Introduction

The Office of the Regional Director, the Division of Programme Management and the Division of Administration and Finance work in close coordination to support WHO’s work in the Western Pacific Region, coordinating technical programmes, country support, partner and donor relations, administrative and financial support, and communications.

The work is guided by the Regional Director’s vision of ensuring countries are always the starting point for WHO’s work. This year, the team has led efforts to strengthen communications, promote a stronger culture of teamwork and collaboration among staff within the Region, promote stronger accountability and transparency, and increase the diversity of the WHO workforce within the Region.

Office of the Regional Director

The Office of the Regional Director (RDO) directly supports the work of the Regional Director as the leader of WHO’s work within the Western Pacific Region, and as a member of WHO’s global senior management team. RDO also provides leadership and coordination of communications, exter-
nal relations and partnerships, and information products and services, and supports the work of WHO governing bodies.

The Communications unit (COM) within RDO works closely with the Region’s 15 WHO country offices, technical divisions and WHO headquarters to provide timely, accurate, credible, understandable, relevant and actionable health information and advice to policy-makers, partners and the public. This year, RDO has led a process to strengthen WHO’s communications in the Region.

Strong communications rely on high-quality publications, information products and translation services. The Information Products and Services team (IPS), which includes the Library, the Publications unit and the Translation team, assists WHO staff and Member States in creating, translating, disseminating and retrieving health-related information.

The External Relations (ERP) unit supports good relationships with the 42 donors that directly support WHO work in the Region. ERP also ensures transparency and accountability in the use of donor funds, through rigorous systems of grant management and sustained coordination with technical units and country offices to ensure timely and high-quality donor reports. In the Western Pacific Region, ERP also coordinates the implementation of the Framework of Engagement with Non-State Actors, adopted by the World Health Assembly in 2016.

Division of Programme Management

The Division of Programme Management (DPM) coordinates technical cooperation with Member States through programme development and operations, country support and editorial services. The Division employs results-based management and cross-cutting approaches in order to ensure results at the country level. DPM directs strategic and operational planning as well as resource allocation based on priorities identified by WHO governing bodies – the World Health Assembly, the Executive Board and the Regional Committee for the Western Pacific. Its work is guided by the Programme Committee and country cooperation strategies. The Division also is responsible for overall coordination of governing body meetings, including the annual session of the Regional Committee.

The Programme Development and Operations (PDO) unit coordinates the implementation of the programme budget across the Region. Over the past year, the unit supported the closure of Programme Budget 2016–2017 with a 99% implementation rate against available resources – one of the highest of all WHO regions. This was achieved in partnership with the Programme Management Officers’ Network, which is coordinated by PDO. Together they planned and rolled out Programme Budget 2018-2019 and prepared for the transition to the Thirteenth General Programme of Work, and will be instrumental in ensuring its effective implementation throughout the Region. PDO is also responsible for coordinating and convening regional meetings, more than 75 of which were held over the past year, involving Member State representatives, partners and more than 300 experts.

The Country Support Unit (CSU) works closely with WHO country offices to ensure that Member State priorities and needs are at the centre of all work. The unit also coordinates the development, implementation, monitoring and review of WHO country cooperation strategies – which are jointly developed with Member States to guide WHO work in countries. CSU helps drive WHO reform in the Region, serves as a regional

The Regional Director discusses Member State concerns during the October 2017 session of the Regional Committee for the Western Pacific in Brisbane, Australia.
focal point for the WHO transformation and implements WHO evaluation policies in the Region. The unit also coordinates WHO’s work with other United Nations agencies and global health initiatives.

The Editorial Services team (EDT) ensures the quality of WHO official documents and information products by providing editorial guidance and support across the Organization. The team coordinates all documentation for the Regional Committee from all divisions in the Region, as well as supporting the communications needs of the Regional Director. In general, EDT supports quality control for all publications and communications products at the Regional Office.

Division of Administration and Finance

The Division of Administration and Finance (DAF) is comprised of three units – Budget and Finance, Human Resources Management, and Information Technologies and Administration. The Division ensures accountability and transparency in the use of funds through diligent reporting and oversight. Effective procedures for recruiting and retaining skilled staff, as well as support for equipping and empowering staff, help WHO deliver meaningful results in the Western Pacific Region.

The Budget and Finance unit within the Division provides guidance, policies and reporting procedures that strengthen internal financial control for compliance and quality assurance.

Direct Financial Cooperation (DFC) activities were implemented and reported in a timely manner in Member States across the Region, with financial support by the Organization that would otherwise have come from local government coffers. These payments help governments to strengthen health development capacity, simultaneously enhancing the impact of WHO technical cooperation. The Region has maintained zero overdue DFCs since September 2015.

To ensure results, DFC quality-assurance activities were conducted in every WHO country office in the Region.

The Human Resources Management unit is tasked with recruiting world-class experts and getting them on board in the shortest time possible. The unit also takes into account gender and geographical representation to ensure balance and diversity among staff in the Region.

In 2017, the Region completed 100% of staff performance appraisals, known as Performance Management and Development System reviews. The Regional Office for the Western Pacific was the only major WHO office to achieve full on-time compliance.

The Information Technology group focused on managing risks and increasing compliance over the past year. Main initiatives focused on increasing the redundancy of the infrastructure, enhancing network quality, and delivering administrative and technical IT solutions to meet programme objectives. Key achievements included: development of the global risk management tool; significant enhancements to the regional analytics portal; and development of systems to manage the fellowship programme. The team also continued its close technological involvement in the roll-out of the Pohnpei Dispensary Strengthening Programme.

In the Administrative Services Unit, the year saw a comprehensive review of services provided by external partners, which led to lower costs and efficiencies. Further, the unit continued to ensure security and an optimal working environment by enhancing a number of areas on the grounds of the Regional Office.

In addition, the Division assisted office relocations in Malaysia in order to operate more efficiently and meet the requirements of the United Nations Minimum Operating Security Standards.