

**Report of the Twenty Fifth Meeting of the Independent Expert Oversight Advisory
Committee (IEOAC) of the World Health Organization**

(Geneva, 23 – 25 July 2018)

Item 1 – Opening and administrative matters

1. This was the second of three IEOAC meetings planned for 2018. The agenda for this meeting is attached as Annex 1 and List of Participants as Annex 2.
2. In attendance throughout: Bob Samels (Chair), Jeya Wilson, Jayant Karia and Christof Maetze. One of the members, Leonardo Pereira, had to leave after the end of Day 2, due to an urgent priority, and could not attend the sessions of the last day of the meeting.
3. The Chair confirmed a quorum with all members present and all declarations of interest or updates duly submitted. No conflicts of interest were recorded. The agenda for the 25th meeting, 23 -25 July 2018, was adopted.

Item 2 – Update on Financial Statements

1. The IEOAC received the financial highlights on the 2018-19 programme budget, including the status of funds available and expenditure as on 30 June 2018. The Committee noted that the availability of funding is consistent with prior years and good progress has been made on the 2018-19 programs. However, senior management should prioritize spending requirements to determine which activities could be reduced or eliminated in case of a funding shortfall.

Item 3 – Update on Internal Oversight Services (IOS) Matters

2. The Director IOS provided an update of the work of the department including Human Resources, 2018 Internal audit plan, status of outstanding open audit reports and status of investigations.
3. The Committee was pleased to note that staff positions are no longer frozen and recruitment on some of the fixed-term as well as short-term positions is now progressing.
4. The internal audit plan for 2018 was reviewed and the Committee is satisfied with the progress made so far as well as with the changes made to the plan. Director IOS shared the Recommendations Dashboard with the Committee and the members noted that the ‘Overdue Open’ recommendations have increased slightly from 8.4% in March 2018 to 11.2% in July 2018. The Committee encourages management to take necessary steps to reduce this number.
5. The Director informed the Committee that a total of 73 new cases of allegations of wrong doing have been received by IOS in the first 6 months of 2018 as compared to a total of 82 cases for the calendar year 2017. The Committee notes from the Investigations Dashboard that the current investigations for 2018 are meeting the

performance standards and are being addressed on a timely basis; cases of harassment are being dealt with on a priority basis and that cases of sexual harassment and exploitation are being addressed immediately. The Committee further notes that majority of the reported cases are related to fraud and corruption, which can be indicative of a sound Whistleblower policy and its implementation, however the Committee encourages IOS to perform forensic audits and requests management to further tighten internal controls as well as implement pro-active fraud diagnostic tools.

6. The Committee also held a private session with the Director IOS.

Item 4 – External Audit

7. The External Auditors provided the Committee with highlights of the 2017 External Audit Report, the 2017 SHI Financial Statements and the 2018 External Audit Plan.
8. The Committee noted that an unmodified opinion has been issued by the Auditors for the Staff Health Insurance 2017 Financial Statements. The Committee is pleased that the issue related to the PAHO documentation for the SHI audit has been addressed for the current and future periods.
9. The Committee understands that the Management Letter responses by management to the Audit recommendations is still in progress.
10. The Committee reviewed the 2018 External Audit Plan and is satisfied to note that the audit plan is being managed in coordination with the Internal Oversight Services Audit plan and that there is no duplication.
11. The IEOAC held a private session with the External Auditors.

Item 5 – WHO Transformation Project

12. The WHO Senior Advisor on Organizational Change provided an update to the IEOAC on the WHO Transformation Project. The Committee now understands this project better and is pleased to note that senior management has taken cognisance of the importance of WHO's normative function. The Committee also appreciates that the project focusses on country needs and impacts at the local level.

The Committee recognizes that the implementation of the transformation project will require change across the organization with considerable impact on HQ functions. As with any large change initiative, certain areas will resist change. Senior management is aware of this challenge and is developing an implementation strategy.

13. The Committee further recognizes that as the transformation agenda progresses, management will have to ensure Member States are aware of the proposed changes that will impact staffing levels at the three levels of the organization. It is imperative that regional or local Member State concerns are addressed without adversely impacting the new business process.

14. Finally, the Committee advises management to identify a business owner for each of the business processes with a well-defined authority and accountability framework.

Item 6 – Compliance, Risk and Ethics (CRE) Update

15. The Director CRE provided an update on the activities in the area of compliance, risk management and ethics, including a status update on WHO's Principal Risks, implementation of the Baldwin Report and an end-to-end process overview for management of one WHO Principal Risk. The Committee was also provided a brief on WHO's position on cases of Sexual Harassment and Abuse (SEA).
16. The Committee notes that the risk management process has matured, with the creation of the Risk Committee, review of the principal risks and identification of the risk mitigation measures. The Committee encourages management to ensure that ownership of each Principal Risk rests with one person rather than a group of individuals.
17. The Committee is satisfied with the progress of the implementation of recommendations from the Baldwin report.
18. The IEOAC is pleased to see the full support from management on any potential sexual harassment and abuse situations. In certain situations, both CRE and IOS can be involved with the complainant. Management should review the handoff process between CRE and IOS to ensure it results timely action in the completion of investigations.

Item 7 – Update on Information Technology

19. The Acting Chief Information Officer provided the IEOAC with an update on the IT Roadmap, including the 5 open recommendations from the report of the External Auditors and their closure plan. An overview of the IT Governance and Cybersecurity activities was also provided.
20. The Committee was pleased to note that the actions have been taken to address the 5 open audit recommendations and all these will be closed in the coming months. The Committee appreciated that IMT has identified the opportunities for improvement of Cybersecurity for the Organization and steps are being taken to address the identified weaknesses. The Committee further noted that considerable recurring investment is needed for the future for effective enforcement of Cybersecurity and the Members encourage management to ensure that sufficient resources, both financial and human, are made available for this area. In this respect, the Committee suggested to Management to work with other UN system Organizations under the auspices of the High-Level Committee on Management.

Item 8 – Status Update on WHO Health Emergencies Programme

21. ADG/WHE provided an update to the IEOAC on the WHO Health Emergencies Programme through an overview of the WHE Conceptual Framework, Budget,

Funding, Human Resources, Delegation of Authority, Procurement and the SOPs and Business Processes.

22. The IEOAC continues to monitor how Emergency procedures work in coordination with normal working processes of WHO. The Committee is pleased to note that the WHE recognizes the importance of cross-functioning with other Departments and that the related Emergency support processes are working well.

Item 9 – Update on Polio Transition – Review of the draft Strategic Plan and Implementation Plan

23. The ADG/WSI provided an update on the Strategic Action Plan for Polio Transition and its implementation. The IEOAC is pleased to note the content of the transition planning and the progress made so far. The Committee recognizes that tremendous amount of work is going on to move polio-free countries towards post-eradication.
24. The Committee understands that certain countries are already in a post eradication stage and it encourages management to implement transition measures in those countries.

Item 10 – Other Matters

25. The IEOAC noted that the WHO Organization Chart has not been issued in final form. It encourages management to finalize and issue the reporting structure.
26. The next meeting of the IEOAC in 2018 is scheduled from 16 to 18 October 2018 in Manila, Regional Office for the Western Pacific (WPRO).
27. The Committee held a short private session for IEOAC members, during which it elected Dr Jeya Wilson as its new Chair starting from the October 2018 meeting. The Committee expressed its appreciation for the contributions of outgoing Chair Mr Bob Samels.

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