

Process for developing the Proposed programme budget 2016–2017

1. This paper provides additional information, as requested by Member States,¹ on the process of developing the Proposed programme budget for 2016–2017, which utilizes a robust bottom-up planning process and a standardized approach to costing, based on the roles and responsibilities across the three levels of WHO.

2. The Global Policy Group (comprising the Director-General, Deputy Director-General and regional directors) established a task force in 2013 for the development of the Proposed programme budget 2016–2017. The task force was co-chaired by the Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean and the Assistant Director-General, HIV, Tuberculosis, Malaria and Tropical Diseases, who led the development of the initial principles, including the emphasis on the bottom-up planning process.

3. In 2014, the Global Policy Group agreed on the principles and the starting point for the bottom-up planning process, that is, to ensure alignment with the Twelfth General Programme of Work, 2014–2019, to keep the overall budget for each biennium within US\$ 4 billion, and to continue to build on the Programme budget 2014–2015 while providing opportunities to sharpen the focus of WHO's work, based on the priorities identified.

4. The category and programme area networks were utilized in order to foster coordination, build consensus and strengthen common understanding of the issues and priorities, and ownership of the results, across the three levels of the Organization.

Bottom-up identification of priorities

5. The process and timeline as agreed by the Global Policy Group, following extensive consultations in major offices, was carried out in a sequential and systematic manner, and is contained in the Annex. The first and key step was the identification of priorities for WHO's technical cooperation at the country level. Country offices were expected to put in place a structured process of consultation with Member States and to involve other stakeholders. The country cooperation strategy and other key strategic planning processes at country level were important references for the identification of priorities. At the same time, departments in the regional offices and at headquarters reviewed existing commitments and engagement with partners and global and regional action plans and targets, as well as resolutions by the governing bodies.

¹ See decision WHA66(9).

6. The WHO country offices identified a priority set of up to 10 programme areas for WHO's technical cooperation at the country level, to which approximately 80% of resources for the technical areas (categories 1–5) would be directed; the remaining 20% of resources for the technical areas would be directed at meeting existing commitments and emerging priorities during the biennium. The main purpose was to sharpen the focus of WHO's work at the country level. Consolidated information on existing resolutions and commitments for programmes, in terms of global targets and project agreements already signed with donors, were made available at the time of these consultations.¹

7. This process at the country level provided the first opportunity to break with past practice of setting priorities based on historical precedent. It has shifted the emphasis towards programme areas based on identified priorities, and has enabled the country offices to focus better on areas in which WHO has more potential to contribute to health outcomes.

8. For those programme areas receiving less emphasis in terms of resources, it was proposed to give careful consideration to sustaining appropriate engagement, including the need to shift to upstream policy and technical support, and make the best use of existing partnerships and relationships with other stakeholders in order to maximize WHO's resources, while continuing to address ongoing needs.

9. As a result, each country office provided a first set of priority programme areas and planned results. An online tool to record the information was made accessible to all staff members across the Organization in order to facilitate transparency for a coordinated planning process involving the three levels of the Organization.

10. In countries with no WHO country office, the bottom-up identification of priorities involved consultations with relevant stakeholders conducted by regional offices. The results of the process were similar to those for countries with a country office.

11. The regional offices and headquarters took into account the feedback from countries when identifying their priority work, through iterative discussions within the programme area networks, which are composed of senior technical staff responsible for programme areas at the three levels of the Organization.

Consolidation of priorities towards an Organization-wide plan

12. A two-step process was used to consolidate programmatic priorities. The inputs from the country offices were consolidated at regional level, and the results of the consolidation process were then fed into the global discussions of the programme area networks, with focal points at headquarters and in the regional and country offices engaged through face-to-face meetings or video- or teleconferences.

13. The resulting high-level plan is in line with the Twelfth General Programme of Work, 2014–2019. It articulates the outputs, indicators and agreed deliverables that WHO will be accountable for, and that are consistent with the roles and functions of each level of the Organization.

¹ Available at http://www.who.int/about/resources_planning/en/.

Iterative development of the Proposed programme budget

14. The identification of resource requirements was closely linked to the bottom-up identification of priorities. Each country office indicated its staff and non-staff resource requirements to deliver the outputs for each programme area.

15. In line with the agreed principles, the Programme budget 2014–2015 was used as a budget indication at the major office and category levels in order to set realistic expectations and provide the conditions for directing the resources to the identified priorities. The major offices then provided the budget indication to their country offices, divisions and departments as a starting point for a more detailed estimate of staff and non-staff resources required to deliver the priorities identified.

16. At the country office level, the budget indication was a benchmark for estimates of staff and non-staff resource needs, while following the 80–20% condition described in paragraph 6.

17. The online tool recorded the information on staff and non-staff resource requirements for each of the programme area outputs. Further iterative discussions were held with budget centres in cases in which estimates of resource requirements exceeded the budget indication. The objective was to fit estimated resource requirements with the overall budget indication of the major offices, allowing for shifts to align the budget with identified priorities. For example, in the Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean, the shifts occurred not only between programme areas, but also between country office and regional office budgets.

18. The category and programme area networks had access to the results, analysed gaps and raised issues for the attention of the regional planning departments, category networks and the Global Policy Group.

Review, oversight and governance

19. The category network review meetings in the regional offices were hosted by the regional directors, and at headquarters by assistant-directors-general. Their primary objective was to ensure that the work across the programme area networks was harmonized, and the plans took into account synergies between programme area networks. The Global Policy Group reviewed the draft Proposed programme budget 2016–2017 before submission to the regional committees, which held sessions between September and November 2014.

20. Following consideration of the draft Proposed programme budget by the regional committees, the category and programme area networks and budget centres in the major offices continued with the process of adding refinements and further iterations. The results chain, in particular the outcomes, outputs and indicators, were reviewed, taking into account comments received from the regional committees. Considerations were made to further elaborate the assumptions and risks that affect the delivery of the work and results.

21. Ongoing work will feed into further refinements following the Board's consideration of the Proposed programme budget, including more a detailed costing through an advance roll-out of Organization-wide planning for human resources and ongoing activities. The version of the Proposed programme budget to be submitted to the Sixty-eighth World Health Assembly requires further elaboration on preparedness and response to outbreaks and crisis. Additional refinements will be based on a standardized costing for staffing, meetings, travel and procurement, which account for two thirds of the total budget.

ANNEX

STEP-BY-STEP DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET 2016–2017

