

## Meeting report

1. The Agile Member States Task Group on Strengthening WHO's Budgetary, Programmatic and Financing Governance ("the Task Group") met in a hybrid format from 3 to 4 October 2022. The meeting was co-facilitated by Mr José Acacio of Australia and Ms Philomena Bawelile Simelane of Eswatini. The Task Group on Strengthening WHO's Budgetary, Programmatic and Financing Governance was established by decision EB151(1) (2022) to analyse challenges in governance for transparency, efficiency, accountability and compliance, and to devise recommendations.

2. The Task Group agreed to follow the agenda and programme of work contained in documents EB/AMSTG/2/1 and EB/AMSTG/2/2, respectively. The Task Group then turned its discussion to the analysis of challenges in governance for transparency, accountability, compliance and efficiency. In that regard, the co-facilitators provided an overview of document EB/AMSTG/2/3 and the rationale for its development. The floor was first opened for general comments on the document. During the discussion, Member States acknowledged the preparations and documents for the second meeting of the Task Group. They also expressed appreciation for the transparency of the intersessional process and information-sharing. As many acknowledged, the documents would facilitate the subsequent work of the Task Group in advancing its mandate. Suggestions were provided on the need to review and regroup the themes and potential topics in an effort to:

- group the recommendations to avoid duplication and bring more synergy to ensure purposeful and measurable proposals;
- ensure that the number of topics was manageable and struck the right balance between ambition and pragmatism; and
- ensure that the potential topics were complementary and mutually supportive and stayed within the scope of the Task Group's mandate.

3. Member States provided further suggestions that could be explored in the discussions as well as specific potential topics that were seen to be missing. Several suggestions regarding the Secretariat's implementation plan were given, including details that some Member States viewed as critical. It was recognized that input was needed on prioritization of potential actions, as well as the amount of precision/granularity required.

4. The co-facilitators invited the Task Group to provide comments, questions or suggestions on the analysis of challenges that fell within the sole remit of the Secretariat. Specifically, the Task Group was encouraged to provide feedback on the various parameters in the table contained in document EB/AMSTG/2/3 (including impact, feasibility, timeline, and resource implications of the potential topics for action), as well as problems and objectives to be addressed, and comment on their priority for delivery. During the discussion, Member States provided suggestions on concrete proposals for reform and noted that the Task Group would consider a draft of the Secretariat's implementation plan at its third

meeting. In addition, comments were made on: overall governance, transparency and accountability; the adequate level of oversight; how some items could be merged or grouped together; concerns about missing details that needed to be considered; and further elaboration of Member State positions. In response to Member States interventions, the Secretariat provided updates on ongoing actions in areas such as: programme budget development, the exploration of the feasibility of a replenishment mechanism, and workforce management – as well as clarifications on a number of points raised.

5. The Task Group was then invited to provide comments, questions or suggestions on the analysis of challenges that fell within the joint remit of the Secretariat and Member States. Specifically, the Task Group was encouraged to provide feedback on the various parameters in the table contained in document EB/AMSTG/2/3 (including impact, feasibility, timeline, and resource implications of the potential topics for action), as well as problems and objectives to be addressed, and comment on their priority for delivery. During the discussion, comments were made on, inter-alia: better and more effective and efficient working in the governing bodies; reviewing the methods used to propose resolutions and decisions and new initiatives; the presentation and format of the programme budget; and better alignment of the programme budget priorities and their financing. It was proposed to organize deep-dives to review certain topics in greater detail.

6. The Task Group provided initial reflections on the first draft of its report to the Executive Board, with recommendations for long-term improvements, which were understood to be durable, sustained improvements that could be implemented with short-, medium- and long-term reform actions. The co-facilitators outlined possible main sections of the report that might include: a brief background section; a section outlining the mandate and scope of the Task Group and its meetings; a section describing the key issues considered by the Task Group; cross-referencing, as appropriate, with the Secretariat’s implementation plan on reform; and a final section with recommendations for long-term improvements as elaborated above, to be presented to the Seventy-sixth World Health Assembly, through the Executive Board at its 152nd session and the thirty-seventh meeting of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee of the Executive Board. In their interventions, Member States stressed the importance of providing concrete and measurable recommendations with clear timelines, pathways for implementation and expected deliverables, as well as making the appropriate linkages to the Secretariat’s implementation plan.

7. The co-facilitators outlined the overall way forward, including the intersessional work to be undertaken prior to the third meeting of the Task Group, with the following main steps: (i) further exchanges and deliberations on the possible content of the report of the Task Group to the Executive Board at its 152nd session; and (ii) the co-facilitators providing additional details regarding possible intersessional work by email. The Task Group recommended that the first draft of its report to Executive Board at its 152nd session should be circulated to Member States well in advance of the third meeting of the Task Group.

8. The Task Group considered and approved the report of its second meeting and noted that its third meeting would be held from 21 to 23 November 2022.

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