

REPORT ON THE JOINT DISCUSSION FORUM

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

INTERNATIONAL ACTUARIAL ASSOCIATION

OCTOBER 21, 2013, 10:00–15:30

Participants:

International Actuarial Association (IAA):

Ken Buffin, Chairperson of the Supranational Relations Committee and Member of the Executive Committee;

Emile Stipp, Chairperson of the Health Committee and the Health Section Committee; and
Denis Garand, Member of the Health Section Committee.

World Health Organization (WHO):

Dr. David Evans, Director of Health Systems Financing;

Dr. Dorjsuren Bayarsaikhan, Health Economist, Health Financing Policy, Health Systems Financing; and
Seuran Lee, Analyst, Health Financing Policy, Health Systems Financing.

1. The meeting commenced with introductions, after which the purpose of the day's discussion was set out, namely to introduce the IAA and in particular its activities in health actuarial work to the WHO. The hope was expressed that, by the end of the day, there would be some exchange of opinions on whether there are opportunities for the two organisations to work together.
2. Emile presented on the [role of actuaries in health systems](#), explained an example of actuarial thinking in the context of an analysis of medical inflation, and Denis then gave an in-depth [overview of health microinsurance](#). The conclusion of the presentation was that:
 - a. Actuaries have deep insight into healthcare systems that could be of value to the WHO, whether in the public or private sector;
 - b. Actuaries' insights are based on detailed but pragmatic analyses, and actuaries tend to be data sceptical;
 - c. Actuaries tend to emphasise context in their analysis and work, such as role players' incentives, and the impact of administration arrangements;
 - d. The profession places strong emphasis on professionalism and ethics, and actuaries are objective and balanced in their advice;
 - e. Actuaries focus on long and short term risks and how to mitigate them; and
 - f. Actuaries aim to do their work to the benefit of society.
3. Discussion followed on some of the trends in health insurance with reference to medical inflation and some of the solutions to it, such as wellness and prevention programmes, and the way actuaries are involved in these. There was also in-depth discussion on health microinsurance and the role it can play in supporting the quest for universal coverage.
4. The WHO indicated that they could see the value of obtaining actuarial input on selected matters, such as:
 - a. The sustainability of healthcare funding;
 - b. The design of social health insurance systems; and

- c. Putting together the lessons learnt from health microinsurance, and new solutions to providing insurance to the informal sector.
5. The IAA and the WHO agreed to consult further internally and to set up another meeting to discuss a way forward. Possible ways of collaborating include: invitations to conferences, whether as speakers or attendees, attending relevant committee meetings of the other party, introducing existing research to each other, enabling the involvement of actuaries in appropriate projects. Dr. Evans expressed interest in exploring a possible WHO/IAA Memorandum of Understanding.
6. For now, the IAA will, from time to time, forward selected papers and presentations to the WHO which deal with the three topics of interest under 4.a. to 4.c., and any other topic in which the WHO may be interested.