

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

1. The eighth meeting of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee of the Executive Board was held in Geneva on 15 and 16 May 2008, chaired by Professor J. Pereira Miguel (Portugal). The list of participants is at Annex. This document contains a report on agenda items on which the Committee reports to the Executive Board.

2. The Committee adopted its agenda.

### **Agenda item 3.1 Management reforms: review of progress** (Document EBPBAC8/2)

3. The Committee welcomed the report on continued progress in management reforms, including updates on the status of the global management system; the move to full compliance with International Public Sector Accounting Standards; streamlining recruitment to reduce delays; strengthening performance management and linking individual and organizational workplans and objectives; and securing adequate financing for the support functions of the Organization, as well as the information on gaps in financing for implementation of the Capital Master Plan and for better compliance with United Nations' minimum operating standards for staff security.

4. The Committee noted that implementation of the global management system was on track, and all regional offices except the Regional Office for the Americas were preparing to use the system by the end of 2009, with the Regional Office for the Americas joining at a later stage. At the same time, it recognized the size and complexity of the task of implementing the system and the substantial risks involved. The Committee was reassured by the Secretariat that steps were being taken to mitigate the risks; this issue was discussed more fully under agenda item 2.5, Report of the External Auditor to the Health Assembly.<sup>1</sup> The Committee was also informed that the needs of clients (primarily technical unit managers and staff) were foremost in decisions about the design of the system. Data conversion, payroll and training of staff were highlighted as especially large and complex undertakings, but progress was reported to be good.

5. The Committee discussed the importance of ensuring adequate financing of the corporate support functions of the Organization. It welcomed steps being taken to define better both direct and indirect costs of providing administrative and other support to activities funded by voluntary contributions, and urged the Secretariat to identify mechanisms for ensuring that these essential support functions were financed.

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<sup>1</sup> See document A61/24.

6. The Committee also noted that implementation of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards would further enhance the financial accountability of the Organization.

**The Committee noted the report contained in document EBPBAC8/2.**

**Agenda item 3.2 Global health partnerships: progress in developing draft policy guidelines for WHO's involvement (Documents EB123/6 and EB123/6 Add.1)**

7. The Committee, welcoming the update on the Secretariat's report on partnerships noted by the Executive Board at its 122nd session,<sup>1</sup> noted that the Board would be discussing a set of draft principles that would form the basis for policy guidelines, which would be submitted to the Board at its 124th session in January 2009.<sup>2</sup>

8. In discussion, some members and other participants proposed that any agreement for WHO to host a partnership should be submitted to the governing bodies for review and approval. Another member maintained that WHO needed to adapt, in order to respond to the rapidly evolving global health architecture and the fact that partnerships were likely to remain. Enhanced national coordination of partnerships through finance or other ministries was needed. It was noted that forthcoming international meetings, such as the third High-Level Meeting on Aid Effectiveness (Accra, 2–4 September 2008), would provide important opportunities to explore partnerships from broader development and coordination perspectives. An additional request was made that the Secretariat report periodically to the governing bodies on partnerships, their achievements and any issues.

9. One Committee member asked for clarification on the nature of the statute on the GAVI Alliance,<sup>3</sup> whether it was being submitted for approval by the Board and whether there were any implications for WHO. The Secretariat responded that the document was for information purposes, given the impending change in status of the Alliance to an independent Swiss foundation, its separation from its UNICEF host, and the importance of the GAVI Alliance to increasing immunization coverage, justifying the continuation of WHO's participation.

10. Another Committee member requested an update on how the Secretariat was planning to manage partnership budgets and the Proposed programme budget 2010–2011. The Secretariat outlined that work on classifying different collaborative arrangements had identified 11 formal partnerships whose budget would be outside the Programme Budget because of their governance arrangements or the fact that their resources were not mobilized by WHO. It was further noted that there would, however, be a small section in the programme budget describing the synergies provided by these partnerships for WHO's work towards the strategic objectives in the Medium-term strategic plan 2008–2013.

**The Committee recommended that the Board note the reports contained in documents EB123/6 and EB123/6 Add.1.**

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<sup>1</sup> Document EB122/2008/REC/2, summary record of the eighth meeting, section 2.

<sup>2</sup> Document EB123/6.

<sup>3</sup> Document EB123/6 Add.1.

**Agenda item 3.3 WHO publications policy: guidance on implementation and evaluation** (Document EB123/7)

11. The Committee noted that considerable progress had been made in developing the WHO publications policy. The proposed evaluation scheduled to be submitted to the Executive Board at its 129th session in May 2011 would indicate whether the objectives were being achieved. The Committee asked for further information on the proposed categorization of WHO's information products and the proposed guidance on approval at the different stages of the publishing process. It welcomed the proposal to establish an electronic library of WHO's information products and requested that users in developing countries be given free access to that library and to other health-related databases.

12. The Secretariat observed that the proposed date for reporting on the implementation of the policy would allow evaluation over a complete biennium, as many of the tools used followed a biennial cycle. The proposed categorization of products (scientific or technical material, advocacy material, and external publications) reflected different requirements in terms of content development, production and dissemination, and criteria for approval. The proposal to include links from the proposed library to other databases was problematic for reasons of quality assurance and because of the potential for confusion among users regarding the identity of their contents. The Secretariat did, however, facilitate access to health information for users in developing countries through several existing mechanisms, including the Health InterNetwork Access to Research Initiative (HINARI) and the Blue Trunk Library.

**The Committee recommended that the Board note the report contained in document EB123/7.**

**Agenda item 3.4 Method of work of the Health Assembly** (Document EB123/11)

13. The Committee welcomed the Secretariat's response to the Board's proposal for consideration of how the meetings of the General Committee of the Health Assembly could be made more efficient and less time-consuming. One member of the Committee underlined the importance of protecting the prerogative of Member States and asked about the process for amending the Rules of Procedure of the World Health Assembly. A participant stressed the importance of limiting the debate on a proposal for a supplementary agenda item to a predetermined number of speakers (for example, a maximum of two in favour of the proposal and two against) as a means of improving the efficiency of the meetings of the General Committee. He also proposed additional criteria for the proposal of supplementary agenda items for the Health Assembly, and noted that steps to streamline the work of the General Committee with respect to its consideration of proposed supplementary agenda items for the Health Assembly would be necessary. The Secretariat referred the Committee to Rules 73 and 121 of the Rules of Procedure of the World Health Assembly which dealt with amendment of the Rules of Procedure.

14. The Chairman suggested that the Executive Board should further discuss the matter.

**The Committee recommended that the Board note the report.**



ANNEX

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

**MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES**

**Portugal**

Professor J. Pereira Miguel (Chairman)

**Liberia**

Dr W.T. Gwenigale (Vice-Chairman)

**Afghanistan**

Mr O. K. Noori (alternate to Dr H. Ahmadzai)

**Denmark**

Ms M. Kristensen (alternate to Mr J. Fisker)

Ms M. Skovbjerg-Jensen (alternate)  
Mr A. Berling-Rasmussen (alternate)

**Indonesia**

Dr W. Lukito (alternate to Dr S.F. Supari)

Dr A. Somantri (alternate)  
Dr T.W. Putri (alternate)  
Dr Widiyarti (alternate)

**Japan**

Dr Y. Sugiura (alternate to Dr H. Shinozaki)

**Mexico**

Mrs D.M. Valle Álvarez (alternate to Dr M. Hernández Ávila)

Mrs M.A. Jaquez (alternate)  
Mrs M.E. Coronado Martínez (alternate)

**New Zealand**

Ms D. Roche (alternate to Mr D. Cunliffe)

**Sri Lanka**

Mr N. de Silva

Mrs M. Mallikaratchy (alternate)

**Tunisia**

Dr H. Abdesselem

**United States of America**

Mr D.E. Hohman (alternate to Dr J. Garcia)

Ms A. Chick (alternate)

**Ex officio member****Singapore**

Dr B. Sadasivan (Chairman of the Executive Board)

**MEMBER STATES NOT MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE**

Mr E.H. Elbey (Algeria)

Ms C Patterson (Australia)

Ms R. Enn (Austria)

Dr F. Helmut (Austria)

Mr C. Wurzer (Austria)

Mr D. MacPhee (Canada)

Mr P. Blais (Canada)

Dr Xing Jun (China)

Ms Han Jixiu (China)

Mr C. Segura (Dominican Republic)

Mrs P. Renoul (France)

Mr U. Fenchel (Germany)

Mr J.B. Alexandre (Haiti)

Dr T. Mboya Okeyo (Kenya)

Mrs S. Tashmatova (Kyrgyzstan)

Mr M. Achgalou (Morocco)

Miss Z. Chraibi (Morocco)

Mr T.E. Lindgren (Norway)

Mr J.A. Sousa Fialho (Portugal)

Dr A. Pavlov (Russian Federation)

Miss C. Kamikazi (Rwanda)

Mr A. Kayitayire (Rwanda)  
Mr Tan York Chor (Singapore)  
Mr S.N. Syed Hassim (Singapore)  
Mr C. Wong (Singapore)  
Mr T.S. Sadanadom (Singapore)  
Ms F. Gan (Singapore)  
Mrs A. Hellgren (Sweden)  
Ms L. Andersson (Sweden)  
Mr D. Rychner (Switzerland)  
Mr N. Plattner (Switzerland)  
Mrs P. Kanchanahattakij (Thailand)  
Ms C. Kitsell (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

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