

**WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION**  
Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean  
**ORGANISATION MONDIALE DE LA SANTE**  
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**Report of**

**The outcome of the Joint Government/WHO Programme  
Review and Planning Missions in 2009, including the  
utilization of Country Cooperation Strategies**

**Contents**

1. Overview..... 1

2. Process..... 1

3. Outcome ..... 1

4. Conclusion..... 2

## **1. Overview**

Operational planning for the biennium 2010–2011 took place between June and November 2009 through the 14th round of Joint Government/WHO Programme Review and Planning Missions (JPRM). This well-known consultative process aims to ensure technical collaboration between WHO and Member States is in line with national health policy and agreed strategic directions identified in the Country Cooperation Strategies. Through this process, operational plans were developed with clearly defined results and measurable targets to be achieved over a two-year period.

The regional programme budget 2010–2011 covers the second biennium of implementation of Medium Term Strategic Plan 2008–2013. The JPRM process includes a critical review and assessment of the outcome of the previous biennium, the results of which are used in the planning exercise itself. It advances projections of issues, challenges and strategic directions which may be confronted within the following biennium. Although the medium term strategic planning process has been introduced recently in WHO, the biennial programme budget remains the key tool for operational planning. However, new elements of reform have also been implemented to harmonize planning and make the biennial programme budget more supportive to WHO's strategic approach and transparent collaboration at country level. The concurrent development and roll out of the Global Management System also had a profound impact on organizational structure, working methods, processes and procedures.

## **2. Process**

The role of Country Cooperation Strategies in the planning process is important. They were used in all countries of the Region, including those countries in crisis, as a key instrument to align WHO technical collaboration with national priorities and to harmonize the programmes within an agreed upon strategic framework. Country Cooperation Strategies are the main tools used to implement the country focus policy of the Organization and to increase focus and efficiency in utilization of resources.

Preparatory work at country and Regional Office level started well ahead of the joint missions. WHO Representatives and their teams, in collaboration with national programme managers, developed draft plans at the country level. JPRM teams were assigned to each country and reviewed the draft plans in view of national, regional and global priorities. Consultations were held with other health-related ministries and United Nations agencies, and they were invited to take part in JPRM sessions to increase synergy of interventions.

To further consolidate the process, intensive training workshops on operational planning in the Global Management System and on results-based management were carried out for national programme managers and country office staff in several countries. This training was instrumental in enhancing common understanding of the planning, monitoring and evaluation of the work of WHO.

## **3. Outcome**

Timely preparation and early involvement of the partners resulted in improved joint planning, sharing of experience between JPRM teams, and good participation of national teams and other governmental partners in this process. Country Cooperation Strategies assisted in the alignment of national priorities and provided a medium term strategic framework for cooperation. A steady improvement in priority-setting and planning skills were evident; however, formulation and definition of expected results and performance indicators needs further improvement. The

dialogue between country teams and JPRM team members resulted in common understanding of country-specific expected results and their link to the regional expected results.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The environment in which public health operates both globally and locally is becoming increasingly complex, with important new players changing the way countries address health challenges. WHO has been a key player in shaping and responding to change in the area of public health, moving strategically to remain effective and efficient in a rapidly evolving environment. Capacity-building in strategic and operational planning is an ongoing process. The Regional Office will continue to strengthen the JPRM process through further improvement and utilization of Country Cooperation Strategies and the findings of their evaluation. The JPRM exercise is a robust consultative process with clear value for reinforcing the current reforms in WHO towards enhancing transparency, efficiency and integrated programme management. The consultative processes will be further developed to increase the quality of analysis of country-specific development challenges and health needs in view of strengths and weaknesses. Managerial applications as well as human resource capacities will be enhanced through results-based management and full utilization of the Global Management System.