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BETTER HEALTH FOR EUROPE



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Outline

- My vision for the WHO Regional Office in the changing European environment
- WHO's strategic relations with Member States
- Strategic partnerships (especially with European Union (EU) institutions)
- WHO collaboration with Georgia
- Biennial collaborative agreement (BCA) 2010–2011



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WHO Constitution (starting point of the vision)

- It is always useful to go back to the roots and remind ourselves of the WHO Constitution, as valid today as ever before.
- Objective of WHO is: "the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health".
- Definition of health: "complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity".
- Functions clearly spelled out
- WHO is a coalition of Member States who jointly take important decisions: "WHO is the Member States".



The Role of WHO

As the directing and coordinating authority in international health (WHO Constitution, Article 2), WHO:

- provides **leadership** on matters critical to health and engages in **partnership** where joint action is needed;
- shapes the **research agenda** and stimulates the generation, translation and dissemination of valuable **knowledge**;
- sets **norms and standards**, and promotes and monitors their implementation;
- articulates **ethical and evidence-based policy** options;
- provides **technical support**, catalysing change, and building sustainable institutional capacity; and
- monitors the **health situation** and assesses **health trends**.



The Changing Environment

Pressures

- Changing demographic and social landscape
- Growing health inequalities within and between countries
- Effects of economic crisis

Challenges

- Pandemic preparedness and control
- Climate change
- Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) and neurodegenerative diseases
- Need for health system reforms – prevention, quality, transparency, and patient needs and involvement

Opportunities

- Increased political recognition of importance of health
- Growing number of actors entering the health arena
- Key factor in innovation and economic growth



Strengths of WHO

- Breadth of its mandate and freedom of work
- Long-standing and trustful relationship with Member States
- Honest-broker reputation and credibility
- Global organization with decentralized arrangements: regional, country level
- Convening power
- Staff in many countries to facilitate implementation

**“WHO in Europe” is more than the secretariat.
It includes Member States and partners.**



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VISION





My vision of the WHO Regional Office in Europe (1)

The WHO Regional Office for Europe should be:

- a centre of **public health excellence**;
- a leader in **health policy, public health and health system development** for Europe;
- a strong, **evidence-based organization**, relevant to the whole Region, with strong programmes and high-calibre staff known for **professional excellence**;
- an organization that is **ahead of developments**, innovates, inspires and shows the way;
- **accountable** for decisions of the Regional Committee and World Health Assembly and, with Member States, turning them into action;



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My vision of the WHO Regional Office in Europe (2)

- an organization that **unites and integrates the Region** (acting as a bridge between different parts) and promotes **solidarity, equity and health**;
- an organization that works in **close partnership** with:
 - WHO headquarters and other regions;
 - EU institutions;
 - all traditional and new players;and creates fora for policy discussions so as to foster **policy coherence**;



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My vision of the WHO Regional Office in Europe (3)

- an organization with an **extended network** to **advocate** and support **implementation**;
- an organization with a positive environment for work that **inspires and empowers staff**;
- an organization that is **financially sustainable** and has sound **financial management**.



Making the Vision a Reality!

Seven Strategic Priorities for Action

1. Developing a **European health policy** as a coherent policy framework
2. Improving **governance** in the WHO European Region and in the Regional Office
3. Further strengthening **collaboration with Member States**
4. Engaging in **strategic partnerships for health** and creating improved policy coherence
5. Strengthening the **European contribution to global health**
6. Reaching out through an **information and communication strategy**
7. Promoting the Regional Office as an organization with a **positive working environment and sustainable funding** for its work



Diversity of the European Region

WHO has to be relevant to ALL countries of the Region in different ways.

With EU Member States, WHO must:

- address their priorities;
- inspire their work through policies, strategies, technical programmes;
- coordinate, advocate;
- facilitate solidarity and exchange of experience with the rest of Europe.

▪ **With the newly independent states (NIS) and Balkan countries, WHO must:**

- continue technical cooperation;
- explore ways to have more input in strategic development;
- address the health divide in Europe in order to reduce it.



Strategic Relations with Member States

The Regional Office can play an important role: acting as a bridge and ensuring true international cooperation through:

- exchange of expertise;
- exchange of know-how;
- exchange of good and best practices;
- intercountry work: an excellent means of capacity building and learning;
- promoting opportunities through twinning or multilateral agreements.



Strategic Relations with Countries (2)

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Strategic Relations with Member States

- **New country strategy will be presented to the Regional Committee in 2011.**

This process includes a review of the country work of the Regional Office (including country offices (COs) and geographically dispersed offices (GDOs)):

- criteria for establishing country offices;
- exit strategy for country offices;
- their role, links to the Regional Office;
- rules of engagement with governments and other partners.

Timeline: mandate from the Regional Committee in 2010 and report back and decision in 2011

Engaging in Strategic Partnerships for Health



**and Creating Improved
Policy Coherence**



Strategic Partnerships for Health

Use WHO's convening power, with (earned) leadership role for health:

- to act as bridge between countries and sectors;
- to strengthen and sustain partnerships for health;
- to create a partnerships forum to promote policy coherence.

A partnership strategy is to be submitted to the Regional Committee in 2011, presenting improved collaboration with partners at the international and country levels.



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Strategic Partnership with the European Commission

- Traditional partners – exchange of letters (1972, 1982, 2000)
- EU countries are a majority in the Regional Committee (governing body of the WHO European Region)
- Partnership to change from a project-based approach to a strategic one
- Joint memorandum of understanding to be signed by the Regional Director and Commissioner Dalli at the Regional Committee session in September 2011.



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A Shared Vision for Joint Health Action

Five flagship areas proposed for collaboration

- Build **one health security system** to protect Europe
- Build **one health information system** to inform Europe
- Create a coalition of **different sectors to tackle health and social determinants**, to improve health in Europe today and for **future generations**
- Share and exploit identified **good practices and innovations**, so that the public health function of all European health systems is developed and strengthened
- Jointly identify, advocate and provide the resources for **key research priorities** that will bring the European research community together and **maintain Europe's cutting edge in research** to strengthen health development and action



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Areas of WHO Country Collaboration in Georgia

Health systems (health sector reform process)

- Full-scale assessment of the performance of health system in 2008–2009, to be continued in 2010
 - Analysis of financing reforms
 - Review of medicines policy
- Strengthen the institutional capacity of the health ministry in health system reform and analysis
- Strengthening of health system information management
- Review of policy on human resources for health (policy dialogue)



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Areas of WHO Country Collaboration in Georgia

- **Immunization and polio**
 - Over 20% of children born in 2007 are estimated to be underimmunized in 6 regions
 - Good responsive national focal point for the International Health Regulations
 - Acute flaccid paralysis (AFP) surveillance needs to be enhanced in several locations (Tbilisi)
 - Improved effort still needed to meet the core capacity requirements for surveillance and response

- **Pandemic (H1N1) 2009**
 - Participates in Euroflu
 - Virological data during pandemic reported almost regularly
 - Epidemiological data less frequently
 - National Influenza Centre active
 - Regular participation and pandemic preparedness meetings (next in September 2010 in Romania)



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Areas of WHO Country Collaboration in Georgia

HIV/AIDS

- Successful coordination with national HIV/AIDS team on **drug treatment, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and obstetrics and gynaecology and civil-society settings**
- Assistance in **developing national evidence-based treatment, guidelines, protocols** and other normative documents
- Advocacy, policy advice, normative guidance and technical assistance in **promoting evidence and human rights based policies and practices**
- Technical assistance in **strengthening national capacities** to offer quality HIV/AIDS services
- Technical support in **strengthening of national HIV/AIDS surveillance and monitoring and evaluation systems**
 - the draft national HIV/AIDS strategic plan for 2011–2016
 - monitoring and evaluation framework



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Areas of WHO Country Collaboration in Georgia

Reproductive health

- Reproductive health strategy/plan for Georgia (2007–2009)
- Provision of technical expertise to participate in 2009 conference for breast and cervical cancer prevention
- Assessment of the quality of maternal health care with United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to take place in 2010
- Development of pre-service curriculum in family planning in collaboration with JSI and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
 - Assistance in setting up a monitoring system to update pre service curriculum in reproductive health

Health promotion

- Development of a strategy for child and adolescent health in 2008
- Participation of Georgia in Schools for Health in Europe and assistance with capacity building for school health promotion



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Biannual collaborative agreement with Georgia for 2010–2011

➤ Priority 1

Strengthening the Georgian **health system** by enhancing function of the Ministry of Labour Health and Social Affairs

➤ Priority 2

Improvement of **maternal and child health** to reach the Millennium Development goals

➤ Priority 3

Addressing **communicable diseases**, particularly tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and malaria

➤ Priority 4

Addressing **noncommunicable diseases and environmental health issues**



Conclusions

- This is a golden opportunity to **ensure improvement in public health in equitable manner** in all Member States in the WHO European Region.
- **The diversity of the Region** is its strength and can help to ensure exchange of good practice.
- **Strategic partnerships with Member States** should be improved to empower health ministries to take more effective public health action.
- **Through stronger partnership with other players in public health at the international and national levels,** WHO can assist countries to take public health action more effectively.
- **The WHO Regional Office for Europe will continue to build its technical expertise to be the lead authority** at the international and national levels.



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**LET'S WORK TOGETHER
FOR BETTER HEALTH FOR
EUROPE AND THE WORLD!**



THANK YOU