

Report of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee of the Executive Board

1. The thirtieth meeting of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee was held in Geneva from 15 to 17 May 2019 under the chairmanship of Dr Kennedy Malama, (Zambia).¹ The Committee adopted its agenda² with the deletion of the following agenda items: 3.7, Assessment of new Members and Associate Members; and 4.3, Amendments to the Financial Regulations and Financial Rules.

Agenda item 2.1 Independent Expert Oversight Advisory Committee: annual report (Document EBPBAC30/2³)

2. The Chair of the Independent Expert Oversight Advisory Committee presented the report, highlighting the areas of particular concern described therein, including the funding of WHO's after-service Staff Health Insurance liability. She stressed that in all management initiatives, effective implementation must be accompanied by accountability. The Programme, Budget and Administration Committee thanked the Advisory Committee for the report, welcoming, in particular, the overview on ongoing investigations.

3. Concerns were expressed in relation to the volume of overdue donor reports. In reply, the Secretariat reiterated its commitment to minimizing the number of outstanding reports, which has been reduced to 10% of all reports due.

4. In the context of the planned review of the Terms of Reference of the Advisory Committee, the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee supported the Advisory Committee's intention to take into account the conclusions of the United Nations-wide review of the independent oversight bodies carried out by the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) in 2019.

The Committee noted the report.

¹ The list of participants is available in document EBPBAC30/DIV./1.

² Document EBPBAC30/1.

³ Available at http://apps.who.int/gb/pbac/pdf_files/pbac30/pbac30_2-en.pdf, accessed 17 May 2019.

Agenda item 2.2 Compliance, risk management and ethics: annual report
(Document EBPBAC30/3)

5. The Secretariat introduced the Director-General's annual report on Compliance, risk management and ethics.

6. The Committee welcomed the information contained in the report and stressed the critical nature of a strong ethical basis for the work of the Organization. Adequate resources should be allocated to advance the work of this function, with particular attention paid to preventing sexual exploitation and abuse, sexual harassment and harassment. Further training should be developed in that field. Leadership should continue to demonstrate a zero-tolerance approach and accountability measures should be put in place at management level across the Organization. The Committee re-emphasized that further discussions concerning the resourcing of the Compliance, Risk Management and Ethics office should be held.

7. The Committee was encouraged by the work undertaken in respect of risk management and called on WHO to continue to implement processes to build coherence in such management across the Organization, in order to ensure sustained results. It was informed that the WHO list of principal risks¹ had been reviewed and updated within the past six weeks, and that it was made publicly available on the Organization's website. The Committee noted that staff security figured very highly on that list, and the Secretariat was urged to allocate sufficient resources to ensure the safety of staff and the security of WHO premises around the world as a matter of urgency.

8. The Secretariat stressed that all staff members were responsible for improving corporate culture: it was not the job of the Compliance, Risk Management and Ethics office alone. It should be noted that WHO's principal risks were not statements of fact; rather, they were expressions of possibility: potential rather than actual. WHO was developing global training material in risk and in ethics, which would shortly be available online. It would be completed by face-to-face training, which would require support. The Secretariat referred to mandatory training carried out for all staff on sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse and the focus maintained on compliance with this training.

The Committee noted the report.

Agenda item 2.3 Reports of the Joint Inspection Unit (Document EBPBAC30/4)

9. The Committee received a brief introduction to the role of JIU, noting that the recommendations made by the unit are based on assessments of all parts of the United Nations and thus do not necessarily apply to every office or agency. The Vice-Chairman of JIU welcomed the good working relations with WHO and the good progress of the Organization in implementing JIU's recommendations.

10. The Committee thanked JIU for its report and expressed support for its important work.

11. The Committee drew attention to some recommendations that are under consideration by WHO. It expressed concern that certain recommendations, such as those involving legislative bodies, had not apparently resulted in action. In particular, the Committee requested the Secretariat to ensure full and quick implementation of recommendation 1 of JIU's recommendation regarding whistle-blowing

¹ See https://www.who.int/about/finances-accountability/accountability/WHO_Principal_Risks.pdf?ua=1 (accessed 16 May 2019).

policies. The Secretariat responded that it would take appropriate action to ensure full implementation of the recommendations mentioned by the Committee.

12. The Committee requested information from the Secretariat as to when the specified recommendations would be implemented. The Secretariat undertook to provide information on timing and on the action that should be taken on the recommendations in question.

13. The Committee was informed that WHO's Evaluation Office posts a document on the Organization's website to indicate how WHO takes forward JIU's recommendations.

The Committee noted the report.

Agenda item 4.1 Evaluation: annual report (Document EB145/6)

14. The Committee commended the progress made in implementing the evaluation policy and the biennial evaluation workplan, understanding that more information and data were available on the website of the Evaluation Office. It welcomed the efforts to promote organizational learning from the completed evaluations and the participation in joint evaluations.

15. The Committee looked forward to the planned evaluations of the Neglected Tropical Diseases Programme and of the use of National Programme Officers, while recognizing the increasing workload. It expressed regret at the delay in initiating the mid-point evaluation of the implementation of the Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases 2013–2020. It highlighted the value of timely evaluations that informed policy and decision-making.

16. The Committee supported the terms of reference and proposed approach for the initial evaluation of the Framework of Engagement with Non-State Actors. It underlined the value of key informant interviews and encouraged broader outreach, including to staff members in the Secretariat. The Secretariat confirmed that broad outreach was planned as part of the evaluation.

The Committee recommended that the Executive Board note the report, and that the Executive Board consider the terms of reference and proposed approach for the initial evaluation of the Framework of Engagement with Non-State Actors.

Agenda item 4.2 Hosted partnerships (Documents EB145/7 and EB145/8)

17. The Committee commended the work of the hosted partnerships. It valued the reviews of such partnerships, which should continue. It noted that attention should be paid to the impact of the transformation agenda and consequent changes in structure and reporting lines within the Secretariat.

18. Recognizing that partnerships should be linked to WHO's constitutional mandate and aligned with its key functions, and that they should adhere to the principles contained in resolution WHA63.10 (2010), the Committee asked that in future reports the Secretariat provide further analysis of the partnerships' relationships with WHO and the output of the activities they undertake together.

19. The Committee recognized the value of the partnership with the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies, including its work in designing health system reforms and the regular dialogue with the Secretariat. It welcomed the Observatory's five-year development plan for 2019–2023.

The Committee recommended that the Executive Board note the reports contained in documents EB145/7 and EB145/8.

Agenda item 4.4 Amendments to the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules
(Document EB145/13)

20. The Committee received an update on amendments to the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules as contained in the report by the Director-General.

The Committee recommended that the Executive Board adopt the draft resolution contained in paragraph 9 of document EB145/13.

Agenda item 5 Adoption of the report and closure of the meeting

21. The Committee adopted its report.

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