

WHO Reform: Mission Briefing (1 July 2011)
Summary of discussions

General comments

1. The areas covered by the reform programme go beyond the three concept papers. There is a need to ensure appropriate linkages between the three papers.
2. While the reform process should remain Member States driven, the Secretariat is encouraged to provide analyses and options to facilitate discussion among Member States.
3. The Secretariat would provide additional information as follow -
 - a paper with an overview of the whole reform package
 - an additional concept paper on managerial reforms, which will be available later
 - figures on the project costs for the development of the reform programme

Specific comments on the concept papers

➤ *Concept paper on governance*

1. It is noted that governance of WHO refers not only to "governing bodies", but is a broader concept. The proposed four areas to be covered in the paper are generally supported. The Secretariat is requested to provide further elaboration, include more analysis and provide some options to facilitate further discussion.
2. Further information is requested in particular on the following areas-
 - the regional and country offices dimensions
 - governance at the three levels of the WHO
 - the method of work of the governing bodies
3. Open-ended working group (OEWG) of the Executive Board (EB) - There were questions on whether participation would be restricted to EB members. It was noted that in accordance with the Rules of Procedures of the EB, all Member States can participate on an equal footing. The EB can decide to limit the number of participants, but only in exceptional cases.

➤ *Concept paper on independent formative evaluation*

1. Scope and focus of the evaluation - There were questions as to why the focus is put on "health systems strengthening"; whether other areas (such as health promotion and prevention) could also be covered.

2. Schedule - There were concerns about the time-line, with proposals to advance the schedule. It was suggested that, instead of waiting for the EB meeting in Jan 2012 to start the evaluation, the EB bureau could act as the interim oversight team to get the work started earlier.
3. The role of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) - Questions were raised about the feasibility of using the JIU mechanism for the evaluation. It was noted that given the technical and programmatic nature of the evaluation (in para.4 of the paper), this is outside the scope of the JIU.
4. The consortium - Further information on the selection of the consortium was requested. It was suggested that selection of the consortium should also be Member States driven and conflict of interest must be avoided.
5. The Secretariat committed to provide draft Terms of Reference for consultation and review by bureau of the EB.

➤ *Concept paper on World Health Forum (WHF)*

1. Added values of WHF - While several countries support the concept of the WHF, some posed questions about its added value.
2. Concerns - Concerns were raised as to whether the WHF would serve as an effective forum for hearing the voices of other stakeholders, e.g. whether civil society organizations and local communities would be engaged in the process; and how potential conflicts of interests would be addressed if the private sector participates.
3. Role of WHF - Concerns about the role of WHF, the duplication with existing forums, and whether discussions at WHF would be infringing on the decision-making authority of WHA and EB.
4. Participants - Further deliberation required on the criteria for invitation, the rules of engagement, as well as the number of participants; and noting the need to get a balance between inclusiveness and having a manageable number that allows focused and strategic discussions.
5. Estimated costs - The Secretariat is requested to provide further details on the estimated costs which appear to be an under estimate; and whether the resources will be derived from WHO's existing budget or will require additional funding.
6. Periodicity - Some considered that it is premature at this stage to decide whether the WHF should be convened every two years for a further two cycles, and suggested to review after the first WHF.
