

Programme budget 2020–2021

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

1. The Committee considered a document providing information on a proposed approach towards the preparation of the Programme budget 2022–2023.¹ It was proposed to maintain the current biennial cycle for the Programme budget 2022–2023 with the clear expectation that a revised budget would be submitted to the Seventy-fifth World Health Assembly in May 2022 in order to take into account requirements emerging from the current pandemic situation and to reflect the conclusions of the Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response, which would be submitted for consideration by the Seventy-fourth World Health Assembly in May 2021. It was also proposed that the Thirteenth General Programme of Work, 2019–2023, and its triple billion targets, should be extended to 2025. The additional time created would make it possible to assess the impact both of fast-track mechanisms for reaching the targets, and of the pandemic of coronavirus disease (COVID-19). The change would also align WHO's reporting with the United Nations reporting cycle on the mid-term review of the Sustainable Development Goals.

2. The Committee expressed its support for the proposed approach to develop the Programme budget, which was described as realistic, flexible and pragmatic in view of the current global situation. In addition, the Committee requested that the Secretariat maintain a Member State-driven, transparent consultative process in preparing the programme budget for 2022–2023. Such a process, while taking account of lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic, should also continue to focus on other issues that lead to better health and well-being overall, and align with the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Committee also expressed its desire to be updated regularly on the progress of the development of the programme budget.

3. The Committee also expressed general support for the extension of the Thirteenth General Programme of Work to 2025, but requested further information on the implications of such an extension. The Committee welcomed the work of the Organization on increased capacity-building efforts at country level.

4. The Committee urged the Secretariat to continue integrating gender equality, equity and human rights into programmatic work across the three levels of the Organization. In that regard, the Secretariat was requested to submit an annual report to the Committee and the Executive Board on progress towards achieving the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP) and on how gaps in the relevant standards are being addressed. The Committee also requested that the annual letter from the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the

¹ Document EBPBAC32/INF./1.

Empowerment of Women (UN Women) addressed to the Director-General on UN-SWAP results should be shared with Member States.

5. Noting that a 7.8% increase of the Programme budget 2022–2023 compared with 2020–2021 was foreseen in the financial estimate of the Thirteenth General Programme of Work, the Committee requested that more details be provided regarding the concrete reasons for such an increase. In particular, it asked for information on the increase in terms of both the WHO transformation agenda and the areas that would be given emphasis for the increase; it also enquired about the extent to which the increase would be directed to the country level. Likewise, efficiency gains within WHO would be of paramount importance to finance such an increase.

Results framework

6. The Secretariat introduced the report of the Director-General,¹ indicating the progress made on the results framework thanks to the close consultation with and involvement of Member States, undertaken through regional consultations and aligned across all three levels of the Organization.

7. The Committee welcomed the Secretariat's commitment towards finalizing the results framework to measure impact, deliver on the triple billion targets and Sustainable Development Goals and strengthen country capacity in health systems and health information systems. The results framework had three parts: impact measurement based on the Sustainable Development Goals, the scorecard and the qualitative country case studies. The results framework had been tested and applied by Member States, which advanced the understanding on delivering the triple billion targets with a focus on strengthening country capacity. The Committee noted the steps taken by the Secretariat towards building capacity in countries to tackle data gaps, including through reducing data fragmentation and building analytical capacity, and recommended the involvement of various sectors and agencies as well as the national statistics organizations and the finance ministries in that work. The Committee noted the importance of supporting countries with regard to disaggregation of data for areas such as gender and equity and the importance of indicators for health emergencies, such as the time to detect and respond, and suggested that engagement with Member States should be scaled up, including with small island developing States and least developed countries. The Committee also welcomed the SCORE for Health Data Technical Package and assessments, the World Health Data Hub, and the efforts to increase WHO's capacity in that area at all three levels and the Organization's collaboration with other entities of the United Nations system to deliver on the triple billion targets and the Sustainable Development Goals.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE HEALTH ASSEMBLY

8. The Committee, on behalf of the Executive Board, recommended that the Health Assembly propose, as guidance to the Secretariat in implementing existing mandates, that the Secretariat:

- (a) adopt an incremental approach in rolling out reporting through the output scorecard, especially as it relates to country offices;
- (b) report on achievements towards the triple billion targets and Sustainable Development Goals, in line with the Organization's results indicators;

¹ Document A73/16 Rev.1.

(c) provide additional information on the anticipated 7.8% increase in the Programme budget 2022–2023 and on the implications of the proposed extension of the Thirteenth General Programme of Work.

9. With regard to the WHO results framework, the Committee, on behalf of the Executive Board, recommended that the Health Assembly note the report contained in document A73/16 Rev.1, and that the Health Assembly further propose, as guidance to the Secretariat in implementing existing mandates, that the Secretariat:

- (a) scale up discussions and engagement with Member States, including small island developing States, on testing the measurement of the impact of the Thirteenth General Programme of Work, using the triple billion dashboard;
- (b) focus its work at country level on building unified and stronger data and health information systems and on strengthening analytical capacity so that countries are able to obtain regular, valid and reliable data;
- (c) consider involving multiple government sectors and institutions, such as statistical agencies and finance ministries, among others, in work to strengthen health data;
- (d) continue the discussions and engage Member States to include additional indicators in the Thirteenth General Programme of Work impact measurement, such as service coverage for mental health, cervical cancer screening coverage; and
- (e) provide support to countries in tackling data gaps, disaggregating data by sex, and conducting gender gap analysis on health.

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