



7th Steering Committee of the Working for Health Programme

**Virtual meeting hosted by WHO
Tuesday, 13 April 2021, 15:00-17:00**

MEETING MINUTES

The meeting was chaired by Jim Campbell.

Opening remarks, Agenda and Minutes

Opening Remarks

1. The Chair opened the 7th Steering Committee meeting and welcomed OECD, ILO, UNDP-MPTF, NORAD, SILATECH and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).
2. The Chair provided an update on the health workforce landscape amid COVID-19 emergency response and the relevance of the Working for Health (W4H) programme to address these challenges.

Decision point:

- The minutes of the 6th Steering Committee (28 October 2020) were adopted.

Item 1: Updates on the progress of work and 2nd Annual MPTF Report

1.1 W4H MPTF balance and expenditure

3. The MPTF Office introduced the Working for Health MPTF Funding Framework document that reflected the official funding status and allocations:
 - Table 1 provided information on deposits received, transfers made to participating organizations and funds available for the programming. So far, 4.8 million United States Dollars (USD) was received, and 3.8 million USD of this transferred to the three agencies. With administrative fees and the direct costs for the Secretariat, a total of 4.2 million USD has been distributed.
 - Table 2 presented detailed information on the contributions received from donors; part of their formal commitments. MPTF noted an error on the expected contribution from SILATECH, which should read 4 million USD.
 - Table 3 presented the projects, the transfer and net funded amount by participating organization, and the expenditure and delivery rates
 - Table 4 covered the interest income earned on the balance of funds held by the Administrative Agent (Fund earned interest).
4. SILATECH noted that the 2 million USD allocation from their original 4 million USD commitment to the MPTF is pending approval of their Executive Board.

5. NORAD noted that the expenditure and delivery rate in table 3 referred back to official information received from the three agencies in the 2019 1st Annual Report. Requested that the date of the delivery rate of table 3 should be added
6. WHO presented an updated overview to complement the MPTF presentation:
 - The distribution and implementation of MPTF funds across 12 national, two regional and two global activities.
 - The balance remaining is stated as 185,000 USD, taking into account pending disbursement for the support of the W4H Secretariat.
 - The revised expenditure implementation rate as of April 2021 is approximately 54% - noting activity delays in 2020 due to COVID-19.
 - The 2020 2nd year financial and technical progress reports will be submitted to the Steering Committee by the MPTF Office in May 2021
7. The Chair requested an update from SILATECH on their MPTF funding commitment. Their delayed deposit of USD 500,000 USD, due in September 2020, is still pending. SILATECH responded that they need to discuss this with their executive board and that these funds are conditional on their receiving updates on the project's performance, specifically in terms of job placement indicators. Once they receive these, they will request the Executive Board for approval to release the 500K USD.

Decision points:

- The final version of the supporting document 3_MPTF Funding Framework:
 - Table 2 to be revised, and the error on the contribution from SILATECH stated as 2M USD rather than 4M USD to be amended.
 - Table 3 to be revised and add footnote referencing that the framework represents the fund status at the end of December 2019.
- SILATECH to meet with their Executive Board regarding the disbursement of the outstanding 500K USD once they receive the requested documents and supportive information (point 7).

1.2 Overview of National, Regional and Global W4H programme

8. A No-Cost Extension (NCE) request until 31st December 2021, due to the impact of COVID-19 on project continuity, was presented to the Steering Committee for consideration.
9. The W4H Secretariat has received additional requests from countries for programme support. When concept notes are available, the Secretariat will share them with the Steering Committee for electronic approval.
10. Investing in human capital for the health and social care sectors will be highlighted in the upcoming G7/G20, and the World Health Assembly (WHA). In this context, the further development of a skills proposal as presented to the 6th Steering Committee Meeting (28 October 2020) was agreed in principle. OECD presented an update of the linkages between resilience, skills and financing and presented additional detail on the skills concept. The Steering Committee tasked the secretariat with revising and resubmitting the concept note for consideration, also for electronic approval.
11. SILATECH indicated that they would provide suggestions for key performance indicators and measurement metrics on the skills proposal, and will review and consider any other concept notes when received.

12. NORAD asked for clarification on whether the NCE request will impact other areas of work, that the Steering Committee would need to consider. The Secretariat assured that the NCE will allow full implementation, as committed.

Decision points:

- The SC approved the No Cost Extension request.
- A revised 'Skills' concept note to be prepared by OECD and submitted for SC consideration

1.3 2nd Annual MPTF Report overview and highlights

13. The Chair drew the Steering Committee's attention to the MPTF 2nd year annual progress synopsis report shared ahead of the meeting.
14. The Secretariat demonstrated the impact of the programme at the country, regional and global level – including job creation. The results and outcomes of catalytic support were showcased with specific examples of Palestine, South Africa, the Southern African Development Communities (SADC), Union économique et monétaire ouest-africaine (UEMOA) and the Mobility Platform.
15. The reprogramming of funds in light of COVID-19 demonstrated the value and flexibility of the MPTF funding modalities to respond to emergencies. It allowed, for example, to provide timely and context-specific training and mobilization of the health workforce in Palestine to support the national COVID-19 response measures, and demonstrated the high value and flexibility of the MPTF to provide catalytic funding and technical assistance.
16. NORAD appreciated the overview and requested the Secretariat to share PowerPoint presentations and related documents in advance of future meetings.
17. SILATECH requested a detailed implementation document for the previously approved concept notes of Chad, Benin, Mali, Mauritania, Palestine and Sudan, as per their 4th SC meeting request.

Decision point:

- The Secretariat to share the full MPTF 2020 2nd Annual Progress Report with the Steering Committee, once available.

Item 2: Working for Health Catalytic Effect on 'Job Creation'

2.1 Job Creation in W4H

18. WHO presented the job creation measurement and assessment concept note, developed through a joint technical working group (TWG). The goal is to develop a systematic framework for job creation measurement in the context of future W4H projects. The concept note is based on input from the TWG and a desk review, resulting in four proposed dimensions for application: (1) planned job creation; (2) Training; (3) Health worker recruitment; and (4) Better working conditions / decent work. Each of the dimensions has indicators and data sources varying in complexity and funding required. The Steering Committee was invited to provide their input and guidance on the concept note that was shared.
19. SILATECH supported the work in principle and requested more clarity on the next steps of the work, implementation and whether the proposed framework and methodology can be applied retrospectively

20. The Secretariat highlighted the complexity of retrospective application, as support was not designed to gather data necessary for job creation assessment, but will investigate whether the methods can be applied to the ongoing projects.
21. NORAD acknowledged and appreciated the work.
22. The SDC acknowledged the methodology and expressed interest in its application to other SDC bilateral programmes supporting employment.

Decision Point:

- The Steering Committee requested the Secretariat to develop the work further, focusing on implementing this framework; and to having a final concept note completed in the next two months for electronic distribution.

15:55-16:45 Item 3: Working for Health future strategic direction

23. WHO circulated the independent review report on the W4H 5-Year Action Plan. The Chair highlighted the impact of COVID-19 on health and care workers and summarized the main findings of the previously circulated independent review. The independent review highlights four areas: (1) high relevance; (2) effectiveness negatively affected by limited financing; (3) Urgency of investment; and (4) the need for increased capacity, visibility and advocacy—and recommends that the programme's action plan and agenda be continued.
 - The WHO Director General's report will be presented to the WHO World Health Assembly, recommending the renewal of the W4H action plan. A Member State-led process will be initiated to develop the action plan, review primary activities, and budget/resource requirement of those activities, beginning in June 2021.
 - A draft resolution from Ethiopia, Senegal, Turkey and Croatia will be presented to the Assembly. Norway and Switzerland have been involved in the pre-WHA activities and this Member State-led process.
 - The WHO DG report suggests a link to funding streams and engagement with international funding organizations.
24. NORAD stated they were fully engaged in the resolution drafting process. They reiterated their support for and advocacy of the agenda and they will work to support its renewal. However, they are currently not in the position to state their future funding intentions.
25. The MPTF Office expressed their appreciation to review the results, focusing on youth, education, job creation, and others. They noted that the review stressed a need for substantial funds and governance. They support the extension of the fund.

Decision points:

- NORAD will provide written comments on the independent review report
- WHO to share the Director General's Report, once cleared and published.
- WHO will keep the Steering Committee informed once the draft resolution is published.

4.1 Submitted for information

26. Following a new requirement from United Nations (UN) MPTF, all Memorandums of Understandings are updated to include a clause on sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SAH). There was a request to add a clause within OECD and the MPTF office's Memorandums of Understanding (MoU). The text proposed was for the Steering Committee agreement.
27. MPTF explained that MPTFs are based on standard agreements that are agreed by the entire UN systems. OECD is a non-UN organization but a participant. Therefore, the particular amendment for the OECD as they work differently from the UN. This SAH clause has been updated for all UN agencies. The Secretariat requested a separate addition that will align the OECD with the UN system.

Decision point:

- There are no objections to the addition of the SAH clause to the MoU with OECD. There is an agreement to proceed and finalize this administrative requirement.

Any Other Business

- WHO extends their appreciation to Norway for their support for the W4H agenda to the World Health Assembly
- SILATECH reiterates their support for the W4H programme and looks forward to the future. They will engage in bilateral discussions with the Secretariat and provide input on the documents.

PARTICIPANTS:

WHO HQ

1. Jim Campbell (Chair)
2. Pascal Zurn
3. Paul Marsden
4. Ayat Abu-Agla
5. Danielle Agnello
6. Monica Lamonge
7. Rania Kawar

ILO

8. Alette Van Leur
9. Oliver Liang
10. Christiane Wiskow
11. Maren Hopfe

OECD

12. Stefano Scarpetta

13. Nick Tomlinson

MPTF

14. Ilara Carnevali
15. Mari Matsumoto

NORAD

16. Ingvar Olsen
17. Priya Miriam Lerberg

SILATECH

18. Banan Massoud
19. Shadi Murtada
20. Mahboobeh Majeed

SDC (observer)

21. Erika Placella

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS:

- 1_Agenda
- 2_Minutes of 6th Steering Committee meeting: 28 October 2020
- 3_MPTF Funding Framework
- 4_No-Cost Extension Request
- 5_PPT Presentation of W4H action and results since October 2020
- 6_Skills Concept Note
- 7_2nd MPTF Annual Report synopsis
- 8_Job Creation Measurement concept note
- 9_Independent Review Report on the Working for Health 5-Year Action Plan
- 10_Revised OECD MOU