

Eleventh General Programme of Work, 2006–2015

1. The Eleventh General Programme of Work, 2006–2015, which was approved by the Health Assembly in resolution WHA59.4, provides a long-term perspective on challenges to health and the measures required for overcoming them. In this context, it sets forth a global health agenda for all stakeholders, highlighting the following priority areas: investing in health to reduce poverty; building individual and global health security; promoting universal coverage, gender equality, and health-related human rights; tackling the determinants of health; strengthening health systems and equitable access; harnessing knowledge, science and technology; and strengthening governance, leadership and accountability.
2. The Eleventh General Programme of Work also defines the broad direction for the work of WHO and sets out six core functions for the Organization, namely: providing leadership on matters critical to health and engaging in partnerships where joint action is needed; shaping the research agenda and stimulating the generation, translation and dissemination of valuable knowledge; setting norms and standards, and promoting and monitoring their implementation; articulating ethical and evidence-based policy options; providing technical support, catalysing change, and building sustainable institutional capacity; and monitoring the health situation and assessing health trends.
3. Resolution WHA59.4 requested the Director-General to use the Eleventh General Programme of Work as the basis for strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation of WHO's work during the period 2006–2015; to review and update the General Programme of Work, as needed to reflect the changing state of global health; and to report through the Executive Board to the Sixty-third World Health Assembly on the continued relevance and use of the Eleventh General Programme of Work.
4. The long-term vision for health of the Eleventh General Programme of Work and its principles, values and priorities were translated into a Medium-term strategic plan for the period 2008–2013, and in particular into the plan's 13 strategic objectives. The Medium-term strategic plan 2008–2013 was endorsed by the Health Assembly in May 2007.¹
5. The Medium-term strategic plan, in turn, guided the preparation of the programme budgets and associated operational plans for the bienniums 2008–2009 and 2010–2011. Throughout these processes, the changing state of global health has been taken into consideration and new emphases reflected. The Proposed programme budget 2010–2011 and amended Medium-term strategic plan 2008–2013, submitted to the Sixty-second World Health Assembly in May 2009, included a stronger emphasis on primary health care together with new areas of focus, namely, the response to threats to public health posed by climate change and the reduction of unsafe health care globally.

¹ Resolution WHA60.11.

6. A formal assessment of the implementation of the Eleventh General Programme of Work is planned for 2013, and will include inputs from Member States and the international community. The assessment is an integral part of the preparation of the next General Programme of Work; as such, it will be discussed in conjunction with the development of the new General Programme by the Executive Board at its 134th session and by the Sixty-seventh World Health Assembly in January and May 2014, respectively. Lessons learnt from the implementation of the Eleventh General Programme of Work will also guide the development of the Medium-term strategic plan for the period 2014–2019.

7. The Eleventh General Programme of Work is being monitored in conjunction with the monitoring and assessment of the Medium-term strategic plan and biennial programme budgets. An in-depth assessment of the Medium-term strategic plan will be conducted in 2010 and will be submitted to the Executive Board at its 128th session and to the Sixty-fourth World Health Assembly in January and May 2011, respectively. As part of this assessment, a subset of indicators that have been defined as measures of achievement of the global health agenda will be reported on, thus enabling the monitoring of that agenda.

8. In addition, the focus and balance of WHO's work are being monitored and analysed with respect to the six core functions. In order to do this, outputs in biennial workplans have been categorized by core function.

9. The Eleventh General Programme of Work also stated that progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals and other health-related targets would be assessed within the period 2006–2015. The Secretariat has been continuously monitoring this progress, and a report was presented for consideration by the Executive Board at its 122nd session in January 2008.¹

10. Globally, the relevance of the Eleventh General Programme of Work has been demonstrated by the major international consultations and conferences that have been held over the last four years. For example, the final report of the Commission on Social Determinants of Health² reaffirmed the importance of the General Programme's global health agenda. The importance of that agenda in providing the appropriate framework for action was further highlighted by recent WHO World Health Reports such as *The world health report 2008* on primary health care.³

11. Recently, the world has suffered three systemic shocks: the food crisis, the fuel crisis and the financial crisis. All three have had a negative impact on health. In this context, the Eleventh General Programme of Work has demonstrated its value by providing a clear and explicit identification of the strategic approaches needed in order to guide an effective global health response.

12. Although the seven items on the global health agenda remain valid, the new context has called for adjustments in terms of emphasis and effort. In particular, in the face of the financial crisis, the importance of maintaining investment in health is being emphasized by stakeholders. At the same time, the acceleration of the implementation of the International Health Regulations (2005) and the recent international cooperation in responding to pandemic (H1N1) 2009 both show that global health

¹ Document EB122/33.

² Commission on Social Determinants of Health. *Closing the gap in a generation: Health equity through action on the social determinants of health*. Final report of the Commission on Social Determinants of Health. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2008.

³ *The world health report 2008: primary health care – now more than ever*. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2008.

security is still high on the agenda. Effective health systems continue to play a vital role in improving health, and this has been underscored by the recent work of the High Level Taskforce on Innovative International Financing for Health Systems. The importance of promoting universal coverage, gender equality, and health-related human rights, and of tackling the determinants of health, was reaffirmed by the Report on the Commission of the Determinants of Social Health and by the follow-up actions undertaken. The continuing relevance of harnessing knowledge, science and technology was demonstrated by the adoption and finalization by the Health Assembly of the Global strategy and plan of action on public health, innovation and intellectual property.¹ Finally, the need to strengthen governance, leadership and accountability in global health has been further underlined as the financial crisis increases pressure for more efficiency in achieving outcomes and for clarity about the mandates and accountability of the actors in global health.

13. The principles and direction given to the Secretariat by the Eleventh General Programme of Work continue to guide organizational changes, ensuring that they are in line with the relevant mandates and commitments for results. Examples of such changes have included effective responses to the objective of health-system development and to the revitalization of primary health care. The six core functions defined in the General Programme of Work are still relevant for balancing the Secretariat's response to the priority needs of Member States and the international community.

14. On the basis of the experience of implementation to date, the Secretariat considers that there is no need for a revision of the Eleventh General Programme of Work.

ACTION BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

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

= = =

¹ Resolutions WHA61.21 and WHA62.16.