

The WHO Transformation

2020 progress report





The WHO transformation: 2020 progress report

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Abbreviations & Acronyms

ADG	Assistant Director-General
AFRO	WHO Regional Office for Africa
AMRO/PAHO	WHO Regional Office for the Americas/Pan American Health Organization
AMR	Antimicrobial resistance
CEM	WHO Contributor Engagement Management system
CSP	Country support plan
DAF	Director of Administration and Finance
DPM	Director of Programme Management
EB	Executive Board
EMRO	WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean
EURO	WHO Regional Office for Europe
EXD	Executive Director
GAP	Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All
GPG	Global Policy Group
GPHG	Global public health good
GPW13	Thirteenth General Programme of Work 2019-2023
HALE	Healthy life expectancy
HQ	WHO headquarters
IPPPR	Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
ODT	Output Delivery Teams
PB	Programme Budget
PHC	Primary health care
PMDS	Performance Management Development System
R&D	Research and development
RD	WHO Regional Director
STDA	Short-term development assignment
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SEARO	WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia
TEN	Technical Expert Network
UHC	Universal health coverage
WHA	World Health Assembly
WPRO	WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific
WR	WHO Representative

Director-General's Foreword

The COVID-19 pandemic is an unprecedented crisis that demands an unprecedented global response.

Although it is a health crisis, it's much more than that. It has shaken the foundations of social, economic and political stability. Millions of jobs have been lost, the global economy is in recession and geopolitical fissures have widened.

Even before the pandemic, the world was off-track for the health-related Sustainable Development Goals. Now we're even further behind.

The need for global health leadership is greater than ever before.

The pandemic has shown why the world needs a strong, impact-driven WHO – one that is relevant in all countries, focuses on results, provides technical and normative leadership, and is “ahead of the curve”.

That is the WHO we have been building over the past three-and-a-half years, through our Transformation Agenda – the most deep-rooted change process in WHO's history.

The pandemic has been an important test for our Transformation – it has shown that we are changing and that many of the changes introduced are already bearing fruit. These changes are already helping us in our relentless pursuit of GPW13 and its Triple Billion targets, which are more relevant and important than ever.

This detailed report shows the incredible scope of work we have undertaken to implement the Transformation and the results it is producing, which have enabled us both to respond to the pandemic and sustain our core programmes.



By the end of 2020, we had completed several key steps in our change journey and had already begun implementing our new and enhanced processes and ways of working.

This report also shows that we still have a long way to travel and there is much more to be done. But it indicates that based on what we have seen so far and the way we have responded to the COVID-19 pandemic that we are headed in the right direction.

There will be important lessons to learn from COVID-19, from the Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and from the ongoing evaluation of the Transformation Agenda itself.

In one sense, WHO must be continually transforming. Science and disease patterns are continually evolving, and we must evolve with them. We must become an organization committed to continuous learning, continuous improvement and continuous accountability.

The journey will continue as we learn, grow and change together for a healthier, safer, fairer world.



Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus
Director-General
World Health Organization



Executive Summary

This document provides an overview of Transformation implementation as of end 2020. It complements the report on "Transforming for enhanced country impact" submitted to the 148th session of the Executive Board (EB).

Our Transformation journey has had four major phases, beginning in July 2017 when Director-General Tedros took office and launched a period of deep listening and engagement with all staff and all major offices. In February 2018, the Global Policy Group kicked off phase two, leading our work to finalize the Thirteenth General Programme of Work 2019-2023 (GPW13), redesign 13 of our core processes as "best-in-class", develop our new 3-level operating model and co-create with all staff a set of core values to guide our ways of working. On 6 March 2019, the Director-General and Regional Directors initiated the third phase, which included aligning our major office structures and developing options for a more fit-for-purpose country presence. The fourth phase – implementation and continuous improvement – began in January 2020, with an initial focus on consolidating our changes and then expanding to monitoring, learning and continuous improvement.

The seven major areas of work in our Transformation Agenda reflect three strategic objectives. The first of these objectives aligns with the ambition reflected in GPW13 to focus WHO's work on driving impact at country level and embed our mission and strategy in our day-to-day work and organizational culture. The second aims to establish a fit-for-purpose organization to deliver our mission and strategy, anchored in new ways of working that are enabled by "best-in-class" processes and operationalized through an aligned, 3-level operating model. The third seeks to leverage our partners and the global community to drive health outcomes and includes new partnership and resource mobilization initiatives. Underpinning all of these objectives

Our mission to...

promote health,

keep the world safe, and

serve the vulnerable

...is at the heart of our Transformation.

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