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Preparation of the Tenth General Programme of Work

Report by the Director-General

The Health Assembly should approve the Tenth General Programme of Work in May 1999, on the basis of a draft reviewed by regional committees in September 1998 and by the Executive Board in January 1999. The preparation of the Programme is closely linked with the preparation of the new policy for the twenty-first century for health for all, and the ninth report on the world health situation/third evaluation of the health-for-all strategy. The outcome of these other activities, which are being undertaken in close consultation with Member States through the governing bodies, will form the basis for the technical and managerial framework of the Programme of Work to ensure that it reflects their needs and aspirations.

This document is an amended version of the report submitted to the Executive Board at its ninety-ninth session and takes into account the views expressed by the Executive Board and its Programme Development Committee.

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I. PRINCIPLES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK

1. The Tenth General Programme of Work will be based on the WHO policy for the twenty-first century for the renewed health-for-all strategy, and will be the first of three or four general programmes of work implementing this policy. The targets for these programmes will, therefore, be defined within the terms of the new policy for the periods covered. The general programmes of work will in turn be used as a tool to update at regular intervals the targets for the implementation of the policy for the twenty-first century for the renewed health-for-all strategy. Development of the Tenth General Programme of Work simultaneously with preparation of the updated policy will ensure consistency of vision and content.

2. The products, services and functions developed by the Organization under the Programme should correspond to: the major functions defined in Article 2 of the Constitution; resolution WHA23.59 (1970), which lists certain important functions of the Organization; resolution WHA33.17 (1980) concerning the study of WHO's structures in the light of its functions; resolution WHA38.11 (1985) concerning regional programme budget policies to ensure optimal use of WHO's resources in countries; and the results of the reforms introduced following resolution WHA46.16 on the WHO response to global change.

3. These products, services and functions should meet defined criteria:

- with regard to quality of planning and management as expressed in previous decisions of the Executive Board and the Health Assembly, and as reflected in the growing experience of the Organization; and
- specifically with regard to the rationale for selecting programme areas for WHO's involvement, the approaches for attaining the objectives of these programme areas, the organizational level or levels for implementation of programme activities, and the type of resource to be deployed.

These criteria will be summarized in the Programme of Work.

4. The Programme will also take into account the result of a preliminary evaluation of the Ninth General Programme of Work and the evolution of the indices used to measure progress towards its targets. The Organization will thus in 1998 have preliminary information on the extent to which the targets proposed in the Ninth may be attained.

5. The programme components of the Tenth Programme should be expressed in terms of targets for and expected products at the end of the period covered, concentrating on the Organization's expected results - whenever possible at country level - and showing how WHO will enable countries to attain their own objectives to the extent possible. Wherever applicable, these products will be quantified with country- and WHO-oriented measurable targets against which progress can be assessed by the regional committees, the Executive Board and the Health Assembly. The Programme will focus on those problems or fields of activity identified as priorities for the implementation of national, regional and global policies for health for all in accordance with resolution WHA48.16 (1995) and specified in resolutions of the Executive Board and Health Assembly as medium-term priorities, and the policy for the twenty-first century for the renewed health-for-all strategy to be adopted in May 1998.

6. As mentioned in paragraph 1 above, targets will be elaborated on the basis of those of the health-for-all policy. However, it should be underlined that the start and end of any particular general programme of work may or may not coincide with a given programme target. It is expected that the health-for-all targets will similarly guide Member States in reassessing their own national targets, thus ensuring a commonality of goals.

7. General programmes of work have recently been prepared for a period of six years, which would mean that the Tenth covers the period 2002 to 2007. Given the rapid changes taking place in the political, socioeconomic and health situation in the world, it is considered that the period should remain one of six years.

8. In the meantime, the streamlining of WHO programmes, through the various restructuring and prioritization exercises, will ensure that the Tenth General Programme of Work is developed in a proper managerial and organizational context. The Programme will highlight the importance of sound management of WHO programmes through improved planning, programme budgeting and evaluation. The link between all planning instruments will be emphasized. The logical sequence of the different instruments is as follows: a global health policy for the twenty-first century for renewing the health-for-all strategy; the Tenth General Programme of Work outlining the role of WHO in implementing that policy over the coming six years; consecutive biennial proposed programme budgets guided by that Programme; and relevant evaluations. The Programme will also incorporate the most recent reforms, emphasizing the selection of priorities and the different strategies available; and it will fulfil WHO's mission and mandate according to its Constitution (updated if necessary).

9. The Executive Board adopted resolution EB99.R15 on "WHO reform: linking the renewed health-for-all strategy with the Tenth General Programme of Work, programme budgeting and evaluation".

II. GENERAL ORIENTATIONS

10. As the Programme will be closely linked to the policy for the twenty-first century for the renewed health-for-all strategy, it will emphasize the intersectoral nature of health and be concerned not only with the health situation but also the foreseeable economic, political, demographic and environmental factors influencing health. Its targets and objectives will be developed on the basis of: the strategic priorities proposed in the consultation document for the health-for-all strategy; the work of the task force on health and development; and the consensus emerging from consultation with countries. This will enable the Organization:

- to promote equity of access to the health system, with special measures for those most affected by inequalities, for example women, and assessment of results through quality control;
- to ensure technical cooperation in response to particular national situations and to fulfil its normative functions;
- to participate in the promotion of peace and security in order to alleviate conflicts and their effects on health;
- to cooperate in programmes that promote intersectoral action and specific health action for the poor aimed at reducing poverty and poverty-related health deterioration;
- to ensure that health is recognized as a prerequisite for sustainable development by the incorporation of health considerations in development policies and programmes;
- to promote sustainability in health development in order to maintain past gains and protect advances through action at national and international level;
- to seek the resources required for health development;
- to ensure the application of newly acquired knowledge, as well as existing knowledge and technology, to the health development process; and

- to mobilize those involved in international health work according to their mandates and capacities, within the framework of coordinated country plans managed by countries and supported by WHO.

11. These are, however, preliminary proposals which should be reviewed as the new policy takes shape and when it is finally adopted in 1998. The Programme of Work will thus be based on the actual priorities of the updated policy.

12. The Programme must answer some of the following questions:

- (a) How can WHO programmes reflect and support the concepts of solidarity, equity, sustainability and awareness of the different needs of women and men in the new health policy? The answer must take into account the continuous role of advocacy for the new policy and monitoring of its implementation.
- (b) How can WHO respond to the changing needs of Member States, including emergency situations?
- (c) How can WHO promote capacity-building on a permanent basis in each country through technical cooperation, with the aim of self-reliance, so that countries develop health care systems at different levels through a multisectoral approach?

III. FUNCTIONS AND CONTENT

13. While the new policy for the twenty-first century for health for all is universal, to be implemented on a worldwide scale by all concerned parties, such as WHO Member States and national, international and nongovernmental organizations, the main function of the Tenth General Programme of Work is to serve as a framework for WHO's activities for the implementation of the policy.

14. The second function is to elaborate the general principles for WHO programme management, briefly analysing the expected health situation and trends during the period, with an assessment of progress made in the previous one.

15. The Programme will contain the following: an executive summary; a description of the policy for the twenty-first century for health for all and an analysis of the expected health situation and trends for the period; an assessment of the implementation of the Ninth General Programme of Work or at least a general evaluation of WHO's recent work; the vision, mission and functions of WHO; a general framework and outline of the Tenth General Programme of Work, including current reforms, with criteria and indicators; major orientations, including priorities and targets; general principles for implementation, including programme budget development and implementation, monitoring and evaluation; and conclusions.

16. The content will be developed progressively from January 1997 to January 1999 according to the schedule given in the Annex.

IV. METHOD OF PREPARATION

(a) Country consultation

17. The preparation of WHO's general programmes of work since the Seventh has been based on wide consultation with countries through the regional offices and the regional committees. In 1995-1996 Member States were consulted for the preparation of the policy for health for all for the twenty-first century and for the

third evaluation of the health-for-all strategy. Any additional issues can be raised during the country programme reviews for the preparation of the 1998-1999 proposed programme budget in autumn 1997.

18. The Global Policy Council will provide the policy orientation and oversee the whole process. The global coordination of the programme content will be entrusted to the Management Development Committee.

(b) Role of the advisory committees on health research

19. The views of ACHRs, global and regional, on the scientific basis of the Programme of Work should be taken into account to ensure that future research trends strengthen its orientation.

(c) Role of governing bodies

20. As shown in the Annex, governing bodies (indicated there as "WHA", "EB" and "RC") will be closely involved in preparation and finalization. The final approval of the structure, principles and policy orientation will be given by the Health Assembly.

V. DEVELOPMENT

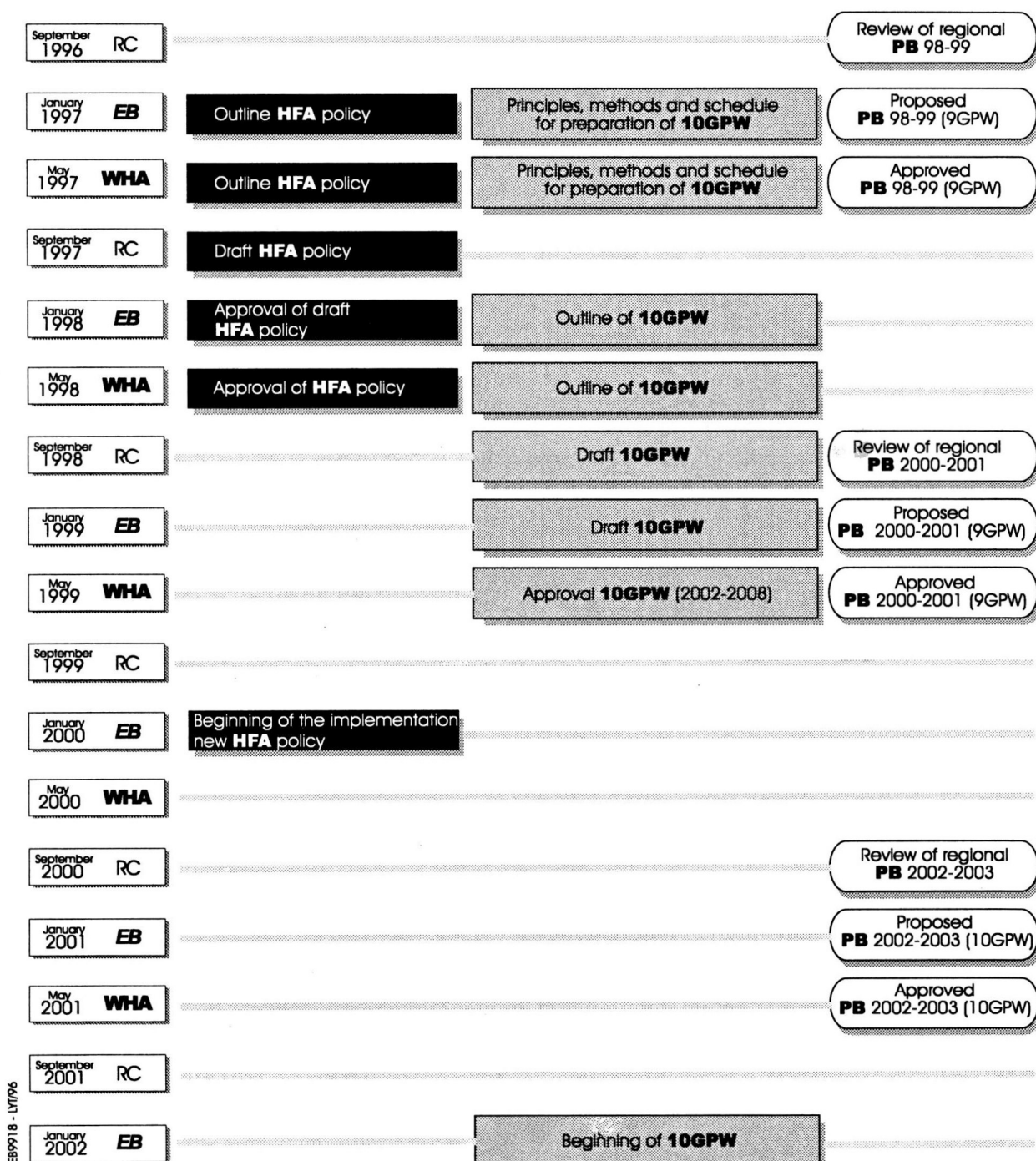
21. A comparative schedule showing the preparation of the Tenth General Programme of Work and its implementation through programme budgets, and the development of the policy for health for all for the twenty-first century, indicating the respective roles of the governing bodies, is provided in the Annex. The Executive Board decided that the Programme Development Committee should also be involved in the preparation of the Programme of Work.

VI. MATTERS FOR THE PARTICULAR ATTENTION OF THE HEALTH ASSEMBLY

22. The Health Assembly is invited to review the present document and endorse the general orientations, the general principles and the schedule for the preparation of the Programme of Work.

ANNEX

COMPARATIVE SCHEDULE



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