

Statement of Slovak Republic on the item 6.1

Mr. Chair,

WHO's evaluation agenda requires significant improvements from a governance perspective to enhance its structure and efficacy. Key areas for improvement include decentralization and capacity building, funding mechanisms, evaluation policy and coverage norms, stakeholder engagement and utilization of evaluations, and addressing potential risks.

Slovakia welcomes all work on evaluation, however, we see some areas for improvement:

Decentralization and Capacity Building: The commitment to decentralize evaluations and foster regional ownership needs robust enhancement. Capacity-building programs should be expanded, and there must be concerted efforts to ensure dedicated evaluation officers are present in all regional offices.

Funding Mechanisms: A clear and dedicated budget line must be established for evaluations. This will alleviate current funding uncertainties and position the evaluation function to be more independent and effective, aligning WHO with the best practices observed in comparable UN entities.

Evaluation Policy and Coverage Norms: The evaluation policy should be updated to define explicit coverage norms, ensuring systematic and comprehensive evaluation across all thematic areas. Regular tracking and reporting of these norms will further enhance accountability and strategic oversight.

Stakeholder Engagement and Use of Evaluations: Enhance engagement with stakeholders throughout the evaluation process to foster ownership and maximize the utilization of evaluation findings. Dissemination of results through upgraded communication channels, including newsletters and short videos, should be made standard practice.

Slovakia has identified some Risks in this field, as following:

Resource Limitations: The current limited staff capacity, both at headquarters and regional levels, poses a significant risk. To mitigate this, WHO should prioritize the recruitment and training of evaluation professionals and leverage partnerships with external experts and organizations.

Sustainability of Funding: Reliance on voluntary contributions for funding evaluations is precarious. WHO must develop sustainable funding mechanisms, possibly through voluntary contributions, assessed contributions, and other diversified sources.

Implementation Gaps: Effective implementation of the revised evaluation policy and workplans is critical. Monitoring and oversight by a proposed internal evaluation committee at the senior management level can ensure adherence to set guidelines and prompt action on recommendations.

Balancing Decentralization with Quality Assurance: While promoting decentralized evaluations, maintaining high-quality standards is crucial. Ongoing support from the Evaluation Office, including practical guides, quality assurance checklists, and training, will be essential to uphold evaluation integrity.

We applaud the commitment to enhancing evaluation activities, the steps taken towards fostering stakeholders' ownership and use of evaluations, and the measures to improve communication avenues such as upgrading webpages and newsletters etc. We also acknowledge the strategy of

engaging solidly in collaborative efforts and participating in wider international professional evaluation events for accountability and strategic learning. The limitation in staff capacity for evaluation in different regions is one issue identified, making the need for consultants necessary therefore we propose the opportunity to decrease the need to allocate additional budget through the involvement of for example the WHO collaborative centers and some WHO partners or technical advisory groups to the evaluation team.

Furthermore, while significant progress has been made in conducting country-level evaluations, there is a need to continue increasing the number of evaluations of contributions to individual nations' public health agendas. Similarly, continuing to build an organization-wide repository of evaluation reports to boost learning across the Secretariat is an area to address robustly.

In relation to the comparative study, Slovakia sees clearly that WHO still lags behind other comparable UN entities in terms of substantial investment in evaluation functions. Therefore, the recommendations from the comparative study focusing on areas such as the development of explicit coverage norms, dedicated budget lines for evaluation, strengthening evaluation oversight, and visibility among others should be given the utmost attention.

By addressing these areas and diligently managing potential risks, WHO can significantly enhance its evaluation practices, thereby strengthening its accountability, learning, and overall impact on global health outcomes.

Thank you, Mr. Chair