
Report of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee of the Executive Board

1. The seventh meeting of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee of the Executive Board was held in Geneva on 17 and 18 January 2008, under the chairmanship of Professor J. Pereira Miguel (Portugal). The list of participants is attached at Annex 1. The Chairman, noting that there were no amendments to the Financial Regulations and Financial Rules, proposed deleting agenda item 3.1 on that topic. The Committee adopted the provisional agenda,¹ as amended.

Agenda item 2 Strategic directions

Management reforms: review of progress (Document EBPBAC7/2)

2. The Committee was briefed on progress made in carrying out WHO's management reforms and on the challenges that lay ahead. The following areas were discussed: the global management system, planning and performance monitoring, financing, staffing, operational support and performance management, oversight and accountability. Detailed progress updates were given on the status of development of the global management system and on the establishment of the global service centre in Kuala Lumpur, scheduled to be fully operational by mid-2008.

3. The Committee expressed appreciation of the general direction taken by WHO in moving forward with its management reforms. The focus on improving the overall performance of the Organization was welcomed. In respect of the measures being adopted to ensure sustainable financing of indirect support functions, the Committee noted that several measures are being pursued. These included use of interest earned on voluntary contributions, aiming to maintain the Organization's standard 13% programme support cost rate, and other measures consistent with those followed elsewhere in the United Nations system.

4. In light of questions raised, further discussion took place on the cost implications of the global management system and the establishment of the global service centre. One member raised concerns about possibly increased centralization resulting from the full implementation of the global management system, but it was explained that at the core of the global management system was the principle of decentralization. The impact of the global management system on the work of the regions as well as the need for care in identifying and managing risks linked to the system were also discussed. An explanation was provided of the system for identifying and mitigating the risks associated with the global management system, the global service centre, information technology work, and other key

¹ Document EBPBAC7/1.

general management initiatives. With regard to the cost savings of those reforms, it was noted that a full picture would only be available after 2009, by which time all regions would have joined the global management system.¹

5. Additional information was provided by the Secretariat on WHO's efforts to improve its performance management and internal justice systems.

Agenda item 3 Matters for review by, and/or recommendation to, the Executive Board

3.2 United Nations reform process and WHO's role in harmonization of operational development activities at country level (Document EB122/18)

6. The Committee welcomed the progress report with its update by the Secretariat on the resolution adopted the previous month in the United Nations General Assembly on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system.² That resolution covered funding for operational activities of the United Nations system, how the United Nations family should contribute to national capacity building, the improved development of the United Nations system, and follow-up and monitoring of the reform process. WHO was fully engaged in and committed to that process.

7. One Committee member noted with satisfaction the Secretariat's involvement in United Nations reform, supporting the Organization's sharing across the United Nations system of its experiences of results-based management, financial and performance systems, and initial work with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards in efforts to increase the coherence of business practices. Further clarifications were given by the Secretariat on the current United Nations stock-taking exercise of lessons learnt from the first year of the "Delivering as One" pilot initiatives in eight countries, noting that independent evaluation findings of the impact were envisaged in the longer term. Additional insights were presented on the different models of the ways in which governments of countries where the pilot initiatives were taking place had committed themselves to increasing their ownership of the process.

The Committee recommended that the Executive Board should take note of the report contained in document EB122/18.

3.3 Partnerships (Document EB122/19)

8. The Committee welcomed the initiative of the Secretariat in seeking guidance, and expressed appreciation for the timely report on partnerships, noting it was the first time that subject had been proposed for discussion by the Executive Board.

9. The importance and complexity of the issue was highlighted in the debate in the Committee, particularly with regard to global trends in health, the increasing financial resources available through the global health partnerships, and the need to consider the implications of that welcome influx of resources and new energy with regard to coordination and harmonization among partnerships, and between partnerships and WHO.

¹ Except for PAHO, which would complete implementation by 2013.

² Resolution 62/208.

10. Clarification was requested on the impact of WHO-hosted partnerships on the Programme budget and Financial reports, noting that partnerships were a growing element in the total figure and that some of those resources were not under the authority of WHO's governing bodies. In response, the Secretariat indicated that WHO was further developing the criteria for determining which partnerships were within WHO's managerial control.

11. One member noted the time and resources that were required within WHO for supporting health partnerships. It was suggested that the Secretariat should examine hosting arrangements for partnerships carefully and should develop clear guidelines on arrangements of that type, and on how WHO would manage its involvement with partnerships, including in relation to partnerships' added value for health and the need to reduce any duplication of effort.

12. Noting the contributions of many partnerships to achieving health goals, one member drew attention to the importance of aligning of partnership policies and directions with Health Assembly resolutions and priorities. One member reflected on the role of the Health Assembly in the context of numerous governance arrangements for global health partnerships, on what the linkage should be, and on ways of increasing information flow, transparency and accountability to all Member States.

13. The Committee suggested that the Secretariat should produce draft policy guidelines for consideration by the Executive Board.

The Committee recommended that the Executive Board should take note of the report contained in document EB122/19.

The Committee requested the Secretariat to act on the suggestions made during the Committee's discussions.

3.4 WHO publications (Document EB122/20)

14. The Committee noted that the report provided a good starting point for ensuring that WHO publications met the needs of Member States. Accordingly, it urged that the policy should be understood and implemented throughout the Organization.

15. The Committee also noted both the large number of publications issued by WHO and the considerable proportion of the budget spent on them, and drew attention to the need for cost-effectiveness. It stressed the need for a transparent and unbiased evaluation of the effectiveness of the publication policy and of individual publications, and for a formal clearance process that would apply to publications from all levels of the Organization.

The Committee recommended that the Executive Board should note the report on WHO publications.

The Committee requested the Director-General to continue work on this issue and to provide the Committee at its next meeting with more detailed guidelines on how the policy would be implemented and evaluated.

3.5 Method of work of the Health Assembly (Document EB122/21)

16. The Committee expressed its appreciation for the initiative of the Secretariat to review the Rules of Procedure of both the World Health Assembly and the Executive Board, with a view to streamlining and rationalizing the work of those two bodies. It welcomed the initiative because this was the first major review for more than a decade. The proposal to abolish the Committee on Nominations, in particular, was seen as a positive step to streamline the proceedings of the opening day of the Health Assembly.

17. On the proposal of one member, the Committee decided to retain the current deadlines provided in the Rules of Procedure of the World Health Assembly for the consideration of items and proposals. It also agreed that it should be made clear that the current practice of equitable geographical representation in the nominations for elected positions for officers of the World Health Assembly would continue, notwithstanding the abolition of the Committee on Nominations.

The Committee recommended that the Board should adopt the draft resolution contained in paragraph 17 of document EB122/21, as amended by the Committee. The revised draft resolution, with the proposed amendments reproduced in tracked mode, is attached to the present report as Annex 2.

3.6 Human resources: annual report (Documents EB122/24, and EB122/24 Add.1)

18. The Committee welcomed the report which described both the progress achieved in the previous year and the activities planned for 2008 in the area of human resources management.

19. The Committee noted the increase in the number of staff holding long-term appointments, while observing that the overall number of staff employed by WHO had declined over the preceding four years. In the context of results-based management, the Committee welcomed the integration of human resources plans into programme planning, thus helping to link staffing levels more closely to programme needs.

20. Committee members expressed appreciation of the continuing emphasis on performance management and staff development and learning.

21. The Committee asked that greater focus should be given in 2008 to measures for improving gender balance and planning for the large number of staff members who would be retiring in the following five to 10 years.

3.7 Report of the International Civil Service Commission (Document EB122/25)

22. The Committee took note of the report and welcomed the special meeting, held in 2007, between the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Commission and representatives of senior management from Geneva-based organizations within the United Nations common system.

3.8 Confirmation of amendments to the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules (Document EB122/30)

The Committee recommended that the Executive Board should adopt the two draft resolutions set out in paragraph 13 of document EB122/30.

Agenda item 4 Matters for information

4.1 Programme budget 2006–2007: performance assessment (Document EBPBAC7/3)

23. The Committee welcomed the report, which it recognized was based on provisional and unaudited figures, pending the closure of accounts for the biennium 2006–2007 by the Sixty-first World Health Assembly. Nonetheless, it appreciated the transparency of the information provided on the implementation of WHO's Programme budget.

24. The Committee cautioned, however, that financial expenditure should not be regarded as an effective proxy for programme implementation and achievement of results. It was noted that the focus of the report had been to respond to the Committee's request at its sixth meeting in May 2007 for an analysis of reasons for low financial implementation.¹ The Committee looked forward to reviewing the performance assessment for the full biennium, which would include assessment of results achieved, and the final figures for the financial period 2006–2007. A summary report would be presented to the Committee at its eighth meeting in May 2008, which would provide a much better opportunity to assess overall the Organization's performance. One member suggested that voluntary contributions received should be aligned with the work of the Organization as approved by the Health Assembly through the Medium-term strategic plan.²

25. The issue of partnerships and the impact of their funding on the Programme budget was raised in the context of assessing performance. Since WHO hosts several partnerships whose budgets are reflected in the Organization's accounts but over which the governing bodies have only partial oversight, the Committee requested that these should be more clearly disaggregated in terms of budgets, income and expenditure.

26. It was noted that the issue of partnerships was complex and that the Executive Board would discuss the matter as a substantive agenda item. However, the Committee urged the Secretariat to begin work on drafting a policy to clarify issues related to WHO's involvement in global health partnerships, including how Member States and partners could cooperate effectively at global and country levels.

4.2 Eleventh General Programme of Work: monitoring process (Document EBPBAC7/4)

27. The Committee welcomed the comprehensive overview of WHO's statutory monitoring and evaluation framework. It noted the importance of timely monitoring for assessing the full implementation of the Programme budget. The Committee understood the time constraints and conditions imposed on reporting to governing bodies; nevertheless it requested the Secretariat to devise stronger monitoring tools that could be used within those deadlines and to clarify the responsibilities within the Secretariat for monitoring.

¹ Document EB121/3.

² Resolution WHA60.11.

4.3 Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (Document EBPBAC7/5)

28. The Committee reviewed the Internal Auditor's comprehensive plan of work, which included various audits, evaluations and the provision for investigations. It noted that the Office was fully staffed, that adequate funding for operations had been made available, and that the plan of work envisaged allocation of resources for oversight to all levels of the Organization.

29. In response to its questions about oversight work devoted to partnerships, the Committee was assured that the time available for the Office's core WHO work would not be diminished by work on partnerships. It was recalled that transparency was needed, yet recognized that some information had to remain internal, and the Committee was informed that a briefing on any specific audit could be provided on request, and that could include a reading of the report of the audit.

4.4 External and internal audit recommendations: progress on implementation (Document EBPBAC7/6)

30. The Committee noted that the Comptroller's office was responsible for responding to and tracking audit recommendations. Over the past two years, the tracking mechanism for helping managers to deal with both internal and external audit recommendations had been reinforced through briefings to senior management. The Committee noted that risk management is a complex process and welcomed the fact that the subject would be tackled during the course of the biennium; it welcomed the fact that a rigorous procedure was already in place for implementation of the global management system.

31. The Committee welcomed the report and the summary tables tracking the external and internal audit recommendations which had been provided, but requested that in future those tables should be made available earlier.

32. Some members asked about the availability of internal audit reports, in view of the fact that those of the United Nations were made available to all Member States in accordance with a General Assembly resolution. The Committee was informed that the Office of Internal Oversight Services submitted an annual report to the Health Assembly which included a synopsis of all the audits. The internal tracking of recommendations was available to Member States on request; should a Member State have a specific interest in a report, a briefing could be arranged which normally included a reading of the report.

33. In response to a further question, the Committee was informed that the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee was deemed to fulfil the function of an audit committee.

4.5 Reports of the Joint Inspection Unit (Document EBPBAC7/7)

34. The Committee reviewed the update on recent reports of the Joint Inspection Unit issued during 2006 and 2007 and the report on progress in implementing the recommendations of previous Joint Inspection Unit reports. A matrix with the Secretariat's detailed comments on the reports was made

available to Committee members for additional information, together with copies of all the reports being discussed.¹

35. The Committee welcomed the presence of the delegation of Inspectors from the Joint Inspection Unit. The Vice-Chairman of the Unit provided an overview of the role and functions of the Unit and introduced the above-mentioned recent reports. He commended WHO's responsiveness and proactive follow-up to the Unit's reports and noted that it had been one of the first agencies to adopt the Unit's new follow-up system.

36. Committee members requested more information on the implementation of recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit and the lessons learnt. The Committee noted that the reports were a valuable resource in the context of WHO and the United Nations reform process. It was suggested that further thought should be given to the most appropriate respective roles and coordination of internal audit, external audit and the external oversight of the United Nations provided by the Joint Inspection Unit.

37. The Committee welcomed the Joint Inspection Unit's reports as representing an important part of the oversight process.

Agenda item 5 Adoption of report and closure of meeting

38. The Committee adopted its report.

¹ Documents JIU/REP/2005/8, JIU/REP/2006/4, JIU/REP/2006/5, JIU/REP/2007/1, JIU/REP/2007/2, and JIU/REP/2007/4.

ANNEX 1

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

MEMBERS, ALTERNATES AND ADVISERS

Portugal

Professor J. Pereira Miguel (Chairman)

Mr J.A. Sousa Fialho (alternate)

Mrs M. Abrantes (alternate)

Liberia

Dr W.T. Gwenigale (Vice-Chairman)

Mr J. Duncan (alternate)

Afghanistan

Dr H. Ahmadzai

Mr O.K. Noori (alternate)

Denmark

Ms M. Kristensen (alternate to Mr J. Fisker)

Mr A. Berling-Rasmussen (alternate)

Ms I. Rasmussen (alternate)

Indonesia

Dr I. Nyoman Kandun (alternate to Dr S.F. Supari)

Mr A. Somantri (alternate)

Dr Budihardja (alternate)

Dr Widiyarti (alternate)

Japan

Dr H. Shinozaki

Dr H. Inoue (alternate)

Mali

Mr O.I. Touré

Professeur T. Sidibe (alternate)
Mr S. Samake (alternate)
Dr D.O.S. Maïga (alternate)
Dr O. Diakite (alternate)

Mexico

Mrs H. Arrington Aviña (alternate to Dr M. Hernández Ávila)

Mrs M. Gómez Oliver (alternate)
Mrs D.M. Valle (alternate)
Mrs M.E. Coronado Martínez (alternate)
Mr S. Tinajero (alternate)

New Zealand

Dr D. Matheson (alternate to Mr D. Cunliffe)

Ms D. Roche (alternate)

Sri Lanka

Mr N.S. de Silva

Mrs M. Mallikaratchy (alternate)
Dr P. Abeykoon (alternate)

Tunisia

Dr H. Abdessalem

United States of America

Ms A. Blackwood (alternate to Dr D. Wright)

Ms A. Chick (alternate)
Mr D.E. Hohman (alternate)

Members *ex officio*

Dr B. Sadasivan (Chairman of the Executive Board)

Mr Tan York Chor (alternate)
Mr S.N. Syed Hassim (alternate)
Mr C. Wong (alternate)
Mr T.S. Sadanadom (alternate)
Ms F. Gan (alternate)

Dr J.G. Maza Brizuela (Vice-Chairman of the Executive Board)

Mr M.A. Alcaine (alternate)

Dr H. Alcides Urbina (alternate)

Mrs L. Alvarado de Overdiek (alternate)

MEMBER STATES NOT MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Mr E.-H. El Bey (Algeria)

Ms N. Dos Santos Saraiva (Angola)

Ms C Patterson (Australia)

Mr N. McFarlane (Australia)

Mr S. Thom (Australia)

Mr H. Friza (Austria)

Ms H. Rodlauer (Austria)

Mr J. De Preter (Belgium)

Mr D. MacPhee (Canada)

Mr P. Oldham (Canada)

Mr P. Blais (Canada)

Mrs Lan Mei (China)

Mr Zhang Ze (China)

Mr Dong Zhihua (China)

Ms B. Souskova (Czech Republic)

Mrs P. Renoul (France)

Mr L. Dudeck (Germany)

Dr A.H.A. Al-Ameri (Iraq)

Mrs S. Hodne Oteen (Norway)

Mr T. E. Lindgren (Norway)

Ms M.-T. Lepatan (Philippines)

Mr M. Tsechkovski (Russian Federation)

Mr E. Kalugin (Russian Federation)

Mr N. Lozinskiy (Russian Federation)

Dr A. Pavlov (Russian Federation)

Mr A. Kayitayire (Rwanda)

Mrs A. Hellgren (Sweden)

Mme B. Schaer Bourbeau (Switzerland)

Mme C. Büsser (Switzerland)

Mrs P. Kanchanahattakij (Thailand)

Ms C. Kitsell (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Mr J. L. Lobo Rodriguez (Venezuela, Bolivarian Republic of)

OTHERS

Joint Inspection Unit

Vice-Chairman G. Biraud

Inspector P.L. Fall

Inspector T. Inomata

Inspector I. Posta

Inspector C. Terzi

Inspector M.D. Wynes

ANNEX 2

The Executive Board,

Having considered the report on method of work of the Health Assembly,¹

1. DECIDES to amend Rules 9 and 38 of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board as follows, with effect from the closure of its 122nd session:

Rule 9

[...]

Any proposal for inclusion on the agenda of any item under (c), (d), ~~and (e)~~ **and (f)** above shall be accompanied by an explanatory memorandum, **except in the case of standing or recurring items proposed by the Director-General under (f).**

Rule 38

If two or more proposals are moved, the Board shall, unless it decides otherwise, vote on the proposals in the order in which they have been circulated to all delegations, unless the result of a vote on a proposal makes unnecessary any other voting on the proposal or proposals still outstanding.

2. RECOMMENDS to the Sixty-first World Health Assembly the adoption of the following resolution:

The Sixty-first World Health Assembly,

Having considered the report on methods of work of the Health Assembly;

1. DECIDES to add to its Rules of Procedure of the World Health Assembly a new Rule 12bis, as follows:

Rule 12bis

At each session the provisional agenda and, subject to Rule 12, any proposed supplementary item, together with the report of the General Committee thereon, shall be submitted to the Health Assembly for its ~~approval~~ **adoption** as soon as possible after the opening of the session.

2. DECIDES to delete Rules 24 and 25 of the Rules of Procedure of the World Health Assembly;

¹ Document EB122/21.

3. DECIDES to amend Rules ~~15~~, 26, 31, 34, 36, ~~52~~ and 68 of the Rules of Procedure of the World Health Assembly as follows, on the understanding that the Rules of Procedure shall be renumbered as a consequence of the deletion of Rules 24 and 25:

Rule ~~15~~

~~—The Health Assembly shall not proceed, unless it determines otherwise, to the discussion of any item on the agenda until at least **twenty-four** hours have elapsed after the documents referred to in Rules 13 and 14 have been made available to delegations.~~

[...]

Rule 26

At each regular session, the Health Assembly shall elect a President and five vice-presidents, who shall hold office until their successors are elected.

Rule 31

The General Committee of the Health Assembly shall consist of the President and vice-presidents of the Health Assembly, the chairmen of the main committees of the Health Assembly established under Rule 34 and that number of delegates to be elected by the Health Assembly as shall provide a total of twenty-five members of the General Committee, provided that no delegation may have more than one representative on the Committee. The President of the Health Assembly shall convene, and preside over, meetings of the General Committee.

[...]

Rule 34

[...]

The chairmen of these main committees shall be elected by the Health Assembly.

Rule 36

Each main committee shall elect two vice-chairmen and a rapporteur.

Rule ~~52~~

~~—Proposals and amendments shall normally be introduced in writing and handed to the Director General, who shall circulate copies to the delegations. Except as may be decided otherwise by the Health Assembly, no proposal shall be discussed or put to the vote at any meeting of the Health Assembly unless copies of it have been circulated to all delegations **not later than the day preceding the meeting**. The President may, however, permit the discussion and consideration of amendments, even though they have not been circulated or have only been circulated the day of the meeting.~~

Rule 68

If two or more proposals are moved, the Health Assembly shall, unless it decides otherwise, vote on the proposals in the order in which they have been circulated to all delegations, unless the result of a vote on a proposal makes unnecessary any other voting on the proposal or proposals still outstanding.

4. DECIDES that the Health Assembly shall continue to follow its current practice concerning equitable geographical representation in the nomination of candidates for elected positions in the Health Assembly and its subsidiary bodies, with a view to such nominations being received by the Director-General no later than the opening of each session of the Health Assembly.

4 5. FURTHER DECIDES that the foregoing changes to its Rules of Procedure shall take effect from the closure of its Sixty-first session.

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