



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

EXECUTIVE BOARD
109th Session
Provisional agenda item 4.2

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Priorities for the biennium 2004-2005

Report by the Director-General

1. In January 2001, the Executive Board at its 107th session endorsed the draft General Programme of Work, 2002-2005, and recommended its approval by the Fifty-fourth World Health Assembly.¹ The General Programme of Work was subsequently approved by the Health Assembly in May of the same year through resolution WHA54.1.

2. In the General Programme of Work, 11 Organization-wide priorities are set out for the 2002-2003 biennium as follows:

- Malaria
- Tuberculosis
- HIV/AIDS
- Cancer, cardiovascular disease and diabetes
- Tobacco
- Maternal health
- Food safety
- Mental health
- Safe blood
- Health systems
- Investing in change in WHO.

3. The General Programme of Work 2002-2005, foresees that the above specific priorities will be reviewed in consultation with Member States when the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005 is prepared. All Regional Directors have consulted their respective Member States on this

¹ Resolution EB107.R1.

issue over the past several months, some in conjunction with the regional committees and others in meetings of ministers of health in the respective regions.

4. After further review with senior management of the Organization, the Director-General in her budget proposals for 2004-2005, intends to retain for the next biennium, all of the Organization-wide priorities listed above, with the exception of the last priority, "Investing in change in WHO". Removing this item from the list of priorities does not signal an end to the change and reform process in WHO, which will continue. All priorities will now focus on the direct health concerns of Member States. In replacement, and noting the requests from Member States in the African, European and Eastern Mediterranean regions, it would be the intention to submit the area of work "Health and environment" as a new Organization-wide priority for 2004-2005.

5. The 11 specific priorities for the 2004-2005 biennium would therefore be as follows, listed in the order of presentation in the proposed programme budget:

- Malaria
- Tuberculosis
- HIV/AIDS
- Cancer, cardiovascular disease and diabetes
- Tobacco
- Maternal health
- Health and environment
- Food safety
- Mental health
- Safe blood
- Health systems.

6. In addition to the above 11 Organization-wide priorities for 2004-2005, regional focus on a limited number of other programmes can also be accommodated in the region-specific part of the proposed programme budget, in response to expressed interests of individual regional committees.

ACTION BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

7. The Executive Board is invited to comment on the intended priorities for the budget proposals for the period 2004-2005.

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