



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

EXECUTIVE BOARD
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Meeting of Interested Parties, 2001

Report by the Secretariat

1. The Meeting of Interested Parties, 2001 was the first to cover the work of WHO as a whole. It was a corporate exercise that involved all clusters and levels of the Organization, including regional offices. The Meeting was comprehensive, introducing participants to the integrated budget format and to the concept of areas of work, while linking financial targets to both the related activities and the expressed priorities of the programme budget.
2. The Meeting was organized as a formal consultative exercise, under common rules and processes, so as to provide a forum for joint reports to all parties on the progress of programmes and use of resources over the previous year and to facilitate feedback to the Executive Board and the Health Assembly. Notifications were sent to all Member States and organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, as well as principal partners among development agencies, international organizations, nongovernmental organizations and foundations.
3. The agenda and discussions of the Meeting were structured around the 26 technical areas of work listed in the programme budget for 2002-2003. The conduct of the different sessions was handled by the responsible clusters, providing for a rotating and dedicated participation by the parties most concerned with the issues under discussion.
4. The main objectives of the Meeting were to introduce WHO partners to the proposed activities for 2002-2003, identifying the financial resources needed for each area of work; to review WHO's programme as a whole, highlighting the priority areas; to provide a forum for dialogue with WHO partners; and to report on achievements and use of resources during 2000.
5. Some 330 individuals from approximately 150 organizations registered as participants. Sixty-six Member States were represented and 13 organizations of the United Nations system and intergovernmental institutions.
6. The Director-General opened the Meeting by reviewing the current challenges in international health, looking at WHO's corporate strategy within this context and highlighting elements of the proposed activities for the programme 2002-2003. She emphasized the need for WHO to secure additional voluntary resources in view of the zero-growth regular budget. She further stressed the importance of the Meeting and the opportunity it presented for WHO's interested parties to review achievements and to provide input into plans for future years.

7. The presentations highlighted action at the regional and country levels and included individual case studies presented by local officials. WHO's regional offices contributed to presentation of programme implementation at regional and country levels.

8. Links with WHO governance were secured through the participation of the Chairman of the Executive Board for the full duration of the Meeting. Other Executive Board members were present during the two-week period.

9. The debates during the Meeting covered strategic issues, including health in a broad development context together with child health, women's health, reproductive health and the initiative on making pregnancy safer. Progress of WHO's contribution to control of communicable diseases was reviewed, as was its contribution to development of health systems. Dissemination of knowledge, response to emergencies, management of chronic illness (including noncommunicable diseases), work on the framework convention on tobacco control, and violence and injury were discussed.

10. Participants made a number of proposals and comments in response to the technical presentations. Reactions from some participants suggested they would value more discussion on the use of resources and on programme planning priorities. Sustainable monitoring indicators needed to be developed to review the work of WHO's programme budget.

11. On the basis of feedback from participants in the Meeting, it is proposed that the Meeting of the Interested Parties, 2002 should be built around the strategic programme budget. It will be structured as a forum for frank exchange of ideas, for guiding WHO's approaches and emphases of work. The prime object is an opportunity for greater involvement in and transparency of the working of the Organization, rather than advocacy or the pledging of funds to specific programmes.

12. It is proposed therefore that the Meeting in 2002 will evolve along the following lines:

- the responsible clusters will undertake standardized reporting on the use of all finances, both from the regular budget and from extrabudgetary sources, within different areas of work. The report will be presented in ways that link use of resources to progress made by all parts of WHO, as compared to the expected results as set out in the programme budget;
- to speed up the process, central, systematic and strategic issues will be selectively identified for interactive dialogue. Documents will be prepared in a standard form, and the Meeting will last for no more than five days. The timing of the Meeting will be established subsequently.

ACTION BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

13. The Executive Board is invited to note the report.

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