

WHO reform

Report of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee of the Executive Board to the Sixty-seventh World Health Assembly

1. The twentieth meeting of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee was held in Geneva from 14 to 16 May 2014, under the chairmanship of Dr Dirk Cuypers (Belgium).¹ The Committee adopted its agenda, with the deletion of items 2.9 and 2.10.²

PROGRESS REPORT ON REFORM IMPLEMENTATION (Document A67/4)

2. The Committee welcomed the update on WHO reform contained in the report of the Chair of the Independent Expert Oversight Advisory Committee,³ which highlighted the need to address the thoroughness of the project management approach for reform, the effectiveness of the reform communications strategy, the adequacy of the human resources strategy and governance of the reform process.

3. The Committee also considered the report by the Secretariat contained in document A67/4, expressed appreciation of the progress on reform to date, and welcomed the development of a simplified results framework and a web-based tool to facilitate monitoring of progress on reform.⁴ The Committee stressed the need to further operationalize project and change management approaches to strengthen and accelerate reform implementation. As part of the change management process, the Committee also highlighted the need for an improved communications approach as a key success factor for reform.

4. The Committee underlined the importance of prioritizing the reforms that will have the greatest impact, expressing concern that certain reform initiatives were not progressing as quickly as anticipated. In particular, the Committee highlighted human resources as a crucial driver for reform, and stressed the importance of effectively and efficiently implementing clearly articulated policies and strategies in that area.

5. The Committee noted coordinated resource mobilization and implementation of the internal control framework as being additional areas of reform that required attention. The Committee called

¹ The list of participants is available in document EBPBAC20/DIV./1.

² Document EBPBAC20/1.

³ Document EBPBAC20/3.

⁴ See document A67/INF./1.

for increased efforts on governance reform in relation to strengthening oversight and enhancing the strategic decision-making of WHO's governing bodies, timely production of documents for meetings of the governing bodies, finalizing WHO's framework of engagement with non-State actors, and redefining WHO's role within the context of the post-2015 development agenda.

6. The Committee emphasized the need for strong regional and country-level engagement in the roll-out and implementation of reform initiatives, highlighting the leadership role of the regional directors.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE HEALTH ASSEMBLY

7. The Committee, on behalf of the Executive Board, recommended that the Sixty-seventh World Health Assembly note the report contained in document A67/4.

FRAMEWORK OF ENGAGEMENT WITH NON-STATE ACTORS (Document A67/6)

8. The Committee welcomed the report by the Secretariat on the draft framework of engagement with non-State actors contained in document A67/6, and noted that the matter was an important part of governance reform.

9. The Committee further noted the progress that had been made in reaching consensus since the 134th session of the Executive Board and the second informal consultation on the draft framework of engagement with non-State actors (Geneva, 27–28 March 2014).

10. Several Member States indicated that they had additional comments and input to give on the current draft of the framework of engagement with non-State actors. Other Member States wished to recommend to the Health Assembly that it approve the draft framework in its current form. It was proposed that a working group be established.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE HEALTH ASSEMBLY

11. The Committee, on behalf of the Executive Board, recommended that the Sixty-seventh World Health Assembly note the report contained in document A67/6.

12. The Committee also recommended, on behalf of the Executive Board, that the Sixty-seventh World Health Assembly consider opening discussion on the agenda item early in the session, in order to determine the way forward.

FOLLOW-UP TO THE FINANCING DIALOGUE (Documents A67/7 and A67/8)

13. The Committee welcomed the report contained in document A67/7 and noted the potential of the financing dialogue and the programme budget web portal to improve the predictability, alignment, flexibility and transparency of WHO's funding and to reduce its vulnerability.

14. The Committee also welcomed the independent evaluation of the financing dialogue, contained in document A67/8, and its conclusion that the dialogue should be continued.

15. Member States suggested that the Secretariat provide a longer-term view of the Organization's financing in order to improve the predictability of WHO's funding further.

16. Member States stressed the need to explore measures that would ensure full alignment of funding across the Organization, such as the reallocation of funds from oversubscribed areas to underfunded ones.

17. The Committee encouraged the Secretariat to communicate what implications the underfunding of particular programme areas would have. The importance of broadening the contributor base, both among and beyond Member States, was underscored, and support was expressed for extending the financing dialogue to include prospective contributors.

18. Following several requests for updates on concrete measures being taken by the Secretariat to improve the coordination of resource mobilization, the Director-General acknowledged the importance of coordinated resource mobilization for effective financing of the Organization and noted that she would listen to Member States on the issue during the Health Assembly and shortly thereafter would implement a number of changes.

19. During the review by the Committee of the report by the Secretariat on the financial and administrative implications for the Secretariat of resolutions proposed for adoption by the Executive Board or Health Assembly (document EBPBAC20/2), a member of the Committee proposed a draft decision for consideration by the Sixty-seventh World Health Assembly, under item 11.4 on the follow-up to the financing dialogue. The Committee agreed to that proposal.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE HEALTH ASSEMBLY

20. The Committee, on behalf of the Executive Board, recommended that the Sixty-seventh World Health Assembly note the reports contained in documents A67/7 and A67/8.

21. The Committee, on behalf of the Executive Board, also recommended that the Sixty-seventh World Health Assembly adopt the following draft decision:

[Title: Consideration of the financial and administrative implications for the Secretariat of resolutions proposed for adoption by the Executive Board or Health Assembly]

The Sixty-seventh World Health Assembly, having recalled the approval by the Sixty-sixth World Health Assembly of the Programme budget 2014–2015 in its entirety and the financing dialogue, including a coordinated Organization-wide resource mobilization, that was established in order to ensure the full financing of the programme budget,

(1) decided that resolutions adopted by the Sixty-seventh World Health Assembly will be implemented to the extent that their funding is included in the Programme budget 2014–2015, with the exception of activities that fall under the emergency component of the Programme budget,¹ or as otherwise specifically decided by the Health Assembly;

¹ Activities that fall under the emergency component of the programme budget do not have a budget ceiling. In resolution WHA66.2, paragraph 9 the Health Assembly "FURTHER AUTHORIZES the Director-General, where necessary, to incur expenditures in the emergencies component of the budget beyond the amount allocated for this component, subject to availability of resources ...".

(2) decided further that where resolutions adopted by the Sixty-seventh World Health Assembly have cost implications that exceed the financial provisions of the Programme budget 2014–2015, the Director-General shall present a report to the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee of the Executive Board at its twenty-first meeting in January 2015 containing a proposal for handling the related costs, including an analysis of the financial and programmatic implications, and considering all available options;

(3) requested the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee to make recommendations to the Executive Board at its 136th session and to the Sixty-eighth World Health Assembly, based on the report in paragraph (2) above for consideration, in conjunction with the information requested in document A66/48, paragraph 28;¹

(4) requested the Director-General, in consultation with Member States, to report to the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee in January 2015 on options to ensure alignment of resolutions with the general programme of work and the related programme budgets, including how to strengthen the link between programme budgets and resolutions, reports on financial implications of resolutions and decisions adopted by the Health Assembly as well as progress reports, and providing information on the proportion of future programme budgets that result from resolutions and decisions adopted by the governing bodies.

FINANCING OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND MANAGEMENT COSTS (Document A67/10)

22. The Committee considered the report by the Secretariat on the financing of administrative and management costs,² and the report on actual and planned cost-efficiency measures.³

23. In respect of the proposals for the future definition, budgeting and financing of administrative and management costs, the Committee expressed broad agreement and looked forward to the integration of the new approaches into the proposed programme budget for 2016–2017.

24. The Committee welcomed the progress made to achieve efficiency savings, and requested regular updates, which in future should also be linked to performance and results. It stressed that full recovery of costs should be applied to all voluntary contributions and that efficiency savings should be benchmarked to those of other organizations in the United Nations system.

25. The Committee noted that achieving further savings in staff costs would depend on the United Nations system-wide staff remuneration policies, which were currently under review by the International Civil Service Commission. The Commission would report its proposals to the United Nations General Assembly in 2015.

26. The Director-General undertook to continue to press for further savings in staff costs through the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, which would give guidance to

¹ See document A66/48, paragraph 28: “... the governing bodies will provide guidance on the Director-General’s proposals relating to any reprogramming of resources or activities deemed necessary, in view of the progress towards programme budget implementation, new mandates received and World Health Assembly resolutions with associated financial implications or emerging public health needs”.

² Document A67/10.

³ Document EBPBAC20/INF./1.

the International Civil Service Commission, and subsequently ensure the implementation of the Commission's decisions.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE HEALTH ASSEMBLY

27. The Committee, on behalf of the Executive Board, recommended that the Sixty-seventh World Health Assembly note the report contained in document A67/10.

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