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As the process of WHO reform matures, I am pleased to welcome you to this fourth summary of recent progress. We are moving forward in our efforts to make the work of WHO more structured, more strategic and more realistic. We see some good signs that reforms are improving the transparency and accountability of WHO’s work, and this has been warmly welcomed by our Member States.

A second Financing Dialogue was held in November, again in a frank and open spirit of looking for ways to ensure that all of the Organization’s core functions are adequately funded. WHO will operate more efficiently and more effectively when we can see the funding gaps and make appropriate adjustments.

When we began these first-ever dialogues, we knew that they would be a learning experience for everyone, but were not entirely sure about the outcome. I believe we can now conclude that one major outcome is trust. Some long-standing problems and inefficiencies were brought out into the open and great efforts were made to identify workable remedial measures. A new open-access web portal to support funding decisions was launched just before the meeting and was immediately welcomed as an important new tool for transparency and accountability.

Organizational reform was discussed during a meeting in November that brought together the heads of all WHO country offices. Although these offices address highly diversified country needs, voices were united in calling for specific changes that can improve our performance and our contribution to the health of their people.

Human resource reforms, including streamlined recruitment and selection processes, are being aligned with programmatic needs, staff needs for learning and career development, and fiscal realities. The reforms aim to attract talent, retain talent, and create an enabling environment. The need for a healthy balance between work and personal lives, encouraged through family-friendly policies, is recognized.

Finally, the newsletter describes another first: a new policy that ensures open access to WHO-authored or WHO-funded research published in external journals and books. Payment barriers to access will be removed for everyone, increasing the visibility and impact of WHO’s contributions to research. Such a policy also underscores my firm commitment to fairness.

Perhaps most important, Member States remain deeply engaged in the reform process and are largely satisfied with the concrete improvements that are being introduced. They are seeing some results.

Dr Margaret Chan
Director-General

“We welcome the Director of the new department of Compliance, Risk Management and Ethics (CRE), Mr Andreas Mlitzke, who started in his new role on 1 October 2013. Mr Mlitzke is a trained judge and has been working in internal oversight in the UN and at WHO for ten years.

CRE will advise management and staff members on how to identify, mitigate and monitor Organization-wide risks and compliance gaps as well as strengthening awareness of ethics standards.”
Two hundred and sixty-six representatives of 92 Member States and 14 non-Member State partners came together in Geneva on 25 and 26 November 2013 to review WHO’s funding outlook for 2014-15 and to work together to address funding challenges.

Participants noted, however, that the overall strong funding situation masked serious shortfalls in some programmes. “We would like to see a better and more balanced distribution of funds across programmes,” said India’s Mr Keshav Desiraju.

Contributors stressed the importance of aligning available funds with Member State-agreed programmatic priorities. “We are proud to support WHO’s leadership in public health,” said Dr Chris Elias of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. “We rely on WHO to achieve its mandate in order for us to be able to carry out our strategies.”

The meeting also noted some positive steps towards greater flexibility and predictability of funding and highlighted the importance of ensuring longer-term financing linked to the six-year General Programme of Work. “This new approach to financing WHO has the potential to show the way for other UN agencies,” said Mr Pierre Blais of Canada.

The new programme budget web portal received a particularly warm welcome. Participants acknowledged significant progress towards greater transparency and accountability, both for the flow of WHO’s resources and for monitoring progress towards results. The Secretariat was encouraged to continue its efforts to ensure better reporting and a clearer indication of WHO’s contribution to results.

There was also wide support for the proposal to move towards more coordinated and coherent resource mobilization. As one participant put it, “The days of freelance fundraising by individual operating units is, we hope, at an end.”

Participants agreed on the importance of continuing and enhancing the dialogue process. Further discussions will take place, for example, on proposals to develop a new approach to financing administrative and management functions, at the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee of the Executive Board in January 2014. The Secretariat will also provide an update on the funding situation at the January session of the Executive Board and will present an evaluation of the Financing Dialogue and resource mobilization experiences to the World Health Assembly in May 2014.

The Financing Dialogue aims to ensure a match between WHO’s results and deliverables as agreed in the programme budget and the resources available to finance them, with the ultimate objective of enhancing the quality and effectiveness of WHO’s work.
After the second meeting of the Financing Dialogue, Linda Muller sat down with Zsuzsanna Jakab to discuss resource mobilization for the Organization.

LM You, together with Deputy Director-General Dr Asamoah-Baah, led the Task Force on Resource Mobilization and Management Strategies. Tell us more about that process.

ZJ It was a great experience to work in a truly global task force. We had representatives from all major offices, all very knowledgeable about resource mobilization. All regions were represented through DPMs/DRD and WRs. We worked in a global spirit and in an open working environment—everyone could be as honest as they wanted, as it was not a formal setting. That is the good thing about these task forces—you are not bound to any rules, so you can be very open and transparent with your thoughts—and that helped to advance the work. We could openly discuss the problems we identified with mismanagement of resources. “The one who raises the money owns the money” has basically been the approach. So it is not only that externally it was uncoordinated but also internally. The resources were not considered corporate resources for the Organization. They were considered resources for the individual who raised them, often resources that came from their own country.

LM What I take away from the task force, the discussions in the Financing Dialogue and the bilateral meetings that we held between the June meeting and now is that we are now firmly moving towards one WHO. We are moving away from the individual approach to a corporate approach and if RDs, ADGs or Directors are going to a Member State to talk about financing, they may be highlighting their own programme but you are also talking about the whole Organization. That is a radical departure from where we are now.

ZJ Exactly! What we need is coordinated and integrated resource mobilization. We still have to work out HOW we will do it. It is a very logical step, but changing the culture and implementing this change in the Organization will take time. It will need strong leadership from the top, from the Global Policy Group and the ADGs.
“Through the reform process, we have managed to build trust with our Member States and with many of our donors…”

LM And also trust. Trust is a word that I heard several times during the course of the two days. If, and only if, Directors have a level of confidence that money will come to their programmes, they will play ball. So trust is needed. The trust is not there now because the money has not been there for them before. This will take time.

ZJ At the Global Policy Group meeting in March 2014 we need to discuss how we distribute the resources internally. When the Directors see that they are receiving funds through the Financing Dialogue and other ways of doing resource mobilization (for example, bilateral discussions) – they will become engaged. Currently there are pockets of poverty in every major office. Some programmes and offices have a hard time paying salaries. Some clusters have been cooperating and sharing, while others have not had that approach. We have to bring everyone together in a truly corporate spirit and trusting relationship, as outlined by the Task Force.

LM In closing, a couple of comments from you on the outcomes of the Financing Dialogue?

ZJ I thought it was an excellent meeting, much better than anyone expected. Through the reform process, we have managed to build trust with our Member States and with many of our donors. Throughout this meeting, you could feel a spirit of trust and for me that was the most positive message. There was no criticism or tension – just a very positive working environment. Everyone tried to find constructive solutions. They appreciate that the Organization is trying to move forward. Also, many countries came with pledges, even if they had to say that these were subject to approval by their parliaments. But it is a very positive sign of trust.

LM …and that is a first for WHO.

ZJ That is the first time it has happened for WHO—and it is very important. At this point, the preliminary figures show that we have close to 85% funding pledges for the next biennium, if all the pledges come in. But then we need to analyse the situation carefully. There are programmes and areas that are not well funded. We need to identify those and do active resource mobilization to ensure that all areas come up to a sufficient funding level. It is also important to distribute the resources. When the DDG said that we had pledges for 85% of the budget, I had a quick look at the situation for the European Region; the funding there thus far is 50%. So we have to analyze the situation and come up with a plan—first identify where the gaps are, and then identify how to fill these gaps. We have to go out in a coordinated way to Member States and donors. The one who does the resource mobilization has to do it for the whole Organization. So we have to make global plans.

Visit the reform website to read the full interview

Zsuzsanna Jakab is Regional Director for Europe. Before taking up the post in 2010, she founded the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), in Stockholm, Sweden. She has been the State Secretary at the Hungarian Ministry of Health, Social and Family Affairs and has held senior management roles at the WHO Regional Office for Europe.

Linda Muller is the Project Manager of the Financing Dialogue.
What is the programme budget portal?

The programme budget portal gives access to explore, at any time, details of the work that WHO has planned for 2014–2015, the results the Organization intends to deliver, and the funds WHO has towards the achievement of these results across countries, regions and headquarters.

“The aim of the portal is to provide detailed information so that contributors can make informed funding decisions,” said Scott Pendergast, Department of Planning, Resource Coordination and Performance Monitoring.

The portal allows visitors to go into any of the six areas of work, drill down to programme level and access information on what we want to achieve, including outcome and output targets and what WHO will do to achieve these results through activities at all three levels of the Organization. Interactive maps illustrate which countries are working towards specific goals. The user can also see what resources are needed, by output level and major office.

The portal also shows financial contributions, what they were applied to, and in what amounts. Graphs make it easy to see where funds have been allocated and where there is still a need for additional contributions. The web portal will draw data from WHO’s enterprise resource planning system, the Global Management System, so that financial information such as expenditure rate will be regularly updated and available.

Please visit the programme budget portal at:  
https://extranet.who.int/programmebudget/
A step towards strengthening country offices

What do you get when you bring together the heads of all WHO offices? Strategic and open discussions on the future of the Organization!

The seventh global meeting of the heads of WHO offices in countries, territories and areas (HWOs) with the Director-General and Regional Directors was held at WHO Headquarters in Geneva from 18 to 22 November 2013. Issues ranging from technical topics as part of WHO leadership priorities, such as noncommunicable diseases and universal health coverage, were covered and reform was at the center of the discussions. Reform at country level means strengthening country offices to ensure that WHO provides efficient and effective support to Member States. Countries’ need for WHO support changes over time as their social, economic and health situations progress. WHO needs to be prepared and flexible enough to provide support through those changes.

The Director-General underscored the role of HWOs as change agents in defining the success of the reform. In response, HWOs formulated several key action points crucial to strengthening WHO work in countries:

- Strengthen WHO’s convening and facilitating role at country level: ensure a minimum country presence in each country, with staff skilled in policy analysis, monitoring and evaluation and communication.
- Align planning and resource allocation with country priorities: ensure bottom-up planning of resources, develop easier and faster processes for revising budget ceilings, provide financial flexibility to enhance responsiveness, and make the country cooperation strategy a strategic management tool.
- Address country-level human resources challenges: ensure that HR profiles match country needs and priorities; fast-track compulsory mobility and rotation to facilitate re-profiling at country level; align staff development and training efforts with emerging needs at country office and make career development effective.

The global meeting of the heads of WHO offices takes place every two years. The outcome of the meeting will be taken on board in further development of reform at country level.
WHO’s vision for information sharing

Dr Najeeb Al Shorbaji, Director, Knowledge, Ethics and Research:

“Health is an information-driven and knowledge-based sector. Without evidence-based, timely, up-to-date, relevant, easy-to-use, and affordable information, the health-care provider will not be effective in delivering health care to those who need it.

Access to information is a basic human right; information empowers people to make better decisions about their own lives, families and communities. Information is power, but it can function in this way only if it is shared and used.

The WHO Constitution states, ‘The extension to all people of the benefits of medical, psychological and related knowledge is essential to the fullest attainment of health. Informed opinion and active co-operation on the part of the public are of the utmost importance in the improvement of the health of the people.’

Information is the foundation for WHO as a knowledge-based Organization. Managing this asset requires strategic approaches and policies to support the generation, sharing and use of information. For information to support policy and decision making, enhance transparency and improve accountability, it must be timely, accurate and complete. Knowledge generated with public funds should be accessible to everyone, without any restrictions – this has been the driver in the development of the outputs to reform information sharing in WHO.”
New policy for WHO-authored or WHO-funded research published in journals and books

A new policy on open access will be announced in January 2014 and come into force in July 2014. The policy will apply to all WHO-authored or WHO-funded research published in non-WHO publications, such as external journals and books.

Although information WHO publishes has been freely available through the WHO website, work published by WHO staff and reports of research funded by WHO published in external journals has often been accessible only through the payment of subscriptions or other fees. Open access takes advantage of digital publishing and the internet to ensure that published research is widely disseminated and freely available. Any reader with access to the internet can find and read a whole article. Researchers and policy-makers can find and combine information without having to seek permission and pay to reproduce a graph or table. Information can be automatically brought together on websites and platforms, making the management of information more efficient.

As subscription barriers to access will be removed for everyone, WHO-authored and WHO-funded work will gain much wider visibility and impact.

Advanced access with IRIS

The Institutional Repository for Information Sharing (IRIS), created in 2012, enables more people to access WHO’s information products. IRIS is the multilingual digital library of WHO, providing free access to the full text of WHO information products in the six official languages.

Previously, much of this information was simply inaccessible, unavailable on an open-access platform, or hard to find, stored at multiple locations, using outdated tools with inadequate search functions. Now scientific and technical reports, governing bodies documents, and many other publications have been brought together and can be accessed from anywhere through the WHO website. IRIS is compatible with search engines such as Google. Searchers can do simple and advanced searches and browse the content by date, author, title or subject. Results and full text can be sorted in many ways and displayed.

More than 50 000 documents are currently available, and the number is increasing rapidly with the addition of many collections, such as the entire historical set of governing bodies documentation from 1948 onwards, which will be fully available by the end of 2014.

IRIS is recording more than 1.5 million downloads per month and will soon be available as a mobile app.

Access IRIS at www.who.int/iris/
Update on human resources reform

A revised human resources strategy was presented to the Global Policy Group in November 2013 and is on the agenda of the January PBAC meeting. The overall objective is to support WHO’s strategic direction and priorities and respond to HR needs at all three levels of the Organization, taking into account WHO’s financing model.

The revised strategy is built on three pillars – attracting talent; retaining talent: career management; and an enabling working environment. Four cross-cutting principles are integral to each of these pillars: gender balance, diversity, collaboration and accountability.

Attracting talent
Simplified and streamlined selection processes, with faster turnaround times, will be achieved through the creation of more generic and standard post descriptions and the development of standard operating procedures to harmonize practices across the Organization. Global rosters will be established for pre-qualified candidates, and joint recruitment for critical positions will be implemented.

Retaining talent: career management
A career management model will ensure that staff at all levels of the Organization have the skills, knowledge and experience needed to fulfil the ambitions of WHO, and that they are motivated to learn, grow and take up new challenges. Career management has four major components: workforce planning; performance management; career development; and mobility. Activities planned in these areas include a skills inventory; succession planning; an enhanced Performance Management and Development System (ePMDS+); a policy on recognition and rewards, and mechanisms to address underperformance; an update of WHO’s competency framework; the development of career paths using generic profiles and learning pathways; and a Learning and Staff Development Framework. A WHO mobility framework, with clear guiding principles and specific policies for its implementation, will be developed.

Enabling working environment
A culture of collaboration and excellence is required to create an enabling environment that will allow for successful implementation of the revised HR strategy. Three main aspects need consideration: a respectful and ethical working environment, the enhanced administration of justice, and modern staff management. The latter includes the enhancement of managerial competence through a new management development programme; a focus on a healthy work-life balance through family-friendly policies; and partnership with staff representatives.

The implementation of the revised HR strategy is a shared responsibility among three sets of enablers – the HR function, management and staff – and its success is dependent on the combined efforts of everyone at all levels of the Organization. In order to support the implementation of the revised HR strategy, the Human Resources Management department at headquarters will be restructured.

A phased implementation of the revised HR strategy is proposed:
(1) design and construction, 2013-2015; and
(2) implementation—operation and review, 2016-2020.

Read the full human resources strategy
The Multilateral Aid Review update, by the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development (DFID) was conducted in 2013. DFID concluded that WHO has made reasonable progress since the original 2011 report in addressing the UK reform priorities. This progress has been recognized with an increase of 2 million pounds sterling annually in core voluntary contributions funding for 2013-2014.

However, DFID highlighted a number of areas for improvement, including rolling out the reform priorities at regional and country levels, showing evidence of country results through a corporate performance assessment framework, and strengthening regional and country capacity in compliance and financial control.

The final report was made public in mid-December 2013:
https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/multilateral-aid-review

Second stage evaluation on WHO reform

The evaluation of WHO’s preparedness and capacity to drive forward the reform agenda was completed. The final report provides both a status update on reform progress as well as recommendations to overcome barriers to the success of reform. In particular, the report highlights the need for strengthened management of the reform process and Organizational change, as well as deepened engagement with staff critical for reform implementation. Uptake of the report’s recommendations will be marked by the development of a web-based reform management tool to support staff responsible for implementation of reform initiatives. A revised reform implementation plan incorporating a more robust reform performance framework will be presented to WHO’s governing bodies in May 2014. The report can be found on the WHO reform website.

2013 Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN)

The 2013 Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) conducted an assessment of four UN entities, including WHO. The findings of this assessment acknowledged considerable improvements in WHO’s organizational effectiveness, especially in the areas of financial management and accountability, oversight and audit, WHO’s humanitarian response, and human resources management. These positive assessments indicate that the WHO reforms initiated in 2011 have already started bearing fruits in making the Organization more effective, efficient, relevant and fit for purpose. The MOPAN report also recommended to further strengthen its development results by applying a clear results chain defined in the Twelfth General Programme of Work.

Further details can be found at http://www.mopanonline.org/ after 15 February 2014.