World Health Organization

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR **Europe**

Report of the Subgroup on Governance
March 2016

Introduction

1.   Governance reform has been a key concern at recent sessions of the Regional Committee for Europe and the Standing Committee of the Regional Committee for Europe (SCRC) and, since 2010, with successive subgroups of the SCRC established to review specific governance issues. The Subgroup on Governance of the Twenty-third SCRC is the fourth consecutive subgroup thus established, and its work is consistent with Regional Committee resolution EUR/RC60/R3, which requests the SCRC "to initiate a cycle of comprehensive reviews of governance in the WHO European Region and to report back to the Regional Committee on lessons learned in this regard at such intervals as the Standing Committee itself deems appropriate."

2.   The terms of reference, membership and schedule of meetings of the Twenty-third SCRC Subgroup on Governance are presented in Annex 1. Issues considered by this Subgroup have focused on:

* nomination procedures for the Executive Board and the Standing Committee;

* alignment with the global working group on governance reform;

* uniform formats for policy documents;

* designating national experts for global and regional expert working groups and advisory committees; and

* conference declarations.

Nomination procedures for the Executive Board and the Standing Committee

3.   After pilot-testing the new nomination tool in May 2014 and May 2015, the Subgroup recommended, and the Standing Committee agreed, on the need for a small handbook to guide SCRC members in the use of the tool for the current round of nominations. It was decided that after using the nomination tool in May 2016, further review of its usefulness should be carried out, including assessing whether the tool effectively increases the transparency and objectivity of the nomination process.

4.   The Subgroup further made mention of the fact that the nomination tool does not interfere with or impact on the current Rules of Procedure of either the Regional Committee or the Standing Committee.

Alignment with global working group on governance reform

5.   The Subgroup has closely followed the work of the Inclusive Member State Process on governance reform and the negotiation on the recommendations of the working group on governance reform in December 2015.

6.   The Subgroup had noted that during the 138th session of the Executive Board in January 2016, an Open-ended Intergovernmental Meeting (OEIGM) on governance was set up to propose recommendations to the Sixty-ninth World Health Assembly in May 2016. It was agreed that Estonia, as chair of the Twenty-third SCRC Subgroup on Governance, would bring the issues of uniform formats for policy documents and nomination procedures for designating national experts for global and regional expert working groups and advisory committees to the attention of the OEIGM.

Uniform formats for policy documents

7.   The Subgroup welcomed the mapping/classification overview of existing global and regional policy documents prepared by the Secretariat, as shown in Annex 2. The Secretariat also proposed sorting policy documents into four main categories:

- legally binding documents;
- political documents;
- strategic documents; and
- technical documents.

8.   Annex 2 illustrates that the main elements of all policy document types overlap on many levels. It is therefore very difficult to distinguish the specific attributes that constitute a framework as compared to a strategy or a charter or a declaration. Many of the terms and definitions are interchangeable. Even within the system of classification depicted in Annex 2 there are elements that cannot be clearly separated.

9.   The Subgroup agreed that clear and well-defined structures for the various types of policy documents would facilitate their review by Member States and, consequently, would improve the quality of guidance that Member States could offer the Secretariat on policy issues submitted to them. The issue was not, however, restricted to the European Region, but was one which would require an Organization-wide response.

10.   The Subgroup therefore recommended that this topic should be raised as a global issue and it was agreed that the Regional Director would bring the proposed classification overview to the attention of the Director-General. It was decided that Estonia, as chair of the Subgroup, would raise the issue in the OEIGM for follow up at the global level.

Designating national experts for global and regional expert working groups and advisory committees

11.   Following the request of Member States during the 65th session of the Regional Committee, the Subgroup reviewed the various procedures for nomination of national experts to regional and global experts and advisory groups. The Subgroup recommended, and the Twenty-third SCRC agreed, that the nomination process at the regional level through the National Counterparts was well-established and efficient and should be continued.

12.   The main challenge was designating experts at the global level, due to different nomination procedures, short timelines and the lack of transparency, particularly with regard to regional representatives. The Subgroup recommended that the Regional Director, to the extent possible, also use regional National Counterparts for global nominations. In the event that there were more candidates then vacancies, the Regional Director should consult with the officers of the Standing Committee and, if appropriate, with the SCRC as a whole.

13.   At the same time, the Subgroup recommended that Estonia should raise this matter to the attention of the OEIGM in order to find a harmonized and standardized solution at the global level.

Conference declarations

14.   The Twenty-second SCRC agreed to be actively involved in discussing whether a declaration should go forward to the Regional Committee in the form of a draft resolution – in which case it would constitute a commitment on the part of Member States – or just be referred to the Regional Committee for general information. The Subgroup proposed that, generally speaking, the following criteria should be taken into account:

- the drafting process for the declaration and the outcome document was transparent and inclusive:
    - two thirds of all Member States were involved in drafting the final text;
    - all comments and/or objections were addressed;
- sufficient time was allowed for consultation and negotiation of the draft declaration or outcome document with Member States:
    - at least 3 months before the conference; and
- the participants attending the conference were at a high level, such as representatives of ministries.

15.   The Subgroup agreed that the Minsk Declaration would be used to pilot-test these criteria.

16.   At its third session, the Twenty-third SCRC concluded that the criteria described in paragraph 14 had been met in relation to the Minsk Declaration and that there was no need to change the proposed criteria.

Annex1. Draft terms of reference

Background

The 60th session of the Regional Committee for Europe, in resolution EUR/RC60/R3, requested the SCRC "to initiate a cycle of comprehensive reviews of governance in the WHO European Region and to report back to the Regional Committee on lessons learned in this regard at such intervals as the Standing Committee itself deems appropriate." Since then, governance reform has been prominently on the agenda of the Standing Committee.

At its 65th session, the Regional Committee was presented a report on governance-related issues that had been covered by the Twenty-second SCRC's Subgroup on Governance. In light of the positive experience gained through this work and the work still to be done, the Twenty-third SCRC decided at its first meeting on 17 September 2015 that the Subgroup on Governance should also continue its work during 2015–2016, with revised terms of reference.

Issues

The Twenty-third SCRC decided that its Subgroup on Governance should tackle the following outstanding work.

1. <u>Nomination procedures for the Executive Board and the Standing Committee</u>
   Following the extensive work carried out by the Twenty-first SCRC to develop a tool which increases transparency, objectivity and fairness in the nomination process for candidatures to the Executive Board and the Standing Committee, and the pilot-testing of the tool by the Twenty-second SCRC, the Subgroup on Governance is tasked to further review and fine-tune the tool.

2. <u>Alignment with the global working group on governance reform</u>
   Taking into account the report of the global working group on governance reform to the 138th session of the Executive Board in January 2016, the Subgroup on Governance is requested to develop proposals to take forward the recommendations of the global working group, as appropriate, at the regional level.

3. <u>Conference declaration</u>
   The Twenty-second SCRC recommended a set of criteria for WHO conference declarations, which is currently undergoing testing.[1] The subgroup is requested to review and finalize the recommendations taking into consideration the results of the pilot.

4. <u>Uniform formats for policy documents</u>
   The Subgroup is requested to follow up on the work done by the Twenty-second

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[1] The Minsk Declaration, the outcome document of the WHO European Ministerial Conference on the Life-course Approach in the Context of Health 2020 in Minsk, Belarus, on 21–22 October 2015, was used to pilot-test the proposed criteria.

SCRC Subgroup on Governance and taking into account the WHO Secretariat's overview of definitions used within the Organization in order to clarify and standardize the terminology used for WHO policy documents and to present a way forward.

5. <u>Nomination procedures or designating national experts for global and regional expert working groups and advisory committees</u>
Following the request of Member States during the 65th session of the Regional Committee, the Subgroup will review the various procedures for nomination of national experts to regional and global experts and advisory groups "through the Regional Director." The Subgroup is requested to make recommendations in order to increase transparency of the nomination process.

Membership of the Subgroup on Governance

The composition of the Subgroup on Governance will include the following members of the Twenty-third SCRC:

Estonia (Chair)
Finland
France
Germany
Italy
Latvia.

Timeline

- Draft terms of reference to be circulated to members of the Subgroup on Governance for review and amendment by 15 November 2015.

- Approval of terms of reference by the Twenty-third SCRC, at its second session in Paris, France, on 26–27 November 2015.

- Video- and/or teleconference to review progress by and report of the global governance working group, early February 2016.

- Meeting of the Subgroup on Governance to review the draft report to be presented to the third session of the Twenty-third SCRC in Copenhagen, Denmark, on 8 March 2016.

- Presentation of the draft report of the Subgroup on Governance to the third session of the Twenty-third SCRC in Copenhagen, Denmark, on 9–10 March 2016.

- Final draft report circulated to Subgroup members for review and comment by mid-April 2016.

- Presentation of the final report of the Subgroup on Governance to the fourth session of the Twenty-third SCRC in May 2016, immediately prior to the Sixty-eighth World Health Assembly, in Geneva, Switzerland.

- Main conclusions and recommendations of the Subgroup on Governance to be integrated into the report of the Twenty-third SCRC to the 66th session of the Regional Committee in September 2016.

Annex 2. Classification of policy papers by document type

Document type	Recent/prominent examples	Main elements	Implementation
Action Plan	• Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of NCDs (2013–2020) • Global Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance (2015)	• Delegation of responsibilities and mandates (Member States, Secretariat, other partners) • Implementation strategy • Set of priority areas • Specific tasks/actions/interventions • Strategic objectives	• Available
Charter	• Tallinn Charter: Health Systems for Health (2008) • Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (1986)	• Endorsement of framework, strategies, global actions • Key challenges • Political commitments to address key challenges • Set of priority actions • Signatories (to Charter)	• No implementation indicators
Code	• WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel (2010) • International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes (1981)	• Definitions of key terms • Guidelines on standardized procedures, mechanisms, best practices • Key challenges • Political commitment to address key challenges	• Guidelines
Convention	• WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (2003)	• Key challenges • Objectives and guiding principles • Political and legally binding commitments to address key challenges • Set of priority actions	• No implementation indicators

Document type	Recent/prominent examples	Main elements	Implementation
Declaration	• Rio Political Declaration on Social Determinants of Health (2011) • Parma Declaration on Environment and Health (2010)	• Endorsement of framework, strategies, global actions • Key challenges • Political commitment to address key challenges • Set of priority actions • Signatories (to Declaration)	• No implementation indicators
Framework	• Health 2020: policy framework for health and well-being (2012) • Framework on integrated people-centered health services (2016)	• Key challenges • Set of principles, values, long-term goals • Set of priority areas • Strategic objectives	• Sometimes available
Operational Plan	• Operational Plan to take forward the Global Strategy on Women's, Children's and Adolescent's Health (2016) • HIV Operational Plan 2012–2013 (2012)	• Description of procedures to achieve targets • Implementation strategy • Milestones, time-frame • Political commitments to implement strategy	• Available + time-frame
Roadmap	• Draft roadmap for an enhanced global response to the adverse health effects of air pollution (2016) • Roadmap for reform of WHO's work in emergencies (2014)	• Description of procedures to achieve targets • Description of tools and mechanisms to move from current to desired state • Priority areas • Time-frame to achieve targets • Vision, rationale	• Available + time-frame

Document type	Recent/prominent examples	Main elements	Implementation
Strategy	• Draft global Strategy on human resources for health: workforce 2030 • Draft global health sector strategies (HIV, Viral Hepatitis, Sexually transmitted diseases)	• Delegation of responsibilities (Member States, Secretariat, other partners) • Framework for action • Implementation strategy • Key challenges and solutions • Strategic directions • Vision, goals, objectives	• Available

Note: Annex 2 illustrates that the main elements of all policy document types overlap on many levels. Thus, it is very difficult to distinguish the specific attributes that constitute a framework as compared to a strategy or a charter or a declaration. Many of the terms and definitions are interchangeable. Even within this system of classification there are elements that cannot be clearly separated. However, the Subgroup on Governance suggests that this could be a starting place for WHO to adopt uniform formats for policy documents at the global level. One such approach, with policy documents grouped according to four main categories, is presented below:

- Legally binding documents: documents that have a legally binding nature
  – Convention
  – Treaty
- Political documents: documents focused on high-level political commitments and mandates
  – Charter
  – Declaration
- Strategic documents: documents that provide guidance to Member States for longer periods of time on a specific topic (guidelines, objectives, recommendations)
  – Action Plan
  – Code
  – Framework
  – Strategy
- Technical documents: documents focused on specific tools, mechanisms and time-frames for implementation, including indicators with baselines and targets that are regularly monitored
  – Operational Plan
  – Roadmap

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