



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

EXECUTIVE BOARD
109th Session
Provisional agenda item 7.4

EB109/24
4 January 2002

Review of working methods of the Executive Board

Committees of the Executive Board

Note by the Secretariat

1. This note provides the background to, and sets out the terms of reference of, the current committees of the Executive Board, namely, the Programme Development Committee (PDC), Administration, Budget and Finance Committee (ABFC), Audit Committee, WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health (CCH), Standing Committee on Nongovernmental Organizations, and several foundation committees and selection panels.

PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

2. In May 1976, the fifty-eighth session of the Executive Board created a Programme Committee to advise the Director-General on the policy and strategy involved in responding to resolutions on technical cooperation and on programme budget policy, and to review the general programmes of work. Between 1976 and 1988 various resolutions added a number of functions, dealing with programme management and development issues, including preparation of guidance for the programme budget and the review of its global and interregional components.

3. In its review of future directions for WHO's governing bodies, the Executive Board Working Group on the WHO Response to Global Change expressed concern that some of the activities of the Programme Committee might duplicate the work of the Board itself. In addition, it felt that in view of the various new mechanisms proposed, the time had come for the Board to reconsider the need for and terms of reference of the Programme Committee.¹ Accordingly, the Programme Committee in July 1993 considered a report by the Director-General on "Terms of reference of the Programme Committee of the Executive Board",² which provided detailed information on the composition of the Programme Committee and on its responsibilities. The Board decided in January 1994³ to disestablish

¹ See document EB92/1993/REC/1, Annex 1.

² Document EBPC18/WP/2.

³ Resolution EB93.R13.

the Programme Committee and replace it with a Programme Development Committee, a decision confirmed by the Health Assembly.¹

ADMINISTRATION, BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

4. In its recommendation on the method of work of the Executive Board, the Working Group on the WHO Response to Global Change suggested that the Board should establish dedicated subgroups as appropriate, to advise the Executive Board on “cross-programme” issues such as administration and finance.² Moreover, resolution WHA46.35 requested the Director-General

to submit to the ninety-third session of the Executive Board in January 1994, for its consideration within the framework of its study of the report of the Working Group on the WHO Response to Global Change, a proposal in conformity with the recommendation of the Joint Inspection Unit in its report JIU/REP/89/9 for the establishment of a budget and finance committee to assist the Board and, through it, the Health Assembly in their deliberations on budgetary questions.

5. In the light of the Director-General’s suggestions and the views of the Programme Committee,³ the Executive Board decided to establish a new Administration, Budget and Finance Committee.⁴ This body was to take over the administration, budget and finance functions of the former Programme Committee, and those of the former Committee of the Executive Board to Consider Certain Financial Matters prior to the Health Assembly.

AUDIT COMMITTEE

6. The Audit Committee was established by the Executive Board at its 103rd session in January 1999 in order to strengthen the Board’s oversight role in financial matters.⁵

CURRENT TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE, ADMINISTRATION, BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE

7. The Executive Board at its 106th session in May 2000 considered revised terms of reference for PDC, ABFC and Audit Committee as proposed by the Chairmen of the three committees and the

¹ Resolution WHA47.6.

² See document EB92/1993/REC/1, Annex 1.

³ See document EB93/1994/REC/1, Annex 1, Part 1, section VI.

⁴ Resolution EB93.R13, confirmed by resolution WHA47.7.

⁵ Resolution EB103.R8.

Chairman of the Executive Board.¹ It adopted on a provisional basis the new terms of reference for the three committees.²

WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA COORDINATING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

8. The Executive Board at its ninety-ninth session in January 1997 approved the proposal that the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board should be invited to join the UNICEF/WHO Joint Committee on Health Policy, which had been established pursuant to resolution WHA1.120 of the First World Health Assembly in July 1948.³ At its first meeting in July 1998, the enlarged committee considered, *inter alia*, draft terms of reference. Revised terms of reference were adopted after discussion by the three Executive Boards.⁴

STANDING COMMITTEE ON NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

9. Pursuant to resolution WHA1.130, the Executive Board established a Standing Committee on Nongovernmental Organizations in July 1948.⁵ The main function of this committee is to review the joint work of nongovernmental organizations in official relations with WHO and plans for future collaboration, as well as new proposals for admission of such organizations into official relations. The terms of reference of this committee were adopted by resolution WHA40.25.⁶

FOUNDATION COMMITTEES AND SELECTION PANELS

10. The Executive Board considers nominations and proposes selections for a number of awards and prizes. To assist it in its work the Board has established a number of small committees to assess the submissions received and to make recommendations. There is no single document setting out the specific terms of reference for members of these committees and selection panels, but their membership, functions and tasks are described in the statutes or regulations of each foundation, which differ slightly from one another. Generally speaking, the members of these committees and selection panels are expected to meet once a year (or at longer intervals), usually during the January session of the Board, to propose the name of the person(s) to whom the prize or fellowship should be awarded and in some cases the amount of the award to be made.

= = =

¹ The first meeting of the Audit Committee, in January 2000, had focused on a review of its terms of reference.

² See resolution EB106.R1, Annex.

³ Resolution EB99.R23.

⁴ See resolution EB103.R17, Annex.

⁵ Resolution EB1.R25.

⁶ See Principles governing relations between the World Health Organization and nongovernmental organizations, paragraphs 4.2 and 4.6. *WHO Basic Documents*, 43rd ed., 2001.