

**17th SESSION OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE  
ON PROGRAM, BUDGET, AND ADMINISTRATION  
OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

*Washington, D.C., USA, 22-24 March 2023*

---

*Provisional Agenda Item 5.1*

SPBA17/INF/1  
6 March 2023  
Original: English

**REPORT ON STRATEGIC ISSUES BETWEEN PAHO AND WHO**

**Background**

1. This report has been presented to the Governing Bodies of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) since 2018 (Document CD56/INF/3) (1) in response to a request from Member States to review key strategic issues in the relationship between PAHO and the World Health Organization (WHO). The present report provides an update on strategic issues between PAHO and WHO from September 2022 through January 2023 (2). It maintains the focus on high-level strategic issues and opportunities of importance to Member States in the Region of the Americas that are related to leadership and governance as well as to accountability and transparency. It also highlights results of collaboration between PAHO and WHO with a view to fostering the proactive engagement of Member States from the Region in global forums.

**Leadership and Governance**

2. This section provides strategic insight from ongoing deliberations and decisions of the WHO Governing Bodies, along with their implications for the Region of the Americas and PAHO. It includes matters reviewed by the 152nd Session of the Executive Board that was held from 30 January to 7 February 2023. It also provides updates on the consultations with Member States concerning key global issues related to health emergencies, on the extension of the WHO Thirteenth General Programme of Work (GPW 13) to 2025, and on the proposed WHO Programme budget 2024-2025 (WHO PB24-25).

***Strengthening WHO Preparedness and Response to Health Emergencies***

3. Recognizing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the WHO Director-General presented to the Executive Board the document *Strengthening the Global Architecture for Health Emergency Preparedness, Response and Resilience: Ten Proposals to Build a Safer World Together*. It intertwined various Member State-led workstreams to define the future of governance in preparing for and responding to multi-hazard health emergencies (3). Those workstreams that may have implications for PAHO's technical cooperation with Member States include the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB); the Standing

---

Committee on Health Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response (the Standing Committee) of the Executive Board; and the Working Group on Amendments to the International Health Regulations (2005) (WGIHR). Further information on this workstream will be presented to the 172nd Session of the Executive Committee of PAHO. The Financial Intermediary Fund for Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response,<sup>1</sup> which was established by the World Bank to improve Member States' capacities to prepare for and respond to emergencies, is also relevant in this context. During the period of this report, the Pan American Sanitary Bureau (PASB) held information-sharing sessions to update Member States on the Fund, including their permanent missions to the United Nations (UN) in Geneva, as part of efforts to strengthen their representation in negotiations and discussions within the relevant workstreams.

4. The INB was established by the Second Special Session of the World Health Assembly through Decision SSA2(5) (2021) (4). Its mandate is to draft and negotiate a WHO convention, agreement, or other international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response. A conceptual zero draft of such an instrument (referred to as the "WHO CA+") was published in November 2022 following public hearings and stakeholder consultations. During its fourth meeting, held from 27 February to 3 March 2023, the INB decided that the zero draft agreement would be considered the basis for beginning negotiations, with an understanding that "nothing is agreed until everything is agreed" (5). Six officers, one from each WHO region, compose the INB Bureau, with the Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations in Geneva serving as the officer for the Region of the Americas. PASB held one regional consultation during the Pan American Sanitary Conference in 2022 and two information sessions (in December 2022 and February 2023) to keep Member States abreast of INB discussions and implications for the Region, as well as to discuss how to improve coordination and information sharing. Additionally, on 14 March 2023, PASB will convene a face-to-face regional meeting on the INB with representatives from the ministries of health and ministries of foreign affairs as well as from permanent missions to the UN in Geneva and/or permanent missions to the Organization of American States. The main objective is to ensure that the most relevant national authorities are adequately informed regarding the key components, documents, deliberations, and expected results of the INB and to equip Member States for meaningful participation in the INB process.

5. The future of governance in preparing for and responding to health emergencies is also intertwined with the formation of a Standing Committee, established by the 150th Executive Board in January 2022 to review, provide guidance, and, as appropriate, make recommendations to the Executive Board regarding ongoing work on policy proposals on pandemic and emergency preparedness and response (6). The Standing Committee also issues recommendations and provides guidance on events that have been declared as public health emergencies of international concern pursuant to the International Health Regulations (2005). The Standing Committee's first meeting was held virtually on 12 December 2022, and its report was presented to the 152nd Executive Board in January 2023 (7).

---

<sup>1</sup> More information available at: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/financial-intermediary-fund-for-pandemic-prevention-preparedness-and-response-ppr-fif>.

6. The final reports of the INB and WGIHR workstreams will be presented to the World Health Assembly in 2024. PASB will continue to facilitate discussions and support Member States to optimize their participation in these global discussions with a view to shaping the future global health emergency architecture.

### ***Strategic Planning and Budgeting***

7. During the second half of 2022, various consultations were held to brief Member States on the development of the proposed WHO PB24-25 as well as to provide updates on the extension of the GPW 13 from 2023 to 2025. A joint PAHO-WHO briefing session was held on 25 October 2022 with the participation of 12 Member States from the Region of the Americas. It yielded important input for the development of the proposed WHO PB24-25 and the update on the GPW 13 for the 152nd Session of the Executive Board (8, 9). The proposed WHO PB24-25 is a key strategic framework that will inform the Program Budget of the Pan American Health Organization 2024-2025 (PAHO PB24-25). Biennium 2024-2025, as the third and final biennium of the GPW 13 and the PAHO Strategic Plan 2020-2025, will be a critical period for recovery from the impact of COVID-19 in a context where the Region and the world also face significant challenges in addressing gaps in progress toward reaching the Sustainable Development Goals.

8. The prioritization of PAHO outcomes, undertaken for the development of the PAHO PB24-25 (10), served to inform the priorities of the Region of the Americas in the proposed WHO PB24-25. The global prioritization process implemented by WHO was also influenced by the experience from the Region and advocacy by Member States in this regard. The proposed WHO PB24-25 presented to the 152nd Executive Board reflects the input of 28 Member States and one Associate Member of PAHO, those that had completed the consultations as of 4 January 2023. PASB has continued to work with Member States to complete the programmatic prioritization results that will be incorporated in the final proposed WHO PB24-25 to be considered by the 76th World Health Assembly. The proposed draft WHO PB24-25 retains the total approved base programs budget of US \$4,968.4 million<sup>2</sup> from the revised WHO Programme budget 2022-2023 (WHO PB22-23). Of this amount, \$295.6 million has been allocated for base programs for the Americas, a 1.2% increase above the approved revised WHO PB22-23 for the Region. The increase in the budget space for the Americas and the reflection of country and regional priorities in the proposed WHO PB24-25 are due to the sustained advocacy and increasing collaboration between Member States, PASB, and WHO. It is important to note that the proposed WHO PB24-25 incorporates the first increase in assessed contributions (by 20%), per Decision WHA75(8) (11). This increase is intended to address priorities identified with Member States and to build country capacity.

9. The Agile Member States Task Group on Strengthening WHO's Budgetary, Programmatic and Financing Governance (AMSTG) was established by the 75th World Health Assembly (11). The AMSTG held three official hybrid meetings, as well as an information session and a deep dive on strategic issues, between July and November 2022.

---

<sup>2</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, all monetary figures in this report are expressed in United States dollars.

It presented its final report to the Executive Board in January 2023 (12). The Executive Board endorsed the WHO Secretariat's implementation plan on reform and its recommendations for long-term improvements on key issues that require action from both the Secretariat and Member States. The Executive Board also endorsed the continued exploration of the replenishment mechanism as part of WHO's sustainable financing options. Intersessional consultations with Member States were requested to be held before the 76th World Health Assembly. Member States from the Region of the Americas actively participated in various sessions of the AMSTG, where they highlighted the importance of strengthening WHO's governance and sustainable financing to enable it to deliver on its core mandate while at the same time enhancing accountability, transparency, oversight, and efficiency. During the 152nd Session of the Executive Board, Member States from the Region stressed that the proposed 20% increase in assessed contributions to finance the proposed WHO PB24-25 must be linked to progress on WHO reforms in this regard.

### ***Strengthening the Presence of WHO at Country Level***

10. In line with efforts to transform WHO into an organization that is more focused on country-level impact, WHO launched a "100-day challenge" in February 2023 with the objective of fast-tracking improvements in WHO's three-level operating model. The WHO Director-General convened an Action for Results Group (ARG) composed of six WHO representatives, one from each of the six regions, including a PAHO/WHO representative. The ARG was tasked with developing a plan of action to strengthen WHO country offices, including through the definition of a core predictable WHO country presence. Following the plan's endorsement by the Global Policy Group, consisting of senior management, the plan will now move to implementation. The effort to strengthen country offices is aligned with the vision of the Director of PAHO. The plan was also informed by initiatives in PAHO, including through investments in line with the PAHO Budget Policy, to strengthen the country focus approach and make PAHO more effective and agile in responding to country needs and priorities. PAHO will continue to collaborate with WHO by sharing best practices from PAHO and by learning from WHO initiatives that can contribute to PAHO's efforts to become more efficient, agile, and responsive to the needs and priorities of Member States.

### **Accountability and Transparency**

11. This section provides updates on the implementation status of the WHO PB22-23, including programmatic and financial monitoring and reporting. The overall funding of the WHO PB22-23, as of 31 January 2023, was \$10.1 billion (150% of the approved budget),<sup>3</sup> with base programs financed in the amount of \$5.0 billion (100% of the approved budget for base programs). The overfunded amount is largely explained by the financing received for the emergency operations and appeals segment (\$4.0 billion). The WHO PB22-23 included a \$292.1 million approved budget for the Regional Office for the Americas' (AMRO) base programs, which as of 31 January 2023 was financed in the amount of

---

<sup>3</sup> Updated figures from the WHO Programme Budget Portal, available at: <http://open.who.int/2022-23/budget-and-financing/gpw-overview>.

\$213.6 million (73% of the approved budget). Of this amount, \$106.6 million was WHO flexible funds and \$107 million was voluntary contributions. Of the share of voluntary contributions, it is important to note that through the WHO Resource Allocation Committee mechanism, the amount of thematic funds received has increased. As of 31 January 2023, the Region has received \$5.8 million as thematic funds, which are more flexible in nature than other voluntary contributions.

12. While the WHO budget for the Americas is still the least funded when compared to other regions, the amount of funding has increased over previous budget cycles, and it is expected that additional funds will be directed to the Region in the second year of the 2022-2023 biennium. Member States' calls for more equitable funding to the Region have been effective in this regard. PASB will continue to monitor and collaborate with WHO to ensure timely and quality implementation of the funds. Ongoing efforts by WHO to mobilize more flexible funds and strengthen internal coordination mechanisms (engaging the regions) are key to improve financing of the approved WHO PB22-23.

13. Building on engagement with Member States in the context of WHO governance, such as through the consultations mentioned above as well as the Group of the Americas (GRUA), PASB is also seeking to increase the sharing of relevant information. While recognizing the independent nature of PAHO, PASB routinely shares with WHO programmatic, budgetary, and other relevant information from the Region, including staffing statistics. Efforts are also being made to increase this information sharing to promote a more holistic view of how the Region contributes to plans, programs, and results at the global level. An example of this is the reporting of the contribution of the Americas to the results set out in the WHO Programme budget through the midterm and end-of-biennium results reports.

### **Strategic Collaboration and Engagement with PAHO Member States and WHO**

14. The timely and close collaboration and consultations between PASB and PAHO Member States provide a foundation for effectively promoting the Region's active participation in and contribution to WHO's governance, strategic, programmatic, budget, and financing activities. Consultations with Member States will continue on the subjects covered during the intersessional meetings before the 76th World Health Assembly. PASB will continue to facilitate provision of the necessary information, briefings, and regional consultations, as necessary or as requested by Member States, to ensure that contributions from the Americas at regional and country levels continue to shape and benefit the global health agenda.

15. As noted above, PASB will also continue building on the close collaboration with WHO and will explore avenues for further information sharing to ensure that WHO global strategic and statutory documents adequately reflect the contributions of the Region of the Americas and its countries.

16. In the spirit of contributing to and influencing the global health agenda, it is also important to continue fostering collaboration among PAHO Member States to develop

multi-country and regional statements on matters of priority importance to the Region, whenever possible. Toward this end, PASB will continue to collaborate with GRUA and country delegations to WHO Governing Bodies.

### **Action by the Subcommittee on Program, Budget, and Administration**

17. The Subcommittee is invited to take note of this report and provide any comments it deems pertinent.

### **References**

1. Pan American Health Organization. Report on strategic issues between PAHO and WHO [Document CD56/INF/3]. 56th PAHO Directing Council, 70th Session of the Regional Committee of WHO for the Americas; 23-27 September 2018. Washington, DC: PAHO; 2018. Available from: [https://www3.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com\\_docman&task=doc\\_download&gid=45799&Itemid=270&lang=en](https://www3.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=45799&Itemid=270&lang=en).
2. Pan American Health Organization. Report on strategic issues between PAHO and WHO [Document CSP/30/INF/2]. 30th Pan American Sanitary Conference, 74th Session of the Regional Committee of WHO for the Americas; 26-30 September 2022. Washington, DC: PAHO; 2022. Available from: [https://www.paho.org/sites/default/files/csp30-inf-2-e-strategic-issues-paho-who\\_0.pdf](https://www.paho.org/sites/default/files/csp30-inf-2-e-strategic-issues-paho-who_0.pdf).
3. World Health Organization. Strengthening WHO preparedness for and response to health emergencies: strengthening the global architecture for health emergency preparedness, response and resilience: ten proposals to build a safer world together: report by the Director-General [Document EB152/12]. 152nd Session of the Executive Board; 30 January – 7 February 2023. Geneva: WHO; 2023. Available from: [https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf\\_files/EB152/B152\\_12-en.pdf](https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/EB152/B152_12-en.pdf).
4. World Health Organization. The world together: establishment of an intergovernmental negotiating body to strengthen pandemic prevention, preparedness and response [Decision SSA2(5)]. Second Special Session of the World Health Assembly; 29 November – 1 December 2021. Geneva: WHO; 2021. Available from: [https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf\\_files/WHASSA2/SSA2\(5\)-en.pdf](https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHASSA2/SSA2(5)-en.pdf).
5. World Health Organization. Report of the meeting. Fourth Meeting of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body; 27 February – 3 March 2023. Geneva: WHO; [forthcoming 2023].
6. World Health Organization. Standing Committee on Pandemic and Emergency Preparedness and Response [Decision EB150(6)]. 150th Session of the Executive Board; 24-29 January 2022. Geneva: WHO; 2022. Available from: [https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf\\_files/EB150/B150\(6\)-en.pdf](https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/EB150/B150(6)-en.pdf).

7. World Health Organization. Standing Committee on Health Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response: report by the Director-General [Document EB152/45]. 152nd Session of the Executive Board; 30 January – 7 February 2023. Geneva: WHO; 2023. Available from:  
[https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf\\_files/EB152/B152\\_45-en.pdf](https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/EB152/B152_45-en.pdf).
8. World Health Organization. Draft proposed Programme budget 2024-2025 [Document EB152/27]. 152nd Session of the Executive Board; 30 January – 7 February 2023. Geneva: WHO; 2023. Available from:  
[https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf\\_files/EB152/B152\\_27-en.pdf](https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/EB152/B152_27-en.pdf).
9. World Health Organization. Thirteenth General Programme of Work, 2019-2025: report on the outcomes of the Member States consultation process: report by the Director-General [Document EB152/28]. 152nd Session of the Executive Board; 30 January – 7 February 2023. Geneva: WHO; 2022. Available from:  
[https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf\\_files/EB152/B152\\_28-en.pdf](https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/EB152/B152_28-en.pdf).
10. Pan American Health Organization. Outline of the proposed Program Budget of the Pan American Health Organization 2024-2025 (Document SPBA17/2). 17th Session of the Subcommittee on Program, Budget, and Administration of the Executive Committee; 22 – 24 March 2023. Washington, DC: PAHO; 2023. Available from:  
<https://www.paho.org/en/documents/spba172-outline-proposed-program-budget-pan-american-health-organization-2024-2025>.
11. World Health Organization. Sustainable financing [Decision WHA75(8)]. 75th World Health Assembly; 22 – 28 May 2022. Geneva: WHO; 2022. Available from:  
[https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf\\_files/WHA75/A75\(8\)-en.pdf](https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA75/A75(8)-en.pdf).
12. World Health Organization. Report of the Agile Member States Task Group on Strengthening WHO's Budgetary, Programmatic and Financing Governance [Document EB152/33]. 152nd Session of the Executive Board; 30 January – 7 February 2023. Geneva: WHO; 2023. Available from:  
[https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf\\_files/EB152/B152\\_33-en.pdf](https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/EB152/B152_33-en.pdf).

---