

Report of the Executive Board on its 131st and 132nd sessions

1. The Executive Board held its 131st session on 28 and 29 May 2012 and its 132nd session from 21 to 29 January 2013. This report summarizes the main outcomes.

131ST SESSION (28 AND 29 MAY 2012)

2. After extensive discussions on **WHO reform**, the Executive Board adopted resolution EB131.R2, approving revised terms of reference for the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee. It also decided to approve a formal evaluation policy (decision EB131(1)). In decision EB131(10), it further decided that the Committee would hold an extraordinary meeting in December 2012 to discuss further aspects of WHO reform, the financing of the Organization, and issues raised by the regional committees about the draft twelfth general programme of work and the proposed programme budget for the next financial period.

3. The Board adopted resolution EB131.R1 confirming **amendments to the Staff Rules** concerning remuneration of staff.

4. In decision EB131(2), the Board adopted conditions for the proportional allocation between preparedness and response of Partnership Contribution resources under **the Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Framework for the sharing of influenza virus and access to vaccines and other benefits**.

5. In decision EB131(3), the Board noted the revised **International Basic Safety Standards** on radiation protection and radiation sources.

6. The Board appointed two members of the **Independent Expert Oversight Advisory Committee** (decision EB131(4)). It also noted reports on the sixteenth meeting of the **Programme, Budget and Administration Committee** and **meetings of four expert committees**. It appointed the new members of the following: the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee (decision EB131(5)); the Standing Committee on Nongovernmental Organizations (decision EB131(6)); the Léon Bernard Foundation Committee (decision EB131(7)) and the United Arab Emirates Health Foundation Committee (decision EB131(8)).

132ND SESSION (21–29 JANUARY 2013)

WHO reform

7. The Programme, Budget and Administration Committee at its extraordinary meeting in December 2012 requested the Board to consider its recommendations for improving the transparency, financing and flexibility of WHO's financing, and also considered issues raised by regional committees on the draft twelfth general programme of work and the proposed programme budget 2014–2015. The Board held extensive formal and informal discussions on all aspects of reform before adopting the following series of decisions.

8. In decision EB132(10) on **hosted partnerships**, the Board requested the Director-General to undertake a series of actions and called for a regular review of arrangements for such partnerships. In decision EB132(11) it called, *inter alia*, for further work on WHO's **engagement with nongovernmental organizations**, including a request to the Director-General to submit, for the consideration of the Executive Board at its 133rd session in May 2013, overarching principles for WHO's engagement with non-State actors, defining separate operational procedures for both nongovernmental organizations and private commercial entities.

9. In decision EB132(12) the Board welcomed the proposals on **streamlining the reporting by and communication with Member States** and requested proposals on a minimal set of health data and indicators.

10. The Board decided that discussion of WHO's role in **global health governance** should be continued at its 133rd session (decision EB132(13)). It also requested action on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit on **implementation and evaluation**, with reports on progress to the Board at its 133rd session (decision EB132(14)).

11. Finally, in decision EB132(15) the Board requested the Director-General to take steps to **streamline the work of the governing bodies and to harmonize and align the work of the regional committees**, including proposals for amending the Rules of Procedure of the governing bodies and greater use of electronic access to meetings and documents.

12. The Board noted the **report of the regional committees**, prepared pursuant to decision WHA65(9) on governance reforms, as a positive step in the reform process and proposed that it be included routinely on the Board's agenda but with a better approach and format.

Technical and health matters

Noncommunicable diseases

13. The Board reviewed **the draft comprehensive global monitoring framework and targets** for the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases in the light of the strong recommendation of the Formal Meeting of Member States. The Board decided to endorse the framework and forward it with its indicators and a set of voluntary global targets for the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases to the Health Assembly with a recommendation for its adoption (decision EB132(1)). The Board also noted the report on the **draft action plan** for the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases and agreed to the Secretariat's proposals for informal consultations and finalizing the plan before its submission to the Sixty-sixth World Health Assembly.

14. The Board noted the report on the **draft comprehensive mental health action plan 2013–2020** and agreed to the proposed process of online consultations for finalizing the text before its submission to the Sixty-sixth World Health Assembly for consideration.

15. The Board also noted the report on the **draft action plan for the prevention of avoidable blindness and visual impairment 2014–2019** and adopted resolution EB132.R1 in which, inter alia, it recommended endorsement of the global action plan on universal eye health to the Sixty-sixth World Health Assembly.

16. After noting the report on **disability**, the Board adopted resolution EB132.R5, in which, inter alia, it recommended that the Sixty-sixth World Health Assembly endorse the recommendations in the *World report on disability*.

Promoting health through the life course

17. In discussing the **monitoring of the achievement of the health-related Millennium Development Goals and follow-up actions to recommendations of the high-level commissions convened to advance women's and children's health**, the Board welcomed the progress towards achieving the health-related Goals while recognizing that much remained to be done. It adopted resolution EB132.R4 on implementation of the recommendations of the **Commission on Life-Saving Commodities for Women and Children**, in which it recommended adoption of a resolution by the Health Assembly, which, inter alia, urged Member States to put into practice the implementation plan for those commodities.

18. The Board discussed a report on **health in the post-2015 development agenda** and a presentation of the consultative process that would lead to the formulation of new sustainable development goals. The Board was assured that international consultations and regional discussions would continue and that the theme would be taken up by health ministers at the Health Assembly. The Board noted this report and a further report on **social determinants of health**.

Preparedness, surveillance and response

19. The Board noted two reports on **implementation of the International Health Regulations (2005)** on the understanding that its comments on the criteria proposed by the Secretariat for the granting of extensions to the target date for developing, strengthening and maintaining the core capacities specified in the Regulations would be reflected in the text to be submitted to the Health Assembly.

20. The Board further noted a report on **Pandemic influenza preparedness: sharing of influenza viruses and access to vaccines and other benefits**, acknowledging the significance of the recent signing of the first Standard Material Transfer Agreement 2.

21. Deploping the recent fatal attacks on health workers involved in polio eradication activities, the Board acknowledged and welcomed the progress being made. It noted the report **on intensification of the global polio eradication initiative**.

Communicable diseases

22. The Board discussed ways to improve the proposed framework for monitoring, evaluation and accountability in the implementation of the **global vaccine action plan** and noted the report on the subject.

23. The attention being given to **neglected tropical diseases** was welcomed and the Board adopted resolution EB132.R7, which recommended to the Sixty-sixth World Health Assembly the adoption of a resolution that, in addition to urging specific actions on Member States and requesting Secretariat action, called upon WHO's international partners to support Member States.

Health systems

24. The Board noted the Director-General's report containing the report of the First Meeting of the Member State mechanism on **substandard/spurious/falsely-labelled/falsified/counterfeit medical products**. It also noted that its comments would be taken into account by the steering committee of that mechanism in planning for future activities.

25. The Board expressed concerns about the need to protect the ".who" domain name on the Internet but agreed that further consideration by the Health Assembly will be needed. It adopted resolution EB132.R8 on **eHealth standardization and interoperability**, which recommended to the Sixty-sixth World Health Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, and which would be updated to include additional language relating to the ".health" issue.

26. The Board also noted reports on **universal health coverage** and **advances in responding to shortages and migration of the health workforce and in preparing for emerging needs**.

Programme and budget matters

27. The Board noted the report on **implementation of the Programme budget 2012–2013**, welcoming the expectation that it would be fully financed. After prolonged and at times intense discussions of both the **draft twelfth general programme of work** and the **proposed programme budget 2014–2015**, the Board adopted decision EB132(16). In particular, the Board proposed to the Sixty-sixth World Health Assembly that it approve the entire programme budget. It also proposed that the Health Assembly establish a financing dialogue and endorse the Director-General's proposal to explore ways of broadening WHO's donor base.

Financial matters

28. The Board took note of the report on **foreign exchange risk management**, being assured that a draft resolution on the subject would be submitted to the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee before the Health Assembly in May 2013. It adopted resolution EB132.R6 on the **scale of assessments** for the biennium 2014–2015, which recommended that the Health Assembly adopt that scale.

29. The Board agreed that the draft resolution on **amendments to the Financial Regulations and Financial Rules** and the mock-up of the draft programme budget resolution would be revised after consultations with Member States for submission to the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee and the Health Assembly.

Management matters

30. The Board, being assured that a new strategy for financing WHO's **real estate** would be submitted to the governing bodies in May 2013, noted the report on the subject.

31. The Board decided in resolution EB132.R13 to amend Rule 52 of its Rules of Procedure, concerning the **election of the Director-General**, and, after extensive discussion, adopted resolution EB132.R14, in which it recommended a draft resolution to the Sixty-sixth World Health Assembly for adoption. This text recommended adoption of a code of conduct, establishment of a candidates' forum, standardization of candidates' curriculum vitae, and amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the World Health Assembly.

32. Regarding membership of the **Independent Expert Oversight Advisory Committee** the Board agreed that appointments be made from the existing roster of candidates and appointed a new member (decision EB132(2)). It also decided in resolution EB132.R12 to revise the terms of reference of the Committee and to request the Director-General to report to the Board after completion of the performance review provided for in the existing terms of reference in order to facilitate the Board's consideration of further proposed amendments to the terms of reference related to the selection criteria for the appointment of the External Auditor and the advice to be provided to the Director-General in relation to future appointments of the Director of the Office of Internal Oversight Services.

33. Having considered the report of its **Standing Committee on Nongovernmental Organizations**, the Board adopted resolution EB132.R9 on relations with nongovernmental organizations, admitting six such bodies into official relations: The Global Alliance for Rabies Control, Inc., WaterAid, the Worldwide Network for Blood and Marrow Transplantation, the European Society for Medical Oncology, The Worldwide Palliative Care Alliance, and the International Association for Hospice and Palliative Care Inc. Official relations with two nongovernmental organizations were discontinued. After review of one third of all nongovernmental organizations in official relations, the Board agreed a series of actions, set out in decision EB132(9).

34. Following the reports of its committees of selection panels or foundation committees on **foundations and awards**, the Board decided to award six prizes (decisions EB132(3)–(8)).

35. In decision EB132(17), the Board approved the amended **provisional agenda for the Sixty-sixth World Health Assembly**, and in decision EB132(18), agreed that the **133rd session of the Executive Board** would be held in Geneva on 29 and 30 May 2013.

Staffing matters

36. The Board adopted resolution EB132.R2, appointing Dr Carissa Faustina Etienne as **Regional Director for the Americas**. In resolution EB132.R3, it expressed gratitude and appreciation to Dr Mirta Roses Periago for her contribution, as Regional Director, to the work of WHO.

37. The Board paid tribute to the memory of Dr Hiroshi Nakajima, former Director-General of WHO, who died in January 2013.

38. The Board noted the report of **the International Civil Service Commission**, the **statement of the representative of the WHO staff associations**, and the **annual report on human resources**, but proposed that in future the latter include more information on financing and a breakdown of the staffing profile.

39. In resolution EB132.R10 the Board confirmed **amendments to the Staff Rules** concerning, inter alia, policies on appointment and abolition of posts as well as the remuneration of staff in the professional and higher categories. In resolution EB132.R11, the Board recommended to the Sixty-sixth World Health Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution on **remuneration of staff in ungraded posts and of the Director-General**.

Matters for information

40. The Board took note of the reports on meetings of one **expert committee** and on **expert advisory panels and committees** and their membership.

41. The Board also took note of **progress made in implementing resolutions** in the following areas: **strengthening noncommunicable disease policies to promote active ageing; global strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol; sustaining the elimination of iodine deficiency disorders; strengthening national health emergency and disaster management capacities and the resilience of health systems; climate change and health; malaria; eradication of dracunculiasis; smallpox eradication: destruction of variola virus stocks; patient safety; drinking-water, sanitation and health; workers' health: global plan of action; strategy for integrating gender analysis and actions into the work of WHO; progress in the rational use of medicines; and health policy and systems research strategy**.

Resolutions

42. At its **132nd session**, the Board adopted 14 resolutions. The financial and administrative implications for the Secretariat of resolutions proposed for adoption by the Executive Board or Health Assembly as stated in the costing documents that accompany the draft resolutions amounted to **a cost of US\$ 9.91 million for the biennium 2012–2013**. Of that projected cost, about US\$ 3.71 million need to be mobilized. Most of the reports on the financial implications of the programme activities resulting from the resolutions adopted by the Board at its 132nd session stated that voluntary contributions would be needed for implementation.

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