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**Proposed approach for a draft full plan for the WHO investment round**

## **Proposed approach for a draft full plan for the WHO investment round**

### **BACKGROUND**

1. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic exposed weaknesses in health systems and further set back progress towards meeting the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals related to access to quality health care. At the same time, the pandemic underlined the critical role of WHO in detecting outbreaks, intervening directly where needed and coordinating a response across all Member States.

2. For WHO to discharge its constitutional mandate fully and effectively, the sustainable financing of the Organization is a prerequisite. Participants in the Inaugural WHO Partners Forum in Stockholm in 2019 recognized that highly earmarked contributions were unhelpful to the transformation of WHO and urged all partners to commit more flexible and predictable funding to the Organization. Building on this call, the Working Group on Sustainable Financing, established by the Executive Board at its 148th session in January 2021,<sup>1</sup> drove a process with the participation of all Member States that resulted in clear recommendations to improve the sustainable financing of WHO.

3. The planned increase in assessed contributions, with the aspiration to reach 50% of the 2022–2023 base budget by the biennium 2030–2031, is a historic step forward. A targeted first increase of 20% of the assessed contributions assessment for the biennium 2024–2025 was approved by the Seventy-sixth World Health Assembly in 2023.<sup>2</sup>

4. In addition, decision WHA76(19) (2023) requested the Director-General, in consultation with Member States, to proceed with the planning of a WHO investment round for the last quarter of 2024 to facilitate the financing of the draft Fourteenth General Programme of Work, 2025–2028. The Secretariat is requested to provide regular updates to and receive advice from Member States and submit a report with a draft full plan that includes modalities and anticipated costs and efficiencies for undertaking this exercise, for consideration and approval of concrete next steps by the Executive Board at its 154th session in January 2024, through the Programme, Budget and Administration Committee of the Executive Board at its thirty-ninth meeting. The WHO investment round represents a further substantive reform to improve the sustainable financing of the Organization.

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<sup>1</sup> See decision EB148(12) (2021).

<sup>2</sup> See resolution WHA76.1 (2023).

## DEFINITION OF SUSTAINABLE FINANCING

5. In line with this aspiration, an effective funding model, as discussed by the Working Group on Sustainable Financing and since labelled “sustainable financing”, has been defined as:

- sustainable – focusing on medium- to long-term funding for the duration of a general programme of work while reducing overreliance on a small number of contributors;
- predictable – ensuring that WHO can rely on sound financing before a biennium starts and reliably count on these funds as with assessed contributions; and
- flexible – aligning fully with the priorities of the approved general programme of work and subsequent programme budgets, and reducing the limitation of funds to a specific type of activity, a specific geographic location or specific outcomes and outputs of a programme budget.

## PROPOSED APPROACH FOR DEVELOPING A DRAFT FULL PLAN FOR THE WHO INVESTMENT ROUND

6. Pursuant to decision WHA76(19) (2023), the Secretariat is preparing a draft full plan for the WHO investment round for consideration by the Executive Board at its 154th session in January 2024 – this includes several consultations with Member States at global and regional level, including through the regional committees.

7. The WHO investment round will be fully in line with the principles established by the Working Group on Sustainable Financing.<sup>1</sup> It will be voluntary and focus on improving the sustainability, predictability and flexibility of voluntary funding in order to enable WHO to have the robust structures and capacities needed to fulfil its core functions as defined in the Constitution of the World Health Organization.

8. Work is under way to prepare a draft full plan that includes:

- proposed modalities for the WHO investment round, including co-hosting and meeting proposals;
- a target funding envelope for the WHO investment round, based on the base segment of the financing envelope to deliver the draft Fourteenth General Programme of Work, 2025–2028, to be developed in parallel;
- an analysis of the anticipated costs and efficiencies, including benchmarking with other international organizations; and
- proposed criteria for the evaluation of the WHO investment round.

9. In addition, the preparation of an investment case to support the economic and programmatic case for the draft Fourteenth General Programme of Work, 2025–2028, is under way, with the intention to launch it in the second quarter of 2024.<sup>2</sup>

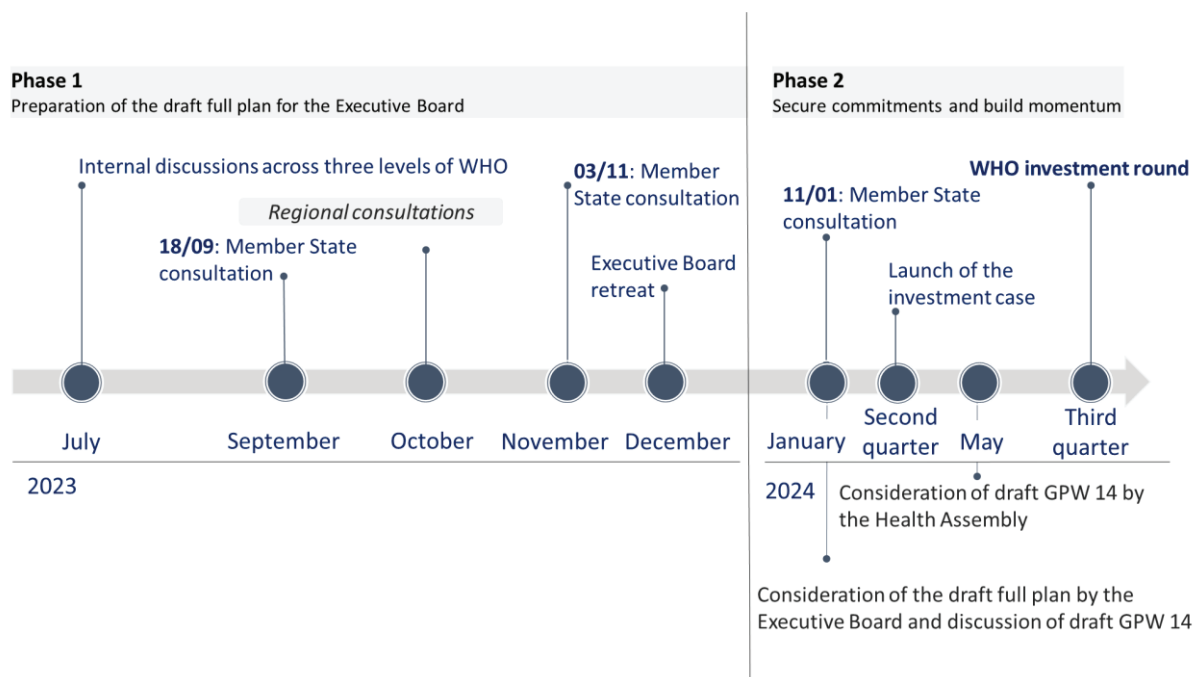
10. The proposed timeline consists of two phases (Fig.). Phase 1 focuses on the preparation of the draft full plan for the WHO investment round for consideration by the Executive Board at its 154th session in January 2024 – this includes several consultations with Member States as well as regional consultations, including through the regional committees.

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<sup>1</sup> See decision WHA75(8) (2022).

<sup>2</sup> An investment case lays out the economic arguments for investing in a particular area or intervention.

**Fig. Proposed timeline of the WHO investment round**



GPW 14: Fourteenth General Programme of Work, 2025–2028.

## VISION FOR SUCCESS OF THE WHO INVESTMENT ROUND

11. The purpose of the WHO investment round is to support the draft Fourteenth General Programme of Work, 2025–2028, to address the escalating global demand for better health and well-being. By building on the agreed increase in assessed contributions,<sup>1</sup> the WHO investment round will enable the Organization to deliver on the targets of the draft Fourteenth General Programme of Work, 2025–2028, in a way that is underpinned by a sustainable, predictable and flexible financing model. The Secretariat is considering indicators that will help to monitor and evaluate whether the WHO investment round is on track.

## ACTION BY THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE

12. The Regional Committee is invited to note this report and provide guidance on:

- (a) the overall outline of the process;
- (b) the proposed timeline.

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<sup>1</sup> See resolution WHA76.1 (2023).