

*Delivering on the SDGs through WHO's 13<sup>th</sup> General Programme of Work:*

# WHO Transformation Plan & Architecture



## FOREWORD

Dear colleagues,

Our 13<sup>th</sup> Global Programme of Work (GPW13) charts a bold and ambitious new strategy for WHO to deliver on the SDGs. Ensuring our organization is fit-for-purpose to fulfil our mission and to achieve the bold targets of GPW13, requires an equally bold transformation of WHO to optimize our impact on people's health at country level.

Last week represented a major milestone in the history of WHO, as the Executive Board discussed and recommended the draft GPW13 to the World Health Assembly. In parallel with the development of the GPW, the Global Policy Group (GPG) has been working on this document – *'Delivering on the 13<sup>th</sup> General Programme of Work and Health SDGs: WHO Transformation Plan & Architecture'* – which lays out our destination for change and describes the integrated transformation process we intend to drive, across the 3 levels of the organization, to reach this destination.

This Plan is very much based on the input you have provided over the past months and the experience gained through the previous and ongoing reforms and transformation work in so many part of WHO. It is a living document that we will continue to build on and refine as we receive further input from all of you – we invite you to send your comments and suggestions to [transformation@who.int](mailto:transformation@who.int). This Plan is a starting point and will soon be complemented by additional materials as different aspects of the transformation unfold. The next eighteen months will be a period of major change. While a small team will support the GPG to run the transformation process, every staff of WHO must implement this change.

On behalf of the entire GPG, I take this opportunity to re-iterate our commitment to leading this change and thank you for your continuous contribution to making WHO an even better Organization.

Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

Director-General

16 February 2018

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# Delivering on the SDGs through the 13th GPW: WHO Transformation Plan & Architecture

## 1. PURPOSE OF THE DOCUMENT

The World Health Organization (WHO) is embarking on a major transformation to increase its impact at country level and to be fit-for-purpose in the era of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and a rapidly changing world. This document lays out the compelling case and ambitious destination for WHO's change, building on the inputs of hundreds of staff, virtually all WHO offices around the world, Member States and partners. This plan details the integrated transformation process across the 3 levels of the organization that has been designed and will be directly led by the Global Policy Group (GPG), as well as the longer term roadmap for transformation. It incorporates lessons from our previous reform work, builds on new and ongoing change efforts, outlines the principles employed in the design of this transformation, and explains the transformation timelines and 'architecture'. This is intended to be a living document, which will evolve over time and be adapted to Regional and country contexts.

## 2. CASE AND DESTINATION FOR CHANGE

### *2.1 The Case for Change*

Nearly 70 years after the founding of WHO, more than half of the people in the world still cannot use health services without incurring financial hardship. In fragile, crisis-affected, and vulnerable states, millions of people are in particularly desperate circumstances due to a lack of access to preventative and curative health services. At the international level, the benefits of globalization have been accompanied by an escalating risk of new and emerging pathogens and their rapid spread. While economic development and technologic advances have curbed the toll of most communicable diseases, the burden of non-communicable diseases in many countries has continued to grow and has now become the leading cause of death and disability. In this rapidly changing world, there is an exceptional demand on WHO to further focus and improve its normative and technical work, and fundamentally enhance its impact at country level in support of Member States.

The Sustainable Development Goals provide a comprehensive framework and demanding timeline for addressing the drivers of health inequalities globally and substantively improving health outcomes. The World Health Organization's draft Thirteenth General Programme of Work 2019-2023 is rooted in the Sustainable Development Goals, and proposes ambitious strategic priorities and targets:

- 1 billion more people have universal health coverage,
- 1 billion more people are made safer, and
- 1 billion lives are improved through the health SDGs.

As laid out in the 13<sup>th</sup> General Programme of Work (13GPW), these targets will be achieved through three key strategic shifts that are designed to enhance the impact of the Organization's voice, presence and expertise to improve health outcomes at country level (see figure 1). Achieving these strategic shifts requires a fundamental transformation of WHO through five major organizational shifts in its accountabilities and management, organizational design and operating model, processes and tools, culture, and relationships.

FIGURE 1: 13<sup>TH</sup> GENERAL PROGRAMME OF WORK

### Draft thirteenth general programme of work: 2019–2023



## 2.2 The Destination for Change

To effectively drive the global health agenda and to fulfil its mission, WHO must change. The world needs an ambitious, modern organization that works as one, across programmes and levels, focusing on a common goal. WHO must ensure its technical excellence drives impact, so that all people can achieve healthy and productive lives, no matter who they are or where they live. The world needs a WHO that is agile, flexible and innovative in a rapidly changing global environment.

The goal of this WHO transformation process is to fundamentally reposition, reconfigure and re-capacitate the Organization such that its normative and technical work is of an even higher quality, and more sharply focused on and

translating directly into a measurable difference in people's health at country level. This will require embarking on an WHO-wide process of learning, developing and – in some instances - transforming the organization. The exact destination will and should continuously evolve and be shaped by all involved, but the aspiration for the outcome of this transformation is clear. A successful transformation means that:

***WHO is the authoritative voice on global health issues.*** The organization is the internationally recognized, impartial authority driving the global health agenda at global, regional and country levels. The technical work and advocacy of WHO are reflected in the health priorities of Member States, non-governmental organizations, civil society actors and the broader partnership for international health.

***Country outcomes are at the center of WHO's work and the primary measure by which its impact is measured.*** The organization is re-aligned, across all three levels, to optimize impact at country level. Country needs inform, focus and drive the work of the entire organization, from its global advocacy to a differentiated country level approach. Measurement capacity is strengthened to monitor progress in addressing these needs, guide course corrections and report impact.

***High-performing country offices are working hand in hand with country stakeholders to drive impact.*** With country outcomes at the center of WHO's work, WHO country offices have the right strategy, organizational design, resources, and processes to deliver high quality technical advice and, when appropriate, service delivery, that is appreciated by host governments, partners and populations.

***Normative and technical work that matters.*** WHO's normative and technical strategy, work and investments are driven by country needs and optimized to achieve impact at that level. WHO is the recognized authority on its country-driven, normative and technical work.

***A mobile, well-supported workforce, focused on impact.*** WHO has the right people, with the right skills, in the right place, at the right time, focusing on delivering impact in country. WHO has appropriate mobility approaches, career paths, learning and training opportunities that promote technical and managerial excellence, and a fast and effective recruiting process. People's primary affiliation in the organization is with WHO, focused on a common objective: making a difference at country level.

***A transformed approach to partnerships, communications and resource mobilization.*** Through a re-designed external relations function, integrating communications, partner engagement, advocacy and health diplomacy, WHO is well positioned to effectively shape global health decision making and generate appropriate and sustainable financing to deliver impact against its strategic objectives.

***Relentlessly focused on results.*** Targets, measurement, risk management and performance management are at the core of all WHO activities. At an organizational level, WHO tracks organization-wide progress through a balanced scorecard that are directly linked to its programmatic, financial, internal business and organizational learning and growth targets. At an individual level, performance and consequence management systems and processes are updated to directly link all work to organizational results, creating stronger accountability and risk management.

This transformation effort is not a one-off effort. As the world becomes more volatile, uncertain, and complex, WHO is also putting in place a longer-term capacity to continuously adapt through more agile organizational arrangements and sustainable continuous improvement processes.

### 3. IMPLEMENTING TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE THAT WILL LAST

#### 3.1 Guiding principles for our change

Implementing transformational change is challenging. This is particularly evident in the experience of previous and ongoing WHO reforms, including the extensive change work at regional level, from AFRO to WPRO (see Appendix I for a selection of key risks and lessons learnt from past reforms). Examining and learning from WHO's experience in implementing reforms and change over the past 15 years, particularly since 2009, has been at the centre of designing the Transformation Plan and Architecture laid out in this document. Specifically:

1. **Senior leadership must be aligned and seen to be proactively and collectively leading the change effort.** In the past, WHO's complex organizational set up has been perceived to result in a misalignment of reform work with leadership's priorities, insufficient role modelling of the changes needed, and slow decision-making. In this effort, the GPG has decided to jointly drive the transformation as one team. The GPG will commit substantial time to collectively steering the transformation, ensuring alignment on everything from aspirations and "direction" to the design and implementation of "one transformation" while making sure the transformation reflects the input and ongoing reforms and transformation of all Regions. Change will require ownership and time commitments across all leadership, cascading from the GPG to ADGs, DPMs, DAFs, WRs and directors to coordinators and managers who are so critical to WHO's day-to-day work and impact.
2. **A clear destination and expected results for change are essential to avoid loss of focus and dilution.** In this effort, WHO will focus on change that drives improved country level delivery and impact. To move towards this common destination, the GPG will identify, work on and focus leadership attention on a number of required organizational shifts, ensuring early wins while building a sustainable platform for impact.
3. **It all starts and ends with staff mindsets and behaviors– their engagement and ownership are the "glue" of successful and lasting change.** The nature of the transformation described in this document involves addressing mindsets to drive the necessary behaviors for

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