The WHO Transformation

2020 progress report
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About this document

✓ Builds on report shared with Member States in Jan 2020 during 146th EB
✓ Detailed overview of implementation of the WHO Transformation Agenda
✓ Status of 40 Transformation initiatives
✓ Learnings from this year, especially during COVID-19
✓ Priorities for 2021 and beyond
Our WHO-wide Transformation at a glance

1 over-riding goal

3 strategic objectives

7 major workstreams (40+ key initiatives)
Major milestones in our Transformation journey so far

Phase 1: Consultation & analysis

- Jul '17: Working group on Initiatives for Change
- Feb '18: Transformation Plan & Architecture
- Jul '18: 3-Level Work Groups & 13 Processes
- Nov '18: Global Values Jam

Phase 2: Design & planning

- Mar '19: DG & RDs launch 3-level op. model & Transformation vision
- Jun '19: Launch of WHO Academy
- Dec '19: Aligned HQ & RO structures
- Jun '20: Global Career Pathways initiative

Phase 3: Alignment & initiation

- May '17: Staff Baseline Survey
- May '18: GPW13 approved at WHA71
- Sep '18: 1st ever WHO Investment Case
- Feb '19: 1st WHO-wide GPW13 Goals Week
- May '19: New WHO Values Charter
- Sep '19: Launch of Global Action Plan

Phase 4: Implementation & continuous improvement

- May '20: WHO Foundation established
Status overview of 40 major, 3-level Transformation initiatives

Implementation status
- Completed
- Fully implemented
- Partially implemented
- Initiated

Major achievements and key milestones
(as of November 2020)
Details of a “Transformation initiative”

Building a motivated & fit-for purpose workforce

Lead division (lead department)

Implementation phase

How it contributes to overarching objective of workstream

Major achievements & milestones

New flexible working arrangements

Business Operations (HRT)

Global HR Community; 3-level Task Force on Flexible Working Arrangements

Initiated

The objective of this initiative is to modernize the ways WHO empowers its workforce by building on best practices and lessons learned. It will enable WHO to evolve in line with the external employment environment and promote inclusivity while remaining productive and responsive to the needs of our workforce and our stakeholders.

Oct '20: A global WHO Task Force on Flexible Working Arrangements was established to conceptualize a global framework and provide recommendations for carrying this scope of work forward.
3 Progress by major area

Stories on how Transformation is going forward at Regional & Country levels

Innovating with partners to save lives in Somalia, EMR

Walking the Talk in the Bahamas, AMR

The Walk the Talk: The Health for All Challenge travelled to the Bahamas in 2019 where the PAHO Bahamas’ Country Office organized a fun run/walk-a-thon to encourage physical activity of people of all ages and abilities. Participation from the Government Ministries, the Organization of the American States, Religious Organizations and other civil society partners showed commitment and enthusiasm for getting the community to ‘move in any way they like’! Participants started the day warming up on the beautiful sands of the local beach and finished the course with presentations of medals and sharing of healthy fruit snacks kindly donated by the Bahamas Agriculture and Marine Science Institute. Z Eve Maycock Dorsett (see photo on the right) an avid runner, mother of eight and a strong advocate for physical activity — and was the first prize winner.

Building a motivated and fit-for-purpose workforce in AFRO

In November 2018, AFRO launched the Pathways to Leadership for Transformation initiative. This programme has trained more than 180 staff to improve skills in leadership, organization, and analytical and strategic thinking. The success of the programme has led to it being adopted Organization-wide. AFRO further launched a women’s leadership programme to focus on overcoming barriers to career progression, a mentorship programme to support junior staff and a Team Performance Programme aimed at enhancing collaboration within and across technical areas in the Regional Office and countries offices. Thus far, 33 trained mentors matched to 65 mentees in the mentorship programme and 45 staff members have benefited from the Team Performance Programme.
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What we have learned so far in our Transformation journey

4.1 Reflections on progress and on our approach to Transformation

As evidenced in the earlier sections of this report, the scope of our Transformation work is vast, with many important inter-dependencies between the different initiatives that have been launched. This has meant that we have had to be flexible and agile in our approach, and to prioritize our efforts based on the needs and priorities of the moment.

Strategic objective 1: Ensuring readiness and adaptability

Our strategy is now driving a transformation of the organization, and our new measurement tool and Trips program are ensuring that we are on track. With this, the focus is on ensuring that we are becoming an aligned and integrated organization.

4.2 What we have learned about our Transformation from the COVID-19 response

As knowledge of COVID-19 was emerging in January 2020, we had just entered the 4th phase of our Transformation [implementation and continuous improvement], with many of the foundations for change already in place, as evidenced in this report. Little did we know at that time just how fundamentally and immediately these foundations would be tested as WHO mounted the largest, most comprehensive global health emergency response ever.

Many of the new capacities and structures established under our new operating model were immediately tasked to operate at scale, including those under the new Chief Scientist position, in the new WHO Emergency Preparedness Division, and in our business operations, partnerships and external relations functions. The milestones and successes documented in this report validate the importance of these new functions and capacities and demonstrate that these aspects of our Transformation are already delivering results.

Several of our early Transformation initiatives – for instance, those related to our digital transformation – were crucial to ensuring WHO’s business continuity during the worldwide shift to remote working that was necessitated by COVID-19. This rapid digitalization of our ways of working is now informing further thinking about the future of how we work within WHO, with our Member States and through our partners, opening up possibilities to introduce new, modern flexible working arrangements.
While incorporating the findings & recommendations of: (i) Independent Panel on Pandemic Preparedness & Response (IPPR) and (ii) External Evaluation of WHO’s Transformation

Implementing our near-term Transformation priorities:

• new, agile ways of working
• new "best-in-class" processes
• a motivated and fit-for-purpose workforce
• new tools to measure and track progress
• transforming WHO’s financing
Changing together for a healthier world!