

Report of the Executive Board on its 151st and 152nd sessions, and on its Sixth special session

1. The Executive Board held its 151st session on 30 May 2022, its 152nd session from 30 January to 7 February 2023 and its Sixth special session on 6 March 2023. All three sessions took place with face-to-face meetings. This report summarizes their main outcomes.

151ST SESSION (30 MAY 2022)

2. The Board adopted its **agenda** containing 14 items and subitems, with 15 accompanying documents. It adopted 12 decisions.

3. The Board noted the report of **the thirty-sixth meeting of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee** and the guidance provided therein.

PILLAR 2: ONE BILLION MORE PEOPLE BETTER PROTECTED FROM HEALTH EMERGENCIES

4. The Board decided to establish a **Standing Committee on Health Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response** and to approve the latter's terms of reference. It also agreed with a procedure for the nomination of members of the Committee.

PILLAR 4: MORE EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT WHO PROVIDING BETTER SUPPORT TO COUNTRIES

5. The Board also decided to establish an **agile Member States task group**, open to all Member States, on strengthening WHO's budgetary, programmatic and financing governance with the remit of reporting to the Seventy-sixth World Health Assembly through the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee at its thirty-seventh meeting and the Executive Board at its 152nd session.

6. After discussions, the Board accepted the recommendation of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee and noted the reports on **amendments to the Financial Regulations and Financial Rules**, deciding to extend the temporary suspension of **Financial Rule XII, 112.1**, in part, until its 153rd session (see also paragraph 38 below).

7. The Board, concurring with the guidance of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee, noted the **annual report on evaluation** and the report on and review of **hosted partnerships**. The Board considered the statement by the representative of the WHO staff associations, and noted the report on virtual meetings of two expert committees.

8. The Board appointed members to fill the seven vacant positions on the **Programme, Budget and Administration Committee** and five on the **selection panels** or **foundation committees**. It also appointed its representatives at the Seventy-sixth World Health Assembly.

152ND SESSION (30 JANUARY–7 FEBRUARY 2023)

9. The Board adopted its **agenda** containing 55 items and subitems, with 78 accompanying documents. It adopted seven resolutions and 29 decisions.

10. In his report, the Director-General discussed the priorities of promoting, providing, protecting, powering and performing for health and the proposed programme budget for 2024–2025. The many responses included much constructive guidance and advice as well as discussion of the impact of COVID-19.

11. The Board noted the report of the **regional committees**.

12. The Board noted the recommendations contained in the **report of the thirty-seventh meeting of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee**.

PILLAR 1: ONE BILLION MORE PEOPLE BENEFITING FROM UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE

13. Having discussed four draft decisions on different aspects of **reorienting health systems to primary health care as a resilient foundation for universal health coverage and preparations for a high-level meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on universal health coverage**, the Board noted the report and adopted decisions on: **integrated emergency, critical and operative care for universal health coverage and protection from health emergencies; increasing access to medical oxygen; preparation for the high-level meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on universal health coverage; and strengthening diagnostics capacity**.

14. The Board welcomed and supported the **draft updated menu of policy options and cost-effective interventions for the prevention and control of noncommunicable disease**. It recommended that the Seventy-sixth World Health Assembly endorse that menu, and requested the submission of an updated version to the Eightieth World Health Assembly through the Executive Board at its 160th session and continuous revision of the WHO global action plan for the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases 2013–2030.

15. With regard to the **draft global strategy on infection prevention and control** the Board decided that informal intersessional consultations with Member States would be held with a view to enabling a draft resolution to be submitted to the present Health Assembly for adoption.

16. Noting the report on the **global road map on defeating meningitis by 2030**, the Board decided to request the Director-General to submit the next report on progress to the Seventy-eighth World Health Assembly in 2025, through the Executive Board at its 156th session.

17. Assured that work would continue on the **standardization of medical devices nomenclature** and that consultations with Member States would be held, the Board noted the report on the subject.

18. The Board noted the report on **substandard and falsified medical products** and decided to recommend that the Health Assembly request the Director-General to facilitate the conduct of an independent evaluation of the Member State mechanism and report to the governing bodies in line with the requirements of that mechanism.

19. Welcoming the support for **strengthening rehabilitation in health systems**, the Board noted the report and decided to request the Director-General to analyse the capacity of Member States to respond to existing and foreseeable rehabilitation needs and to develop feasible global health system rehabilitation targets and indicators of effective coverage of rehabilitation services for 2030.

PILLAR 2: ONE BILLION MORE PEOPLE BETTER PROTECTED FROM HEALTH EMERGENCIES

20. After a full discussion the Board noted the report on **strengthening the global architecture for health emergency preparedness, response and resilience**, including the 10 proposals and five core systems outlined which it supported.

21. Recalling that the risk of transmission of poliovirus remained globally and reiterating its support for eradication but raising several issues including the need to vaccinate hard-to-reach children, the Board noted the reports on **poliomyelitis eradication** and **polio transition planning and polio post-certification**.

22. The Board discussed the report on **public health emergencies: preparedness and response – WHO’s work in health emergencies**. As the Board failed to reach consensus on whether to note the report on **implementation of resolution WHA75.11 (2022)**, it proceeded to a vote, with the result that the Board noted the report and agreed that the Secretariat would continue to work on the report with a view to presenting comprehensive, balanced and validated data and including all relevant aspects for submission to the Seventy-sixth World Health Assembly.¹ Further, it agreed that the Secretariat would provide a briefing for Member States before the Health Assembly.

23. The Board noted the report on the **Global Health for Peace Initiative**, welcoming the progress being made on the draft road map but recognizing that further work, including consultations, was needed at all levels, from world leaders to communities.

24. The Board, having called for the mapping of the baseline of the global clinical trial ecosystem and the development of a self-assessment tool, noted the report on **strengthening clinical trials to provide high-quality evidence on health interventions and to improve research quality and coordination**. Noting also the report on the **proportional division of funds for the Partnership Contribution of the Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Framework for the sharing of influenza viruses and access to vaccines and other benefits**, the Board adopted an amended decision continuing the current proportional division and arrangements during influenza emergencies.

PILLAR 3: ONE BILLION MORE PEOPLE ENJOYING BETTER HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

25. The Board commended and discussed the development of WHO’s first framework for achieving well-being and noted the report on **well-being and health promotion**, welcoming its strategic directions and the focus on monitoring. It advised that governance and leadership on health promotion needed to be strengthened and recommended areas for greater emphasis such as mental health and climate change.

26. The Board, noting the report on **ending violence against children through health systems strengthening and multisectoral approaches**, welcomed the attention being given to responding to

¹ See document A76/12.

violence against children, including the multisectoral approach through the INSPIRE framework, and called for better training and integration with mental health among other measures to counter the preventable scourge.

27. The Board discussed and noted the report on **social determinants of health**, including WHO's draft operational framework for measuring, assessing and addressing the social determinants of health and health inequities. The Board also considered drowning in the broader context of determinants of health and health inequities, and recommended that the Seventy-sixth World Health Assembly adopt a resolution on **accelerating action on drowning prevention**, in which, inter alia, it requested the preparation by the end of 2024 of a global status report on drowning prevention and the establishment of a global alliance for drowning prevention with organizations of the United Nations system, international development partners and nongovernmental organizations.

28. Welcoming the WHO global report on health equity for persons with disabilities and commending the targeted actions for disability inclusion as valuable for mainstreaming disability in the health sector, the Board noted the report on **the highest attainable standard of health for persons with disabilities**.

29. The Board, having considered and noted the report on the **United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016–2025)**, recommended that the Seventy-sixth World Health Assembly adopt a resolution on **accelerating efforts for preventing micronutrient deficiencies and their consequences, including spina bifida and other neural tube defects, through safe and effective food fortification**, which inter alia requested the Director-General to develop technical and quality assurance guidance for food fortification and to prepare a report on the global status of food fortification and supplementation.

30. Noting the report on **behavioural sciences for better health**, the Board recommended that the Seventy-sixth World Health Assembly adopt a resolution that promoted the use of behavioural science approaches in both Member States and the work of the Secretariat.

PILLAR 4: MORE EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT WHO PROVIDING BETTER SUPPORT TO COUNTRIES

Budget and finance matters

31. After an extensive and constructive discussion, the Board concurred with the guidance of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee and noted the reports on the **Financing and implementation of the Programme budget 2022–2023 and outlook on financing of the Programme budget 2024–2025** and the **Proposed programme budget 2024–2025** (which had been the subject of more consultations than any previous programme budget). Many of the recommendations and comments, in particular on strengthening countries while protecting WHO's normative function, were being taken into account.

32. The Board, concurring with the guidance of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee, noted the report on the **Thirteenth General Programme of Work, 2019–2025** and the outcome of the consultations held with Member States on the report of the Director-General to the Seventy-fifth World Health Assembly¹ on extending the Thirteenth General Programme of Work, 2019–2023 to 2025. With regard to the **amendments to the Financial Regulations and Financial Rules**, the Board agreed, on the recommendation of the Programme, Budget and Administration

¹ Document A75/8.

Committee, to proceed and adopted a resolution whose text had been amended to remove point (e) from the proposed revised text for Rule 111.2. It further agreed to hold further consultations on which option to include for the proposed new Financial Regulation 6.5.1 on the application of Article 7 of the Constitution in the case of a Member State being in arrears in the payment of its assessed contributions. The Board, accepting the recommendation of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee, also adopted a resolution on the **scale of assessments for 2024–2025**.

33. The Board noted the report and concurred with the guidance of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee in respect of the report on **sustainable financing: feasibility of a replenishment mechanism**, including options for consideration, and proposed further exploration of and consultation on a WHO replenishment mechanism.

Governance matters

34. The Board concurred with the guidance of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee and noted the **report of the Agile Member States Task Group** and the report on the **Secretariat implementation plan on reform**. In an amended decision, it requested various steps be taken in order to give effect to those recommendations of the Task Group where actions were proposed ahead of their consideration by the Seventy-sixth World Health Assembly as well as recommending that the Health Assembly decide to adopt the Task Group's recommendations. Similarly accepting the Committee's guidance, it decided to endorse the Secretariat implementation plan on reform.

35. With regard to global action plans and strategies that were scheduled to expire within one year, the Board considered the reports and took two decisions. It recommended that the Health Assembly extend the time frame of the **WHO global action plan on promoting the health of refugees and migrants, 2019–2023 to 2030**. Similarly, it recommended that the Health Assembly extend the time frame of the **WHO traditional medicine strategy 2014–2023** to 2025 and to request the development of a draft new global traditional medicine strategy for the period 2025–2034 for consideration by the Seventy-eighth World Health Assembly in 2025, through the Executive Board at its 156th session.

36. The Board noted the report on **involvement of non-State actors in WHO's governing bodies** and adopted an amended decision on constituency statements, including a request for a report on the implications for statements delivered by observers to be submitted to the 153rd session of the Board through the thirty-eighth meeting of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee.

37. The Board concurred with the recommendation of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee and noted the report on the **implementation of the Framework of Engagement with Non-State Actors** and that on the review of one third of the **non-State actors in official relations with WHO**, adopting the decision on the outcome of that review, including the admission into official relations of two bodies and the discontinuance of official relations with four others. The Board also considered the information report on **WHO presence in countries, territories and areas**.

Management matters

38. Commending the Secretariat's work in this area, the Board concurred with the guidance of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee and noted the report on **prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment**. Further, in the context of the reform of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, it noted the report and adopted a decision on the extension of the temporary suspension of Financial Rule XII, 112.1, in part, until the 153rd session of the Executive Board.

39. The Board, having considered the report on the **possible convocation of a special session of the Executive Board**, decided to hold a special session in the event that the outcome of an investigative process required it to consider the matter (see paragraph 49).

40. Concurring with the guidance of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee, the Board noted the report on the **Geneva buildings renovation strategy**.

41. In its discussion of **considerations for possible electronic voting at future governing body meetings**, the Board emphasized that consensus should remain the objective. It noted the report but requested a further report on a risk assessment and financial analysis of the issue.

Committees of the Board

42. After discussion and informal consultations on the options for addressing the misalignment between the terms of membership of the **Standing Committee on Health Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response** and the normal schedule of WHO committee membership, the Board adopted a decision on the terms of membership with a modified version of option 1.

43. Four **prizes** and one **award** were conferred by the Board.

Staffing matters

44. The Board appointed Dr Jarbas Barbosa Da Silva Jr as Regional Director for the Americas, expressing its profound gratitude and appreciation to Dr Carissa Faustina Etienne for her invaluable contribution to the work of WHO and of PAHO, especially her courageous service in the face of the COVID-19 emergency.

45. The Board concurred with the guidance of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee and noted the reports on **human resources** and **amendments to the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules**. It adopted two resolutions relating to salaries, one of which was amended to reflect accepted terminology, while the other recommended that the Health Assembly adopt a resolution related to remuneration of staff in ungraded posts and of the Director-General. The Board also recommended that the Health Assembly adopt a resolution establishing a housing allowance for the Director-General and amending his contract accordingly.

46. The Board noted the **Report of the International Civil Service Commission** and that on **reform of the global internship programme**, concurring with the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee's guidance. The Board also noted the report on **implementation of the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy, including the WHO policy on disability**.

47. The Board considered the **statement by the representative of the WHO staff associations** and the **report of the Ombudsman**.

Report on meetings of expert committees and study groups

48. The Board noted the reports on five meetings of three **expert committees** and on **expert advisory panels and committees and their membership**.

SIXTH SPECIAL SESSION (6 MARCH 2023)

49. The Board considered the report of the Secretariat and, acknowledging the seriousness of the findings of misconduct, decided to **terminate the appointment of the Regional Director for the Western Pacific** and **noted the Secretariat's guidance with reference to the specific disciplinary measure appropriate in this case**. It also noted the suggested timetable of considering the appointment of a Regional Director at its 154th session in January 2024.

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