

Decisions

EBSS2(1) Programmes and priority setting

The Executive Board, having considered the section of the report by the Director-General¹ relating to programmes and priority setting,

1. Decided to establish a Member State-driven process,² to take place following the 130th session of the Executive Board in January 2012, with a view to providing recommendations on methods for programme and priority setting for the consideration of the Sixty-fifth World Health Assembly in May 2012;
2. In support thereof, requested the Secretariat to develop a background document for the Executive Board at its 130th session in January 2012 to include:
 - (a) a detailed description of current criteria and mechanisms for priority setting, and the relationship between country-level, regional and global priorities, including elements of bottom-up and top-down prioritization;
 - (b) a description of the current activities carried out at headquarters, regional and country level, including the programmes as well as the financial and human resources allocated to each level and cluster;
 - (c) a description of the application of criteria and priorities to planning and the impact of criteria and priorities on resource allocation and results;
 - (d) proposals for how criteria and priorities could be set and applied in the future;
 - (e) a detailed proposal, with a timeline, for the Member State-driven process established by this decision.

(Fifth meeting, 3 November 2011)

¹ See document EBSS/2/2.

² Including, where applicable, regional economic integration organizations.

EBSS2(2) Governance

The Executive Board, having considered the section of the report by the Director-General¹ relating to governance,

1. Agreed on the following principles:
 - (a) governance needs to be a fully inclusive process, respecting the principle of multilateralism;
 - (b) WHO's governing bodies have a key role in priority setting, with the Health Assembly playing a policy and strategic role and the Executive Board playing a strengthened advisory, executive and oversight role;
 - (c) WHO should seek to strengthen and make maximum use of existing mechanisms and structures;
 - (d) the general programme of work should guide the work of the governing bodies;
 - (e) engagement with other stakeholders should be guided by the following:
 - (i) the intergovernmental nature of WHO's decision-making remains paramount;
 - (ii) the development of norms, standards, policies and strategies, which lies at the heart of WHO's work, must continue to be based on the systematic use of evidence and protected from influence by any form of vested interest;
 - (iii) any new initiative must have clear benefits and add value in terms of enriching policy or increasing national capacity from a public health perspective;
 - (iv) building on existing mechanisms should take precedence over creating new forums, meetings or structures, with a clear analysis provided of how any additional costs can lead to better outcomes;
2. Further agreed that:
 - (a) the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee of the Executive Board should be strengthened. In particular, its role should also include overseeing the monitoring and evaluation of programmatic and financial implementation at the three levels of the Organization;
 - (b) the duration, timing and sequencing of the sessions of the Executive Board and the meetings of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee should be optimized, relocated in time or extended, as appropriate, rather than holding additional sessions of the Executive Board;

¹ See document EBSS/2/2.

(c) the Executive Board should play a role in limiting the number of draft resolutions based on an assessment of their strategic value, financial and administrative implications, and reporting requirements and timelines;

(d) the following proposals for improving the methods of work of the Executive Board and Health Assembly do not require amendments of the Rules of Procedure and should be immediately implemented: debates should become more disciplined to discourage lengthy national reports and focus on the substance of the item; and institute as the norm a “traffic light” system and enforcement by chairmen of time-limits;

(e) the linkage between the work of the Regional Committees and that of the Executive Board and the Health Assembly should be enhanced and strengthened;

(f) the Director-General shall strengthen support to Member States in their preparation for, and participation in, the work of the governing bodies in collaboration with Regional Offices, with particular regard to the timely provision of quality documentation in all official languages;

(g) dialogue and collaboration with other stakeholders should be strengthened as appropriate, while taking into account the importance of full engagement of Member States and of managing conflicts of interest;

(h) WHO should, based on Articles 2 (a) and 2 (b) of the Constitution of the World Health Organization, engage and where appropriate lead and coordinate across the United Nations system and with other international agencies on issues that impact health;

(i) in the longer term, options for a framework to guide interaction between all stakeholders active in health should be explored.

3. Requested the Director-General to submit to the Executive Board at its 130th session in January 2012:

(a) a proposal for revised terms of reference for the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee in order to strengthen its role as referred to in paragraph 2 (a) above;

(b) further analysis on ways to increase linkages and alignment between Regional Committees, the Executive Board and the Health Assembly as well as on proposals to harmonize the practices of Regional Committees;

(c) proposals for a revision of the annual timeline of the meetings of governing bodies in order to optimize their synergies and effectiveness;

(d) further analysis of proposals to promote engagement with other stakeholders;

(e) further analysis on modalities to improve Member State involvement with and oversight of partnerships including the possible expansion of the mandate of the Standing Committee on Nongovernmental Organizations in this regard;

- (f) proposals on how to streamline national reporting in accordance with Articles 61 to 65 of the Constitution of the World Health Organization, using modern tools.

(Sixth meeting, 3 November 2011)

EBSS2(3) Managerial reforms

The Executive Board, having considered the section of the report by the Director-General¹ relating to managerial reforms,

1. Welcomed the Director-General's proposals and, while recognizing the need for complementary work, especially on the strategic allocation of resources, requested that the proposals be taken forward in the following areas:

- (a) organizational effectiveness, alignment and efficiency;
 - strengthen country offices;
 - promote alignment, synergy and collaboration;
 - improve knowledge management;
- (b) financing of the Organization;
 - improve financing of administration and management costs;
 - strengthen financial controls;
 - improve Organization-wide resource mobilization;
- (c) human resources policies and management;
 - revise the workforce model and contract types;
 - streamline recruitment and selection processes;
 - improve performance management processes;
 - implement a mobility and rotation framework;
 - enhance staff development and learning;
- (d) results-based planning, management and accountability;
 - implement a new results chain;
 - sequence planning to reflect country needs;
 - prepare a realistic budget;
 - create a new resource allocation mechanism;
 - improve monitoring and reporting;
 - strengthen the internal control framework;
 - increase the capacity of audit and oversight;
 - strengthen the conflict of interest policy;
 - establish an information disclosure policy;

¹ See document EBSS/2/2.

- (e) strategic communications;
 - build communications capacity;
 - develop communications platforms;
 - improve public and stakeholder understanding of the work of WHO;
2. Urged caution and recognized that further analysis and consultation would be needed before action could be considered in several areas of reform, notably the proposals relating to:
- (a) strategic relocation of staff, resources, programmes and operations;
 - (b) introduction of an annual “budget re-costing mechanism” to protect against currency fluctuations;
3. Requested the Director-General to develop further:
- (a) a detailed proposal, for mechanisms to increase predictability of financing and flexibility of income, which supports priorities set by Member States, and a report on this to the Executive Board at its 130th session in January 2012;
 - (b) a detailed proposal to establish a contingency fund for public health emergencies, and a report on this to the Executive Board at its 130th session in January 2012;
 - (c) proposals for a timeline for development of the programme budget and general programme of work for the period 2014 onwards, taking into consideration the good experiences of the medium-term strategic plan, with an analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of changing the periodicity of the programme budget to three years, and a report on this to the Sixty-fifth World Health Assembly in May 2012;
 - (d) a draft formal evaluation policy, including a mechanism for oversight of evaluation by the governing bodies informed by insights provided by the Independent Expert Oversight Advisory Committee, and a report on this to the Executive Board at its 130th session in January 2012;
 - (e) clarification on the proposals with respect to enhancing the networks and relationships between regional offices, and between groups of country offices within and across regions; and on enhancing capacity for effective resource mobilization, particularly at the country level;
 - (f) a proposal for a new resource allocation mechanism, to be considered by the sixteenth meeting of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee of the Executive Board in May 2012.
4. Decided to proceed with an independent evaluation to provide input into the reform process through a two-stage approach, the first stage of which will consist of a review of existing information with a focus on financing challenges for the Organization, staffing issues, and internal governance of WHO by Member States, following up where possible to produce more information in response to questions arising from the Executive Board at its special session. Ideally, stage one should be completed in time for the Sixty-fifth World Health Assembly;
5. Decided further that the first stage review will also provide a roadmap for stage two of the evaluation, the goal of that second stage being to inform the Sixty-sixth World Health Assembly,

through the Executive Board at its 132nd session, as an input into the general programme of work. Stage two of the evaluation will build on the results of stage one and further consultations with Member States,¹ focusing in particular on the coherence between, and functioning of, the Organization's three levels. As one input into reform, this evaluation will proceed in parallel to other aspects of the reform;

6. Requested the Director-General to identify the appropriate entity for the first stage of the evaluation and to develop further, in consultation with the United Nations Joint Inspection Unit, the External Auditor and the Independent Expert Oversight Advisory Committee, an approach to the two-stage evaluation, in consultation with Member States,¹ and present it to the Executive Board at its 130th session in January 2012 for consideration;

7. In the context of relations with the United Nations Joint Inspection Unit, requests the Joint Inspection Unit to update its reports on:

(a) Decentralization of Organizations within the United Nations System – Part III: the World Health Organization;²

(b) Review of management and administration in the World Health Organization.³

(Sixth meeting, 3 November 2011)

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¹ Including, where applicable, regional economic integration organizations.

² Document JIU/REP/93/2.

³ Document JIU/REP/2001/5.