at its 142nd session (see document EB142/2018/REC/2, summary records of the eleventh meeting, section 2).

⁴ See the evaluation report: <http://www.who.int/about/evaluation/OfficeSpecific/en/> (accessed 22 October 2018).

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 five years of age (diarrhoea, pneumonia and malaria) through the scaling up of integrated community case management. The evaluation aimed to assess the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, impact and sustainability of the Programme's results in order to inform policy dialogue and future design and implementation of integrated community case management. The evaluation report is available in English, French and Portuguese.¹

6. An evaluation of the Country Office in Romania is ongoing and covers the Biennial Collaborative Agreements between the Government of Romania and the WHO Regional Office for Europe for the period 2014–2017. This is the first country office evaluation to be undertaken in the WHO European Region. As with all country office evaluations, its main purpose is to identify achievements, challenges and gaps, and to document WHO best practices and innovations in Romania. This includes not only the results of the Country Office but also contributions from the regional and global levels to the country programme. The report will be available during the last quarter of 2018.

7. The Evaluation Office is currently undertaking an evaluation of the Eastern Mediterranean Regional Centre for Environmental Health Action. The purpose of this evaluation is to identify achievements, challenges and gaps, and to document best practices and innovations. The ultimate goal is to provide lessons learned from the Regional Office's efforts to help countries address environmental and climate change-related risks to health, and to identify the most effective and efficient options for the future evolution of the Centre. The evaluation will concentrate on the period 2014–2017, while taking into consideration the Centre's work since its inception in 1985. The report of this evaluation will be presented to the Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean.

8. The Evaluation Office has commissioned an evaluation of the Neglected Tropical Diseases Programme, with a special focus on the current neglected tropical diseases road map for implementation. The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the accomplishments of the Programme and the lessons learned through implementation at the three levels of the Organization. The evaluation will document the Programme's successes, challenges and gaps during the bienniums 2014–2015 and 2016–2017 and provide lessons learned and strategic recommendations for the design and operationalization of the next steps, addressing the remaining toll of neglected tropical diseases in the context of the Thirteenth General Programme of Work, 2019–2023. The evaluation report is expected to be delivered during the second quarter of 2019.

9. An evaluation of the utilization of National Professional Officers at country level has also been commissioned by the Evaluation Office. The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the role played by National Professional Officers in the effective delivery of WHO's mandate at country level in support of Member State efforts to achieve their national health targets. The evaluation will specifically focus on the role National Professional Officers play and how WHO has been utilizing them, and explore ways in which their skills and competencies could be utilized more effectively in the future. The evaluation will also document successes, challenges and best practices, and provide lessons learned and recommendations for future use by management to inform policy and decision-making. It is expected that the evaluation will be concluded during the second quarter of 2019.

10. The Evaluation Office is currently facilitating eight reviews by the Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations system: (a) integration of disaster risk reduction in the work of United Nations system

¹ See the evaluation report: http://www.who.int/about/evaluation/RACE/en/#race_en (accessed 22 October 2018).

entities; (b) strengthening policy research uptake in the service of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; (c) United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women; (d) enhancing accessibility for persons with disabilities to conferences and meetings of the United Nations system; (e) managing cloud computing services in the United Nations system; (f) change management in the United Nations system; (g) audit/oversight committees in the United Nations system; and (h) progress made in United Nations system organizations towards strengthening the investigation function.

11. Between January and May 2018, the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network¹ (MOPAN) secretariat and its contractors finished collecting the key data underpinning its assessment of WHO as part of its 2017–2018 assessment cycle. This included: (a) a perception survey of WHO partners in 13 sample countries (plus Network Member States); and (b) in-depth interviews with WHO staff. In August 2018, MOPAN organized an information session for permanent missions in Geneva to provide a general progress update on the WHO assessment process. The final report is expected to be available early in 2019.

12. The Evaluation Office is strongly engaged in the United Nations Evaluation Group and actively participates in meetings of heads of evaluation offices and in the Group's various task forces. In July 2018, the Evaluation Office hosted a meeting of its Geneva-based members to discuss the elaboration of a United Nations Evaluation Group road map for mainstreaming evaluation of the Sustainable Development Goals at the global, regional and national levels.

ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING

13. One important recommendation of the independent review of the evaluation function was that WHO should address the distinction between, and complementarity of, organizational learning and evaluation. In addition, one of the recommendations of the evaluation of WHO reform (2011–2017), third stage, was to develop a systematic approach for the implementation of the recommendations identified during audits, evaluations and reviews. To address both recommendations, the Organization has established a process to anchor organizational learning, taking into consideration the consolidated findings and recommendations from the different exercises. In this process, under the stewardship of the Deputy Director-General for Corporate Operations, the directors of the accountability functions identify a shortlist of recurring, systemic cross-cutting issues arising from findings and recommendations from various sources, and potential root causes, and establish a list of issues to embed within ongoing workstreams with key business owners, including the transformation team.

14. In this regard, five priority issues for further action have been identified: (a) direct financial contributions; (b) the need to strengthen country operations, capacities and impact; (c) the lack of alignment of planning (activities and staffing levels), budgets and financing in the Organization, including alignment across key instruments such as the general programme of work, the programme budget and the country cooperation strategies/country-level workplans; (d) resource mobilization/financing/award management; and (e) supply chain/procurement. In addition, the directors of the accountability functions regularly meet to follow up on implementation of actions and review additional new recommendations. The Secretariat will continue to provide regular reports on progress to the governing bodies.

¹ For further details on the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network, see <http://www.mopanonline.org/> (accessed 22 October 2018).

PROPOSAL FOR REVIEW OF 40 YEARS OF PRIMARY HEALTH CARE IMPLEMENTATION AT COUNTRY LEVEL

Background

15. In January 2018, the 142nd session of the Executive Board¹ requested the Evaluation Office to conduct a review of 40 years of primary health care implementation at country level. Furthermore, the Board requested the Secretariat to present to the 144th session of the Board an outline of the scope and framework for such a review.

Purpose

16. The overall purpose of the review is to: (a) document global progress towards primary health care implementation, identifying achievements and success stories, best practices and key challenges encountered; and (b) make recommendations on the way forward in order to accelerate national, regional and global health strategies and plans for universal health care/primary health care and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Scope and approach

17. The scope of the review will be informed by the Global Conference on Primary Health Care (Astana, Kazakhstan, 25 and 26 October 2018), the forthcoming report of the Regional Office for the Americas/PAHO High-level Commission on Universal Health in the 21st Century: 40 years of Alma-Ata, and other reviews of primary health care implementation. Covering the 40-year period from the 1978 Alma Ata Declaration on primary health care to 2018, the review will assess global progress towards primary health care implementation through two complementary information sources: (a) a systematic review of existing published data sources; and (b) an assessment of country-level implementation through Member State engagement and inputs obtained by means of an online questionnaire for all Member States.

18. The overall process and methodological approach will follow the principles set forth in the WHO Evaluation Practice Handbook² and the United Nations Evaluation Group Norms and Standards for Evaluation and Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation.³ The review will also adhere to WHO cross-cutting evaluation strategies on gender, equity, vulnerable populations and human rights, and include, to the extent possible, disaggregated data and analysis.

¹ See document EB142/2018/REC/2, summary records of the eleventh meeting, section 2.

² WHO Evaluation Practice Handbook. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2013 (http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/96311/9789241548687_eng.pdf;jsessionid=B9451D6A553A070BADE75ED7E874F623?sequence=1, 22 October 2018).

³ Norms and Standards for Evaluation. New York: United Nations Evaluation Group; 2016 (<http://www.unevaluation.org/document/download/2787>) and UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation, United Nations Evaluation Group Foundation Document, UNEG/FN/ETH(2008) (<http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/102>) (both accessed 22 October 2018).

19. The review will aim to address the following key questions:
- (a) What have been the enabling factors and challenges in developing and implementing primary health care approaches in countries over the past 40 years?
 - (b) How have primary health care and related innovations helped to improve health outcomes, equity, intersectoral collaboration and efficiency?
 - (c) What intersectoral approaches have been implemented for primary health care?
 - (d) What lessons and innovations from different country and regional technical/development contexts can be adapted and shared to promote and scale up future efforts in universal health care/primary health care?
20. The review will be conducted by the Evaluation Office. The review process will be initiated during the first quarter of 2019. The final report will be issued during the last quarter of 2019 with key findings presented to the Executive Board at its 146th session in January 2020.

ACTION BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

21. The Board is invited to note the report and consider the proposal for the review of 40 years of implementation of primary health care at country level.

= = =