

## **Report of the Agile Member States Task Group on Strengthening WHO's Budgetary, Programmatic and Financing Governance**

The Executive Board, recalling the outcome of the Seventy-fifth World Health Assembly, in particular the adoption of the recommendations of the Working Group on Sustainable Financing through decision WHA75(8) (2022); recalling also that the Executive Board at its 151st session established an Agile Member States Task Group on Strengthening WHO's Budgetary, Programmatic and Financing Governance to analyse challenges in governance for transparency, efficiency, accountability and compliance, and come up with recommendations; having considered the report of the Agile Member States Task Group on Strengthening WHO's Budgetary, Programmatic and Financing Governance to the Seventy-sixth World Health Assembly, through the 152nd session of the Executive Board and the thirty-seventh meeting of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee, with recommendations for long-term improvements;<sup>1</sup> welcoming the submission of the Secretariat's Implementation Plan on Reform for consideration by the 152nd session of the Executive Board through the thirty-seventh meeting of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee,<sup>2</sup> and noting that the Task Group recommendations in the report reflect consensus lying in a subset of the broader suite of reform ideas and do not preclude Member States from proposing, advocating for or participating in other reforms that are not listed here,

Decided:

(1) to request the Director-General in order to give effect to those recommendations of the Task Group where actions are proposed ahead of their consideration by the Seventy-sixth World Health Assembly:

- (a) to make information, including costing advice available to Member States from the earliest stages of development for resolutions and decisions to allow them to assess potential financial implications and to inform their understanding of any impact on the programme budget, including availability of financial resources; and to make staff available at relevant sessions to explain this information to Member States, and to provide guidance on proposing sunset clauses and the barriers to implementing such provisions;
- (b) to prepare a separate organigram (version for Member States' access) and appropriate granularity of detail for working-level contact details;

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<sup>1</sup> See documents EB152/33 and EB152/4.

<sup>2</sup> See documents EB152/34 and EB152/4.

- (c) to support the efforts of the Task Group co-facilitators, and the Chair of the Executive Board, in consultation with Member States, to prepare proposals to strengthen the role of the Executive Board and its Programme, Budget and Administration Committee to better engage and provide advice and guidance on the oversight of future programme budgets and improve the way of working in the governing bodies, including by providing legal and procedural advice;
  - (d) to conduct an analysis of the value chain in the production of reports for WHO governing body meetings, including the initial consultation phase, with a view to outlining the process currently in place to draft reports, relevant internal and/or external consultations, and other relevant steps. The analysis should provide specific recommendations to improve efficiency and address internal and external barriers to timely publication and the necessary steps to address these including the resource implications;
  - (e) to develop a project plan with associated costs for the implementation of digital solutions for governing body services' interactions with Member States, including the proposed digital portal;
  - (f) to review the 2012 analysis on cost recovery for voluntary contributions contained in the Annex to document EBPBAC18/3 to assess whether the recommendations from that analysis still hold and propose feasible actions for further implementing the recommendations and the suggestions to address the new challenges emerging from the review, as well as provide guidance for conducting further analysis;
  - (g) to conduct an analysis of voluntary contribution earmarking flexibility and limitations in similar United Nations or global health agencies, as well as successful practice of incentives for donors to provide more flexible funding, to inform potential future reforms to governance of voluntary contributions;
  - (h) to provide guidance to inform the preparation of proposed draft decisions on improving the timeliness of delivery of governing body documents and information to Member States including on flexibility/rigidity within financial regulations, rules of procedure and the WHO Constitution regarding the form and structure of reports for WHO governing bodies meetings for translation and inclusion in agendas with a view to exploring changes to these;
  - (i) to provide reports on the implementation of this decision to the 154th session of the Executive Board through the thirty-ninth meeting of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee;
- (2) to request the Task Group co-facilitators, for consideration of the Executive Board at its 153rd session in May 2023 to prepare, in collaboration with the Chair of the Executive Board and, in consultation with Member States:
- (a) a draft decision to decide on a contemporary acceptable lead time for publication of reports in all official languages ahead of the Health Assembly, Executive Board and Programme, Budget and Administration Committee meetings, including, where applicable, acceptable lag times for publication following completion of informal consultation processes;

- (b) a proposal to identify, inter alia, a financial threshold for costs that would be incurred beyond the programme budget, above which the initiative or programme would need to be costed under the Department of Planning, Resource Coordination and Performance Monitoring's more stringent "second pass" costing methodology, and for which the details of the identified costing and the associated contribution to achieving the general programme of work would then be reported to the Health Assembly through the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee or, if applicable, through the Executive Board and any conditions under which the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee should consider requesting divergence from results reporting;
- (c) a draft decision setting out a standard template and recommended timeline for the process of proposing and considering resolutions and decisions that reflect, inter alia, costing investigation of potential duplication and/or synergies (e.g. with existing or proposed resolutions or initiatives addressing the same issues); applicability of sunset clauses; and contribution to the relevant general programme of work;
- (d) proposals for the reform of the Executive Board and its Programme, Budget and Administration Committee that consider, inter alia, meeting structure, cadence, agenda management and preparation of reports (prioritization, timing and structure), exploration of need for additional Member State engagement with external auditors, internal auditors and/or the Independent Expert Oversight Advisory Committee beyond standing agenda items as well as proposals for positioning Member States to give strategic guidance based on governing body documents;
- (3) to recommend that the Seventy-sixth World Health Assembly adopt the following decision:

The Seventy-sixth World Health Assembly, having considered the report of the Agile Member States Task Group on Strengthening WHO's Budgetary, Programmatic and Financing Governance to the Seventy-sixth World Health Assembly, through the 152nd session of the Executive Board and the thirty-seventh meeting of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee, with recommendations for long-term improvements,

Decided:

- (1) to adopt the recommendations of the Agile Member States Task Group contained in the Appendix to the report of the Agile Member States Task Group;
- (2) to request the Director-General to put in place measures to support the implementation of the recommendations of the Agile Member States Task Group contained in the Appendix to its report and to track and report on this implementation on an ongoing basis alongside reporting on the Secretariat Implementation Plan on Reform.

Fourteenth meeting, 6 February 2023  
EB152/SR/14

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