



WHO presence
in countries,
territories
and areas

2019
Report

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Contents

FOREWORD	v
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	vi
INTRODUCTION	2
Overview	2
Methodology for data collection	2
Limitations of the report	3
1. WHO WE ARE	6
1.1 World Health Organization	6
1.1.1 Governance and Structure	7
1.1.2 Regional Offices	9
1.1.3 WHO country offices	9
1.1.4 WHO country offices covering more than one country, territory or area	10
1.1.5 Countries and areas covered by WHO regional offices	11
1.1.6 Suboffices in countries	11
1.2 People	13
1.2.1 WHO country office leadership	13
1.2.2 Status of acting HWOs	13
1.2.3 Gender distribution of HWOs	14
1.2.4 Region of origin of HWOs	15
1.2.5 Age and retirement of HWOs	16
1.2.6 HWOs' length of service	16
1.2.7 WHO workforce in countries, territories and areas	17
1.2.8 WHO country-level staffing situation	17
1.2.9 Gender distribution of WHO staff at the country level	18
1.2.10 Diversity of WHO staff capacity at the country office level	18
1.3 Facilities	20
1.3.1 Place	20
1.3.2 Corporate communication capacity at country level	21
1.3.3 Information sharing	22
1.3.4 Access to breastfeeding facilities in WHO country offices	22
2. WHAT WE DO	26
2.1 Contributing to national health policies, strategies and plans to roll out UHC, ensure healthy lives and respond to health emergencies	27
2.2 Country Cooperation Strategy	29
2.3 Joint WHO and government monitoring mechanisms	33
2.4 Supporting implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals	34
2.5 WHO support in health emergencies	36
2.6 Supporting health sector coordination	41
3. HOW WE DO IT	44
3.1 Technical backstopping	45
3.2 Funding WHO's work at the country level	48
3.2.1 Availability of financial resources at the country level	48
3.2.2 Distribution of base funds by programmatic priorities and operations	49
3.2.3 Sources of funding for WHO country-level work	49
3.2.4 Distribution and spending of planned funds at the country level	51
3.2.5 Mobilization of funds for Human Resource support	52

4. WHO WE WORK WITH	56
4.1 Collaboration with the United Nations system	57
4.1.1 Supporting the United Nations Resident Coordinators	58
4.2 Engaging within the United Nations Country Teams	59
4.2.1 WHO participation in Joint National/United Nations Steering Committees	59
4.2.2 United Nations Development Assistance Framework	59
4.2.3 WHO participation in the thematic groups of United Nations country teams	61
4.2.4 WHO participation in United Nations common business operations and activities	62
4.2.5 WHO participation in joint activities of the United Nations resident coordinator office	63
4.3 UN Multi-Partner Trust Funds	64
4.4 WHO country-level engagement with global health initiatives	65
4.4.1 WHO and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria	65
4.4.2 WHO and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance	68
4.4.3 South-South and triangular cooperation	69
5. OUR WORK AND ITS RESULTS	74
Expanding universal health coverage	76
Addressing health emergencies	83
Promoting better health and well-being	90
ANNEXES	98
Annex 1: List of WHO Member States and Associate Member States	98
Annex 2: WHO offices and suboffices in countries, territories and areas	99
Annex 3: Number and categories of staff members working in WHO offices in countries, territories and areas	104
Annex 4: Global Fund grants of which WHO is a subrecipient	109
Annex 5: Countries eligible for Gavi new vaccines support in 2018	110
Annex 6: Planned costs and available funds for WHO work in countries, territories and areas	111

Foreword



Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

Director-General
World Health Organization

The ultimate measure of WHO's success is not the number of reports we publish or the meetings we hold, but the difference we make to the health of the world's people. That's why delivering impact in countries is the essence of both WHO's 13th General Programme of Work (GPW13) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The "triple billion" targets of GPW13 are designed to make us focus on delivering results for the people we serve, and value for money for our donors. To support those efforts, WHO is now embarking on a comprehensive transformation, to make sure we empower and enable the entire organization – and especially our country offices – to make a measurable difference at country level.

It's impossible to adequately summarise the extraordinary work that WHO does all over the world every day, but the 2019 country presence report is an excellent snapshot of the Organization's work in 149 countries, territories and areas across six regions. This year's report attempts for the first time to provide additional information on the role of WHO country offices in supporting governments and partners to achieve the SDGs and provide support for South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives. It also features several country stories highlighting achievements relating to each of the "triple billion" targets.

While we have achieved significant results, we cannot be content. The world remains dangerously off-course for the SDGs, and we have a lot of work to do to support countries to get on track and stay on track. One of the principles of both the SDGs and GPW13 is that they are for all countries, rich and poor. No health system is perfect, and WHO has something to offer every country. Our new policy dialogue process is designed to give us a robust mechanism, based on solid data and projections, for identifying weaknesses in health systems and recommending policy solutions.

We are also improving the way we develop "global goods" including norms and standards, to ensure we develop the highest-quality products that address the needs of countries. WHO's new aligned structure will help to ensure we work more seamlessly across all three levels of the organization to deliver results.

But delivering results in countries is not a job for WHO alone. Partnership is key. The Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-Being for All, which was launched last year and will be presented at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2019, is a vital platform for ensuring enhanced collaboration in the global health community. WHO is pleased to be leading the development of this ground-breaking instrument, in which 12 global health and development agencies have committed to align their operating practices, identify ways to accelerate progress, and develop shared milestones to keep ourselves accountable.

The challenge now is to turn good intentions, bold promises and ambitious documents into concrete changes that make a difference. I am optimistic that future editions of this report will highlight even greater results in pursuit of our mission to promote health, keep the world safe and serve the vulnerable.

Executive summary

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development views health as vital for the future of our world. With a commitment to achieving Goal 3, which calls on all stakeholders to “ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages”, the World Health Organization (WHO), as a specialized agency of the UN system, leads and coordinates global health, and supports countries in reaching all health-related SDG targets.

WHO as an intergovernmental organization has a governance system that comprises the World Health Assembly, the Executive Board and Regional Committees. The WHO Secretariat is headed by the Director-General and comprises country and regional offices, headquarters and associated offices. The six regional offices are headed by regional directors.

WHO has one of the largest field presences within the UN system. Working with 194 Member States across six regions and from 149 offices in countries, territories and areas, WHO through its large network of staff, provides support to countries through policy dialogue, technical assistance in strategic areas as well as operational support, depending on the country context.

WHO has placed countries squarely at the centre of its work. Through its transformation programme, WHO is stepping up efforts to continue strengthening its country office leadership, ensure

presence report provides information on: who we are as WHO, what the Organization does, with whom it works and with what resources. Compared to the 2017 country presence report, this year's report provides additional information on: the role of the WHO country office in supporting governments and partners in implementing the SDGs; support for South-South and/or triangular cooperation initiatives; WHO's collaboration with the United Nations system; and selected country stories categorized by the strategic priorities of GPW 13 from countries where WHO teams are contributing in making a difference in systems and in the lives of people.

The information contained in this report was obtained through an online country presence survey administered to all 149 Heads of WHO offices (HWOs) in 2018, the WHO Global Management System and other internal and external information systems and sources.

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