



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

EXECUTIVE BOARD
115th Session
Provisional agenda item 5.2

EB115/INF.DOC./5
7 January 2005

Increasing managerial effectiveness and efficiency in WHO

1. The environment in which public health operates both globally and locally is becoming increasingly complex, with important new players changing the way countries address health challenges. With complexity comes the need for more harmonization and better coordination at global, regional and country levels.
2. Investments in health have risen substantially over the past five to 10 years, contributing to a change in WHO's relations with major partners. Most funds come from voluntary contributions, and partners expect transparency, accountability, and measurable results. Factors such as advances in information technology, impact of economic cycles, innovation in managerial techniques and an increasingly competitive job market affect the way WHO can and should be managed.
3. WHO has been a key player in shaping and responding to change in the area of public health, moving strategically to remain effective and efficient in a rapidly evolving environment. Maintaining efficiency requires the right managerial tools to implement programmes. For example, WHO quickly adopted results-based management. Yet the context in which this approach is set has certain shortcomings: the managerial framework is not conducive to working collaboratively across the Organization; the two-year cycle limits the value of the budget as a strategic instrument; monitoring of programme budget implementation by results is uneven across the Organization; financial systems lack flexibility; and different planning, monitoring and reporting requirements may overlap.
4. Although management of human resources is undergoing considerable reform, certain mechanisms could be improved in order to provide a global overview of existing competencies and skills within the Organization, to adapt staff profiles to rapidly evolving needs and to enhance managerial and administrative competencies.
5. A more efficient use of resources also requires a strong information technology platform that ensures the interface between different systems, protect integrity of data, and allow appropriate access to information needed for the effective implementation of WHO's programmes.
6. Further strengthening of WHO's presence in countries, and consequent shifting of resources calls for increased collaboration throughout the Organization, clear definition of roles and responsibilities between the different levels, appropriate accountability mechanisms, and greater transparency on the use of resources.
7. In view of the above considerations, WHO's Secretariat is undertaking managerial reform in order to improve ability to **respond** to countries, **collaboration** across the Organization, **use of**

resources and outcomes, **transparency**, **accountability**, and **integrity**, **working environment**, and **capability of staff** at the three organizational levels. To achieve these objectives, and on the basis of input from various sources, efforts are focusing on the following aspects that characterize effective management:

- ensuring that supportive **policies** are framed, promulgated and adhered to
- improving core **systems** and procedures
- increasing levels of **service**
- ensuring that proper **accountability** and **learning** mechanisms are in place.

Work involves five core managerial areas: planning and performance monitoring, management of human resources, management of financial resources, information and communication, and infrastructure and logistics. Managerial reforms are thus a response to emerging or sometimes persisting needs within the Secretariat and to Member States' expectations and concerns. Where possible, all efforts strive to build on and strengthen what is already existing.

8. The managerial reforms should therefore be seen as a set of interrelated initiatives, which include:

- reviewing **managerial principles** and **policies**, in order to provide overall guidance to managers and staff on WHO's business model, including values and behaviours
- improving managerial competencies through the **Global Leadership Programme**
- implementing a **global management system**, i.e., a seamless system for planning, and for management of financial and human resources across the Organization
- renewing the framework for **results-based management**, which supports the planning, implementation and monitoring of WHO's overall strategy
- improving transparency and access to information through greater **connectivity** between WHO offices.¹

9. The **outcome** of these and other managerial initiatives are expected to yield a number of improvements over time, including:

- **a more strategic approach** to the work of the Secretariat, with better alignment to country approaches and an increased ability to respond to global health needs
- more effective **management of human resources**, leading to a closer match between programme needs and staff competencies, more targeted recruitment, increased staff diversity and motivation

¹ Details available on request at the Office of the Assistant Director-General for General Management.

- **modern financial management policies** for better transparency, integrity and use of financial resources
- increased efficiency and effectiveness of **programme implementation and decision-making** by the provision of timely and accurate information on financial, human and material resources through the Global Management System
- savings through increased efficiencies in **core administrative areas**, such as:
 - lower **travel costs** through global negotiated airfare contracts and lower administrative costs through streamlined travel policy and procedures
 - reduced **recruitment** time and related administrative costs through preclassified, standard job descriptions
 - better value for money and lower administrative costs through web-based **procurement** and globally negotiated catalogues of products
 - increased accountability and decreased administrative costs through streamlined **financial procedures**
 - reduced processing costs for **financial and other administrative transactions** through introduction of the Global Management System
 - reduced cost of managing **voluntary contributions** through more harmonized and standardized donor agreements and reporting requirements
 - reduced cost of such services as printing, translation, building management, and so forth through a constant review of **outsourcing opportunities**
 - reduced **communication costs** through increased use of teleconferencing or videoconferencing within the Global Private Network, which should also lead to less need for travel.

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