

Independent Formative Evaluation of the World Health Organization

CONCEPT PAPER

Introduction

1. World Health Assembly resolution WHA64.2 requested the Director-General “in consultation with Member States to develop an approach to independent evaluation, and to present a first report on the independent evaluation of the work of WHO to the Sixty-fifth World Health Assembly in May 2012”. Subsequently, the 129th Executive Board requested that, by the end of June 2011, three concept papers be prepared which will be further revised on an ongoing basis throughout the consultative process. In line with the Executive Board Decision, this paper is the first draft of a concept note setting out the proposed scope, terms of reference and process for the Independent Evaluation.

2. The aim is to establish an efficient and effective process for independent evaluation of WHO, which is rapid, is not resource intensive, and has significant impact and influence. Experience with this process will inform decisions on establishment of a mechanism for regular independent evaluation of the work of WHO. Key principles that will apply in planning and conducting the evaluation are independence, transparency, credibility and efficiency. An independent formative¹ assessment of a thematic area of work for the Organization will also contribute to shaping and guiding several elements of WHO Reform, for example, improving results-based planning and accountability, and increasing WHO’s effectiveness at the country level.

Purpose

3. The purpose is to develop an approach to independent evaluation of the work of WHO in order to improve programme performance. The outcome of the evaluation will be a report to Member States on the work of WHO in a thematic area, with specific recommendations on steps to enhance the work of the Organization in this area.

Scope and Terms of Reference

4. Member States have expressed support for the proposal that the evaluation should focus on health systems strengthening, as this is a high priority for Member States, a fundamental requirement for improving health outcomes and the Millennium Development Goals, a major and increasingly important area of work for WHO at each level of the Organization. The evaluation provides an opportunity to clarify the role of WHO in this area. It will focus on WHO’s capacity to support countries (developed and developing) in strengthening their health systems, including national health policies, strategies and plans; universal coverage and health systems financing; health work force; access to essential medicines and technologies; and health information systems.

5. The evaluation will encompass the three levels of WHO, and the six core functions of the Organization as described in the Eleventh General Programme of Work² as applied to the work of the Organization in health systems strengthening. It will review the ways in which these functions are carried out, and make proposals for enhancing internal and external alignment, effectiveness, efficiency and transparency of the work of WHO. These will include specific measures to improve

¹ “Formative evaluation” is designed with the purpose of improving programmes, and contrasts with “summative” evaluation, which examine the effects or outcomes of programmes.

² Eleventh General Programme of Work 2006–2015. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2006.

results-based management and accountability; enhance human resources; and strengthen priority setting, financing, resource mobilization and resource allocation.

WHO Functions	Study questions to be addressed at the global, regional, subregional and national level
Providing leadership on matters critical to health and engaging in partnerships where joint action is needed.	What do countries expect from WHO in terms of products and services for health systems strengthening – what are the key aspects of health systems strengthening on which WHO should focus its attention and resources? Does WHO exercise effective leadership in health systems and how could this improved? Which partnerships with other agencies have been most effective in supporting health systems strengthening and how can these collaborations be enhanced to strengthen coherence and alignment?
Shaping the research agenda and stimulating the generation, translation and dissemination of valuable knowledge	How is WHO influencing the research agenda around health systems? How could WHO improve its effectiveness in disseminating knowledge and innovation?
Setting norms and standards, and promoting and monitoring their implementation	To what extent is the development of norms, standards and global public goods for health systems driven by country demand, and how could this be improved? Are there any ways in which the development process for norms and standards could be made more efficient, transparent and objective? How effectively does WHO monitor and report on the implementation of norms and standards and how could this be improved?
Articulating ethical and evidence-based policy options	How effectively does WHO help countries translate norms and standards into national policy and what could be done to strengthen the alignment of the different levels of the Organization to more effectively support this process?
Providing technical support, catalysing change, and building sustainable institutional capacity	Is WHO structured appropriately to provide adequate support to Member States in health systems strengthening? How can different WHO programmes align their work more effectively to contribute to health systems strengthening? How could WHO change the way it delivers technical support to more effectively build sustainable institutional capacity in countries?
Monitoring the health situation and assessing health trends	How could the monitoring of health indicators by WHO be further strengthened to enhance accountability?

6. The Independent Evaluation will also address several aspects of WHO Reform:

- How can the structure, staffing and alignment of WHO be strengthened to provide more effective support to countries in the area of health systems strengthening?

- How effective is the current planning framework in articulating the work of WHO in health systems strengthening, and in functioning as a tool for programming, accountability, resource mobilization and resource allocation.
- What steps need to be taken to strengthen financing, resource mobilization and strategic communications for health systems strengthening in WHO?
- What changes to human resource policy, planning and management would have the most impact in increasing the competence and capacity of WHO to support countries?

7. In carrying out the evaluation, the Evaluation Consortium will draw on existing data, reporting and assessments, and will seek the views of Member States, staff and partners. The Evaluation Consortium will make visits to headquarters, Regional Offices, and selected Country Offices. The Evaluation Consortium will have access to all relevant documentation in the secretariat.

Oversight

8. The Executive Board will provide oversight for the Independent Evaluation, reviewing the Terms of Reference and Work Plan, selecting the Evaluation Consortium, and receiving regular reports on the activities, observations and recommendations of the Evaluation Consortium. The Director-General will propose that the Executive Board establishes a subgroup of the Board as an Evaluation Oversight Committee to carry out these functions. The Director-General will provide a secretariat for the Independent Evaluation.

Selection of Evaluation Consortium

9. The evaluation will be carried out by an independent Evaluation Consortium, selected through an objective and transparent process. The Evaluation Consortium will comprise a multi-disciplinary team of 8–10 individuals from a consortium of institutions with proven capacity and experience in carrying out evaluations of the work of international organizations in the field of public health, and with the technical and managerial experience and skills that reflect the purpose and scope of the evaluation. These will include technical aspects of health systems strengthening and organizational aspects of planning, resource management, organizational design and human resources. Members of the Evaluation Consortium will be expected to exercise their professional judgement, and will be free from conflict of interest.

10. The Evaluation Consortium will be selected following a public “Request for Proposals” for an Evaluation Consortium and Work Plan. To reflect the scope and diversity of the work of WHO, priority will be given to proposals submitted by consortia of institutions from both developing and developed countries.

11. The criteria for selection of the Evaluation Consortium will be (1) demonstrated capacity and experience of the consortium of institutions submitting the Proposal in evaluation of international organizations in public health; (2) evidence of understanding of the purpose and expected outcome of the evaluation as reflected in the Proposal and Work Plan; (3) experience, competence and diversity of proposed members of the Evaluation Consortium, and; (4) cost.

Proposed Process

12. The Director-General will present a draft Scope and Terms of Reference for the Independent Evaluation to the Special Session of the Executive Board in November 2011. Following endorsement by the Executive Board, the Director-General will issue a public Request for Proposals. These

proposals will be assessed by the Evaluation Oversight Committee constituted by the Executive Board based on the above criteria, and the Evaluation Consortium selected. The Executive Board will be informed of the outcome of the selection process, and the proposed Work Plan.

13. An initial meeting of the Evaluation Consortium will be held at WHO headquarters in January with the Evaluation Oversight Committee to discuss the Work Plan for the Independent Evaluation. The Evaluation Consortium will commence its work in February 2012.

14. The Evaluation Consortium will make visits to WHO headquarters, the six Regional Offices and several Country Offices. The Evaluation Consortium will also engage with Member States and other key stakeholders.

15. The Evaluation Consortium will meet in April 2012 at WHO headquarters for a consultation on their findings with the Member States (Geneva-based missions) and the secretariat. The Evaluation Consortium will present a first report to the Sixty-fifth World Health Assembly in May 2012.

Proposed Time Line

Special Session of Executive Board approves Terms of Reference for Independent Evaluation and establishes Evaluation Oversight Committee	Nov 2011
Director-General Issues Request for Proposals for Independent Evaluation	Nov 2011
Evaluation Oversight Committee reviews proposals and selects Evaluation Consortium	Dec 2011
Award of contract to the Evaluation Consortium	Jan 2012
“Kick off” meeting of Evaluation Consortium with Evaluation Oversight Committee to discuss Work Plan	Jan 2012
Headquarters, Regional and Country visits by Evaluation Consortium	Feb–Apr 2012
Consultation on interim report of Evaluation Consortium	Apr 2012
First report of Independent Evaluation to Sixty-fifth World Health Assembly	May 2012

Budget (USD)*

Evaluation Consortium: 10 team members for 100 days	850 000
Travel and expenses (6 field visits per team member, 7 days per visit)	400 000
Evaluation Consortium Reports (publishing and translation)	50 000
TOTAL	1 300 000

* Budgets are indicative. Secretariat costs are not included.

Issues for Consideration by Member States

16. Do Member States support:

- (a) the proposed Scope and Terms of Reference for the Independent Evaluation?
- (b) the proposed process for providing oversight for the Independent Evaluation?
- (c) the proposed process for selecting the Evaluation Consortium?
- (d) the proposed timeline for the Independent Evaluation?