WHO reform: programmes and priority setting


1. In decision EB130(6), the Executive Board at its 130th session decided on the scope and terms of reference for a Member State-driven process and requested the Director-General to prepare materials in support of that process. The present document responds to the request for “a road map and timelines for the preparation of the Twelfth General Programme of Work and the Programme budget 2014–2015”.

2. Article 28 of the Constitution requires that the Executive Board “submit to the Health Assembly for consideration and approval a general programme of work covering a specific period”. The Constitution does not prescribe the form, length or the periodicity of such a programme of work. The purpose of the general programme of work, however, is clear: to provide a strategic framework for the development of WHO’s programme budgets.

3. The current, Eleventh General Programme of Work was established for the period 2006–2015. However, there is a strong rationale for cutting short the period presently covered in order to have the new programme of work become operational one year earlier, in 2014.

4. Firstly, a new programme budget has to be ready for the biennium 2014–2015. The new budget will need to reflect the broad priorities agreed as part of the WHO reform programme, and thus should be guided by a new general programme of work. Secondly, by 2014, the Medium-term strategic plan 2008–2013 will no longer be current. Over the past three bienniums, the Medium-term strategic plan and the Eleventh General Programme of Work have together provided the strategic framework for successive programme budgets. However, in coming years it is proposed that, if the general programme of work is sufficiently robust, a medium-term strategic plan will no longer be needed.

5. The Twelfth General Programme of Work will cover a six-year time frame, from 2014 to 2019, and will present the vision and strategy for WHO, highlighting the priority areas on which the Organization will focus during the period. The general programme of work will subsume certain components of the present medium-term strategic plan structure, such as the strategic plan element, and will be underpinned by the new results chain, based on commonly agreed terminology. The

---

1 And, where applicable, regional economic integration organizations.
2 See also documents 1, 2, and 3, which respond to paragraph (2)(b) of decision EB130(6).
3 The rationale behind this decision is set out in more detail in document 1 on programmes and priority setting.
Twelfth General Programme of Work 2014–2019 will then guide the preparation of the series of programme budgets and associated operational plans within the period.

6. The timeline below recognizes that the general programme of work and the first programme budget within the new period will be developed together, rather than sequentially. In order for both to be operational in 2014, both must be considered and approved by the Sixty-sixth World Health Assembly in May 2013. Over the next 15 months there needs to be adequate time for discussion and consultation at global and regional level. For this reason the sixteenth meeting of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee of the Executive Board has been extended to allow discussion of a draft outline prior to the Sixty-fifth World Health Assembly in May 2012. Building on these discussions and the outcome of the Member State process on priority setting, revised drafts will be reviewed by the regional committees held between August and October 2012. The Programme, Budget and Administration Committee will then further review the draft in the last quarter of 2012 (November or December) prior to the Executive Board’s review at its 132nd session in January 2013.

7. At each stage appropriate mechanisms are planned to ensure that ideas from stakeholders at global, regional and country level are taken into account. An indicator of success in this regard will be the level of participation across the Organization in elaboration of the general programme of work and the involvement of Member States and other stakeholders in the process.

ROADMAP AND TIMELINES

8. **27–28 February 2012**: meeting is held to advance the work of the Member State-driven process on methods for programmes and priority-setting.

9. **May 2012**: the draft outline of the Twelfth General Programme of Work 2014–2019 is submitted for review and discussion to the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee at its sixteenth meeting and the Sixty-fifth World Health Assembly.

10. **End August – mid-October 2012**: the regional committees review the draft Twelfth General Programme of Work 2014–2019 and the draft Proposed programme budget 2014–2015. Input from Member States informs further development of these documents.

11. **Mid-August – mid-October 2012**: a web consultation is held on the draft Twelfth General Programme of Work 2014–2019 to solicit input and comments from a wider group of stakeholders.

12. **End November/early December 2012**: if the Executive Board approves the change in timing, the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee at its seventeenth meeting could review the revised draft Twelfth General Programme of Work 2014–2019 following review by the regional committees and the web consultation; and the revised draft Proposed programme budget 2014–2015 incorporating input from the regional committees.


14. **May 2013**: the draft Twelfth General Programme of Work 2014–2019 and draft Proposed programme budget 2014–2015, incorporating comments from the Executive Board, are submitted to the Sixty-sixth World Health Assembly through the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee at its eighteenth meeting.