Secretariat implementation plan on reform

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

1. The Secretariat provided an overview of document A77/28, which contained an update on implementation of the Secretariat implementation plan on reform. As at April 2024, the Secretariat had closed 81 of 96 actions (84%); of the 15 outstanding ongoing actions, 13 more were expected to be completed by the end of 2024 and two more in 2025. The Secretariat highlighted that it was implementing all reforms in a holistic manner, including those related to the transformation agenda, the recommendations of the Agile Member States Task Group and the ones from the Action for Results Group for country impact, to ensure coherence, alignment and increased impact, all of which were essential to building and maintaining sustainable systems.

2. The Committee expressed its appreciation for the Secretariat’s efforts to enhance transparency and the action taken so far, in particular in relation to budget and finances processes, implementation of measures for preventing and responding to sexual misconduct, and improvement of governance practices, including the creation of the Member States portal and its dashboards as well as key performance indicators at country level.

3. The Committee welcomed the high implementation rate of the actions contained in the plan. It encouraged the Secretariat to pursue timely implementation of the plan, while acknowledging that some actions would take more time. It requested the addition of an action to the plan, namely for the Evaluation Office to develop an action plan to address the conclusions of the comparative analysis of the evaluation function across the United Nations system, as recommended by the Independent Expert Oversight Advisory Committee.

4. The Committee noted the Secretariat’s continued support for governance reform and the work of the governing bodies. It further recognized that the Secretariat implementation plan is a living document and encouraged ongoing discussions with Member States to identify existing gaps.

5. In that regard, the Secretariat explained that a mechanism for updating the Secretariat implementation plan should be established by the Secretariat, as this would ensure the overall coherence of the process and the alignment with other actions already in the plan.

6. The Secretariat reiterated its commitment to implementing the Secretariat implementation plan in timely fashion and to continuing to report on progress to the governing bodies. It underscored the need to take account of capacity constraints when it came to the implementation of the many governing body requests and recommendations, with a view to avoiding disruption and ensuring sustainability.

7. The Committee proposed that the Secretariat should, to the extent possible based on the availability of funding, continue to strengthen country offices including by allocating sufficient and timely resources to ensure WHO’s impact.
RECOMMENDATION TO THE HEALTH ASSEMBLY

8. The Committee, on behalf of the Executive Board, recommended that the Health Assembly should note the report, and proposed, as guidance for the Secretariat’s implementation of existing mandates, that the Secretariat should:

(a) continue its work to implement the actions set out in the Secretariat implementation plan on reform and meet the anticipated due dates;

(b) continue to promote culture and behaviour change at all three levels of the Organization;

(c) add an action to the Secretariat implementation plan for the Evaluation Office to develop an action plan to address the improvements required in WHO’s policy framework, systems and processes in line with the conclusions of the comparative study of the evaluation function across the United Nations system;\(^1\)

(d) begin adding items with timelines extending beyond 2025.

\(^1\) See document EB155/4.