



REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE
EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN 6 July 2014

EM/RC61/1-Rev.1

Sixty-first Session
Tunis, Tunisia, 19-22 October 2014

**ANNOTATED PROVISIONAL AGENDA
FOR THE SIXTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE
FOR THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN**

1. Operational planning for 2014-2015: process, outcomes, and lessons learnt (Agenda item 2(a), document EM/RC61/2)

The Regional Committee, at its Fifty-ninth Session in 2012, recognized the importance of limiting the distribution of resources to a few key priority areas and emphasized the need for a country-based budget planning process based on the needs of Member States (resolution EM/RC59/R.6). The 2014–2015 operational planning process by the Joint Government/WHO Programme Review and Planning Missions (JPRMs) was therefore conceived with these objectives in mind, in order to avoid the fragmentation of the past biennia and to achieve real impact at country level. The bottom-up approach and the emergency situations affecting several Member States in the Region resulted in allocations that varied significantly from Programme Budget figures, particularly at country level. Lessons learnt provided the basis for the preparation of the 2016–2017 operational planning exercise. The paper reviews the exercise for 2014–2015 and discusses the outcomes and lessons.

2. Programme budget 2016-2017 (Agenda item 2(b), document EM/RC61/3 & EM/RC61/3-Annex 1)

The World Health Assembly in 2013 requested the Director-General (decision WHA66(9), to propose “a new strategic resource allocation methodology in WHO, starting with the programme budget 2016–2017, utilizing a robust bottom-up planning process and realistic costing outputs, based on clear roles and responsibilities across the three levels of WHO”. A task force on planning for the Programme Budget 2016-2017 laid out the principles and the process for developing the Programme Budget 2016–2017. The draft Programme Budget document, reflecting consolidated country, regional and global priorities, outputs and deliverables together with a budget breakdown by major office and country, will be presented to the Regional Committee.

The Sixty-seventh World Health Assembly, in May 2014, considered the report of the twentieth meeting of the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee of the Executive Board, contained in document A67/6. During the discussions, support was expressed for the Committee’s recommendations, which included endorsing the roadmap that set out the proposed way forward and changing the name of the relevant working group, which thus became the Working Group on Strategic Budget Space Allocation. The Regional Committee is invited to consider a working paper and to provide further guidance for the development of a proposal on a new strategic budget space allocation methodology.

3. Annual Report of the Regional Director 2013, including progress reports (Agenda item 3, document EM/RC61/4)

The Annual Report of the Regional Director covers 2013 and early 2014. It focuses on the major work undertaken in regard to the strategic priorities endorsed by the Regional Committee in 2012: health systems strengthening towards universal health coverage; maternal and child health; noncommunicable diseases; communicable diseases, particularly health security; and emergency preparedness and response, as well as WHO management and reform. Under this agenda item, progress reports on the following subjects will also be outlined and provided as information documents:

- Eradication of poliomyelitis (Agenda item 3(b), document EM/RC61/INF.DOC.1)
- Tobacco-Free Initiative (Agenda item 3(c), document EM/RC61/INF.DOC.2)
- Achievement of the health-related Millennium Development Goals and global health goals after 2015 (Agenda item 3(d), document EM/RC61/INF.DOC.3)
- Regional strategy for health sector response to HIV 2011-2015 (Agenda item 3(e), document EM/RC61/INF.DOC.4)
- Saving the lives of mothers and children (Agenda item 3(f), document EM/RC61/INF.DOC.5)
- Shaping the future of health in the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region: reinforcing the role of WHO 2012-2016. Mid-term progress report (Agenda item 3(g), document EM/RC61/INF.DOC.6)

4. Global health security – challenges and opportunities with special emphasis on International Health Regulations (Agenda item 4(a), document EM/RC61/Tech.Disc.1)

The opportunities for the global spread of emerging pathogens and re-emerging outbreak-prone diseases and for the accidental or deliberate release of biological, chemical, radiological and nuclear agents are increasing. The importance of collective action to manage international health emergencies has been recognized. The International Health Regulations (2005) provide the legal framework for collective responsibility in global health security, which ultimately depends on the quality of national public health systems. The Regulations impose obligations on States Parties to develop and maintain core public health capacities, fulfilment of which will benefit the pursuit of global health security. This paper discusses the threats to regional and global health security, existing frameworks and initiatives, including the International Health Regulations, progress in implementing the Regulations in the Region and remaining gaps and challenges. It proposes next steps for consideration by the Regional Committee.

5. Emergency preparedness and response (Agenda item 4(a), document EM/RC61/Tech.Disc.1)

All countries of the Region are vulnerable to hazards and emergencies. More than half are now facing crises that, most cases exceed their coping capacities. The increasing number of emergencies and crises in the Region continues to have significant impact on the lives and livelihoods of vulnerable populations and a negative effect on health gains and improvements in development indicators obtained as a result of decades of development. Despite concerted efforts to strengthen resilience, the level of emergency preparedness and response capacity remains dangerously low in the health sector, in particular, and at multisectoral level in general. It is imperative that communities and nations invest in resilience and build solid emergency preparedness and response systems. Ministries of health and health partners must understand and manage risks, scale up the health workforce to coordinate future events and secure the financial and operational resources needed to ensure relief aid to vulnerable populations. The Regional Committee has previously endorsed resolutions aimed at strengthening emergency preparedness and response. This paper proposes priority actions to move forward in this area.

6. Noncommunicable diseases: Implementation of the Political Declaration of the United Nations General Assembly, and follow-up on the United Nations Review Meeting in July 2014 (Agenda item 5(a), document EM/RC61/5)

The Regional Committee, at its Fifty-ninth session in 2012, endorsed a regional framework for action on implementing the Political Declaration of the High-Level Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases of September 2011. This paper takes stock of progress and discusses the way forward for scaling up action on noncommunicable diseases in the Region.

7. Health systems strengthening: progress and prospects 2012-2016 (Agenda item 5(b), document EM/RC60/6)

Health system performance in Member States of the Region is undermined by a range of geopolitical, socioeconomic and health system-related challenges. The Regional Committee, at its Fifty-ninth Session in 2012, endorsed health system strengthening as one of five priority areas for WHO's work with its Member States in the Region, for the period 2012–2016. WHO provided a road map outlining steps the three groups of countries could take to improve performance in seven key areas, the Regional Committee urged Member States (resolution EM/RC59/R.3) to undertake concrete strategic actions. This paper summarizes the progress two and half years later. It revisits the initial analysis, highlighting the continuing challenges and realities in the Region. It updates the roadmap to make it more fit to address the unfinished agenda in the three years to come, proposing actions in four priority areas in order to strengthen the move towards universal health coverage, for consideration by the Regional Committee.

8. Reinforcing health information systems (Agenda item 5(c), document EM/RC61/7)

The Regional Committee, at its Sixtieth Session in 2013 (resolution EM/RC60/R.8) recognized the importance of strong national health information systems in providing reliable information for decision-making and policy-making, requested Member States to review a proposed list of core indicators and called on Member States to develop or strengthen national plans to improve health information systems. The paper will present the final list of core indicators, together with a review of the constraints impeding the use of these indicators for policy development and ways of addressing the challenges encountered.

9. Resolutions and decisions of regional interest adopted by the Sixty-seventh World Health Assembly and the Executive Board at its 134th and 135th Sessions (Agenda item 6(a), document EM/RC61/8)

The paper highlights resolutions and decisions on global developments adopted by the World Health Assembly in 2014 that have direct relevance to or implication for the Region, and a direct link with many of the priority activities of the Region. In addition, it provides a summary of the steps and actions being taken in implementing specific resolutions relating to regional and country needs.

10. Review of the draft provisional agenda of the 136th Session of the WHO Executive Board (Agenda item 6(b), document EM/RC61/8-Annex 1)

The Regional Committee will review the draft provisional agenda of the 136th Session of the Executive Board (January 2015).

11. Framework of engagement with non-State actors (Agenda item (e), document EM/RC61/9)

In May 2014, the Sixty-seventh World Health Assembly discussed the report on the framework of engagement with non-State actors. It decided (WHA67(14)) that further consultations and discussions

were needed on issues, including conflict of interest and relations with the private sector. It decided also that the regional committees in 2014 should discuss this matter. Regional committees are expected to submit a report on their deliberations to the Sixty-eighth World Health Assembly, through the Executive Board.

12. Award of the Dr A.T. Shousha Foundation Prize and Fellowship (Agenda item 9(a), document, EM/RC61/INF.DOC.8)

The Executive Board, at its 134th Session approved the nomination of Professor Abba Mehio Sibai (Lebanon) for the Dr A.T. Shousha Foundation Prize for 2014. The prize will be awarded to Dr Sibai during the Sixty-first Session of the Regional Committee.

13. Award of the State of Kuwait Prize for the Control of Cancer, Cardiovascular Diseases and Diabetes in the Eastern Mediterranean Region (Agenda item 9(b), document, EM/RC61/INF.DOC.9)

The Regional Committee, at its Sixtieth Session in October 2013, decided to award the State of Kuwait Prize for the Control of Cancer, Cardiovascular Diseases and Diabetes in the Eastern Mediterranean Region for 2014 to Dr Khaled Al Saleh (Kuwait), Kuwait Cancer Control Centre, based on the recommendation of the Foundation Committee for the State of Kuwait Prize. In October 2013, the Foundation Committee also adopted revised criteria for the nomination and assessment of candidates which will be used to guide the selection of the candidate for the 2015 Prize.

14. Award of the Down Syndrome Research Prize (Agenda item 9(c), document, EM/RC61/INF.DOC.10)

The Regional Committee, at its Sixtieth Session in October 2013, decided not to award the Down Syndrome Research Prize in 2013, and to call for nominations for 2014, although nominations for the Prize are normally solicited every other year.

15. Report of the second meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee to the Regional Director (Agenda item 11, document EM/RC60/INF.DOC.6)

The Technical Advisory Committee to the Regional Director convened on 14–15 June 2014 at the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean in Cairo, Egypt. The objectives of the meeting, in line with the terms of reference of the Committee, were to seek the Committee's advice on matters relating to the implementation and evaluation of WHO's strategic directions in the Region; measures to strengthen the capacity of the Regional Office and country offices in support of Member States; and policies and strategies for the development of technical cooperation among and between countries of the Region. The Committee discussed a number of topics relating to the regional strategic priorities. The recommendations of the Committee are shared with the Regional Committee for information.

16. Review of implementation of Regional Committee resolutions 2000-2011 (Agenda item 10, document EM/RC60/INF.DOC.11)

The Regional Committee, at its Sixtieth Session in 2013, minding the reports on governance reforms contained in documents EB132/5 Add.6 and A66/4, and having considered the report by the secretariat (EM/RC60/INF.DOC.8), decided to establish an ad hoc subcommittee to the Regional Committee, supported by the Secretariat, with the aim of recommending to the Sixty-first session in 2014 which resolutions to sunset of the total 134 resolutions endorsed by the Regional Committee during the period 2000–2011. The Islamic Republic of Iran and Sudan were nominated to lead the process. Results of the sunset review process will be presented to the Regional Committee with recommendations on modifications and way forward.