Best practices for improving effectiveness of working group meetings

The main progress of draft standards often take place during working group meetings. It is therefore necessary to be efficient during those meetings.

Here are several proposals aiming to improve effectiveness of WG meetings. A great part of the success of meetings lies in what is done between two meetings to prepare, progress and follow-up:

Before the meeting:

- WHO: WG Convenor (supported by WG secretary if any) - Communicate meeting time and place in due time

- WHO: WG Convenor (supported by WG secretary if any) - Ensure the venue has the required equipment (tel. conference, speakers,…)

- WHO: WG Convenor (supported by WG secretary if any) - Prepare an agenda that precisely indicates the documents to be discussed and the expected outcome.

-

- WHO: WG Convenor - Resume and analyse the list of actions decided during the previous meeting.

- WHO: Project Leader/Convenor/WG secretary - If the aim of the meeting is to deal with comments formerly sent on a draft standard, the Project Leader/Convenor/WG secretary shall have solved all editorial comments prior to the meeting. The meeting shall focus on main technical items.

During the meeting:

- WHO: WG Convenor (supported by WG secretary if any) - Begin the meeting by reporting on discussions/recommendations from the previous meeting and clearly indicate that those items will not be re-opened for discussion.

- WHO: WG Convenor (supported by WG secretary if any) - Circulate attendance lists.

- WHO: WG Convenor (supported by WG secretary if any) - Ensure the experts present at the meeting are entitled to participate.

- WHO: WG Convenor - Do not re-open the discussion on a conclusion already taken by the WG at that working draft stage but wait for comments from the NSB that nominated the expert at the Enquiry stage to re-open the discussion.

- WHO: WG Convenor - Do not allow never-ending debates.

- WHO: WG Convenor (supported by WG secretary if any) - During the meeting, write a precise action list that identifies the responsible person and a target date.

- WHO: WG Convenor (supported by WG secretary if any) - Define the next steps on each draft standard for the next two meetings.

- WHO: WG members - Do not begin a draft standard without having solved main controversial items. Otherwise discussions will be re-opened at every meeting.

- WHO: WG Convenor (supported by WG secretary if any) - Before leaving the meeting, have a clear view of the conclusions of the meeting. A summary, report or draft resolutions may be requested by TC/SC.

Between two meetings:

- WHO: Project Leader/Convenor/WG secretary - Update the action plan (i.e. target dates on projects, etc.).

- WHO: Project Leader/Convenor/WG secretary - Follow-up agreed actions and send reminders to the responsible people who need to provide contributions.

- WHO: Project Leader/Convenor/WG secretary - Update the draft standard based on the consensus agreed at the last meeting.

- WHO: WG members - If the draft standard must be submitted to the WG for a last proofreading before to be submitted to Enquiry, experts shall not use this opportunity to re-open debates; the aim of this proofreading shall be clearly stated.

- WHO: Project Leader/Convenor/WG secretary - Encourage web meetings to deal with specific items between two meetings of the working group.

- WHO: Project Leader/Convenor/WG secretary - Ensure visibility on the planning of forthcoming meetings, i.e when to expect what by or from whom.

Change of Convenor/Secretary:

Ensure continuity of work: via regular uploading of WG working documents on electronic platforms (Livelink and Collaboration tool).

October 2018