



REGIONAL COMMITTEE

Provisional Agenda item 11.2

Seventy-first Session

SEA/RC71/17

New Delhi, India

3–7 September 2018

6 August 2018

Management and Governance matters: Status of the SEA Regional Office Building

The status of the WHO South-East Asia (SEA) Regional Office Building at Indraprastha Estate in New Delhi, India, was presented to the Seventieth session of the WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia in Maldives in September 2017. The Regional Committee therein decided, through SEA/RC/70(2), that the best option for managing the precarious structural issues of the Regional Office Building was to redevelop the whole campus.

Noting with high appreciation the host country's agreement to finance and manage the demolition and reconstruction of a new Regional Office Building at the existing site and the excellent cooperation and substantive contribution to the project, the Regional Committee requested the Secretariat to continue working closely with the Government of India on the project and to swiftly finalize the required agreements regarding financing, construction and ownership of the new building.

This Working Paper provides updates on the progress from the last Regional Committee with the following highlights:

- Relocation of the Regional Office to two temporary "swing" spaces in Central Delhi with effect from 14 May 2018 in a smoothly executed transition;
- Appointment of the National Buildings Construction Corporation (NBCC) Limited as the project management consultancy agency for this reconstruction project by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India;
- Progress made in the design stage of the project; and
- Continued dialogue between the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, and the World Health Organization, Regional Office for South-East Asia, towards efficient and successful completion of the project within the agreed timelines.

The attached Working Paper was presented to the High-Level Preparatory (HLP) Meeting for noting. The HLP reviewed the paper and made the following recommendations for consideration by Seventy-first Session of the Regional Committee:

Actions by WHO

- Provide the latest update on the SEA Regional Office Building reconstruction project to the Seventy-first Session of the Regional Committee in September.

The working paper and the HLP recommendations are submitted to the Seventy-first Session of the WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia for its consideration.

Introduction

1. During its Sixty-eighth session in Dili, Timor-Leste, in September 2015, the WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia reviewed and noted the preliminary report on the status of the South-East Asia Regional Office Building in New Delhi, India.
2. The Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoH&FW), Government of India, invited the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) to undertake a detailed analysis of the existing facilities at the Regional Office campus. The CPWD issued a report titled “Seismic strengthening of buildings at WHO-SEARO campus, New Delhi” in January 2016. Following the findings of this analysis, comprehensive technical studies on the structural status of the WHO South-East Asia Regional Office Building were presented to the Sixty-ninth session of the WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia held in Colombo, Sri Lanka, in September 2016. Vide its Decision SEA/RC69(3), the Regional Committee requested the Regional Office to proceed with the move to temporary premises and finalize a sustainably funded reconstruction strategy for a new Regional Office Building, urging Member States to contribute as possible. Accordingly, pledges from Maldives, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Timor-Leste amounting to more than US\$ 1 million were made for the project.
3. The Secretariat provided updates on the temporary move to the Seventieth session of the Regional Committee in Maldives in September 2017, including on the signature of lease agreements for the identified temporary accommodation of the Regional Office as well as on funding for the reconstruction project by the Government of India. A detailed business case report outlining the business requirements and the risk assessment of three available options was presented. The three options were:
 - (1) refurbishment of the existing campus,
 - (2) redevelopment of the whole campus,
 - (3) part redevelopment and part refurbishment of the existing campus.
4. The Regional Committee vide its Decision SEA/RC70(2) decided to adopt “Option 2: redevelopment of the whole campus” for a total estimated budget of US\$ 55.89 million, with WHO covering the cost of the relocation of the staff to temporary premises for a period of up to five years for an estimated amount of US\$ 20.49 million. The Decision also expressed deep appreciation for the Government of India for its continued generosity in hosting the Regional Office for South-East Asia in New Delhi, including its agreement to take the responsibility for financing and managing the construction of the new SEA Regional Office Building that would amount to approximately US\$ 35.4 million (Indian Rupee 228 million).
5. Decision SEA/RC70(2) further noted with appreciation the pledges for the new Building from other SEA Member States, amounting to US\$ 1.25 million.
6. In line with Decision SEA/RC70(2) of the Regional Committee, the Chairperson of the Seventieth session of the Regional Committee, in his summary report, briefed the Executive Board on the updates and discussions related to the status of the SEA Regional Office Building.
7. This paper presents the progress made since the discussions on the subject at the Seventieth session of the Regional Committee in September 2017 and the adoption of Decision SEA/RC70(2).

Progress made

A. Move to temporary premises

8. As reported during the Seventieth session of the Regional Committee, the following two adjacent “swing” properties were identified as the temporary office space for the Regional Office, with a total combined area of 76 789 sq.ft:

- (1) Metropolitan Hotel (26 100 sq. ft)
- (2) Red Fort Capital Parsvanath Tower 1 (50 686 sq. ft)

9. The above properties were selected based on a number of factors, including: the acceptable security provisions; the location in central Delhi in proximity to basic amenities; public transportation options; and capacity to accommodate all staff and activities of the South-East Asia Regional Office. The process of selecting the premises was supported by a consulting company through detailed market research and evaluation of about 25 shortlisted “swing” space properties. Lease deeds were signed for an initial period of three years, renewable for another three years, following careful legal and security reviews of the sourcing process and contract documents.

10. Full fit-out of the temporary premises was concluded with the support of two WHO-SEA Regional Office internal committees that were established to ensure that the new premises would meet the requirements of work and that the move would be managed without disruption to ongoing technical work. These two committees are:

- (i) Building Committee: Senior staff representatives from all Regional Office departments and members from the Staff Association and the SEA Regional Office Health and Safety Committee formed the Building Committee. This Committee was involved from the very start of the process, and helped to define the criteria for the search of the new premises. Members visited all feasible proposed locations and took part in their evaluation. This Committee also considered and made decisions about the design of the new office space, seating arrangements and related matters.
- (ii) Building Relocation Committee: The Building Relocation Committee was constituted after the Building Committee finalized its work and all decisions on the structural design of the new offices were made. The Building Relocation Committee also had representation from each Regional Office department as well as the Staff Association and the Health and Safety Committee. This Committee deliberated on the details of working in the new office structure, given the considerable changes from the existing office. The Building Relocation Committee also supported the Regional Office in outlining the principles of working in an open-plan setting, formulating guidelines for the move, and drafting various policies on how to manage work in the new office.

11. Following refurbishment of the temporary spaces as per the agreed designs, the Regional Office for South-East Asia shifted to the temporary spaces on 14 May 2018 in a smoothly executed transition.

12. The move from the 60-year-old WHO SEA regional headquarters to the new, serviced office buildings has offered the Secretariat opportunities to make substantial gains in energy efficiency and conservation. It is worth noting that in the four months leading up to the move, more than 18 tonnes of paper were disposed of for recycling from the Regional Office. In the old building, 31 multifunctioning devices for printing and photocopying were being used whereas the new premises are operating only 11 such devices. Automation of several business processes was introduced in the lead-up to the move to ensure that these efficiency gains remained sustainable.

Progress on building the new Regional Office

13. The Government of India, and the MoH&FW in particular, have made all efforts to ensure that the building project will be completed in the shortest possible time frame.

14. Vide its letter F. No M. 11020/01/2014-IH dated 14 December 2017, the MoH&FW appointed the National Buildings Construction Corporation (NBCC) Limited as the project management consultancy agency for this reconstruction project.

15. The NBCC will, on behalf of the Government of India, prepare and carry out all competitive bidding processes, contract with the architects and engineers, allocate the different work packages to duly qualified companies, and maintain robust monitoring and quality control over all contracts. NBCC will also provide regular updates to the MoH&FW and WHO on the management of the project and raise issues for decisions as required.

16. The MoH&FW has instructed NBCC to recognize WHO as the owners of the new building and to ensure that all reasonable requirements of the Regional Office for South-East Asia are included in the building's concept and design. In this context, following a competitive bidding process, Achal Kataria Architects have been appointed to finalize the designs and concept plan.

17. The Regional Office has been working diligently with the architects and NBCC to decide on all requirements for the new building, and the detailed designs and drawings for the whole project are expected to be finalized and submitted for relevant authorizations and permits by the end of June 2018.

18. In parallel, the process of conversion of the nature of land use of the plot from "socio-cultural" to "office building", as reported during the last Regional Committee, is now completed. This has secured a higher floor-area ratio (FAR) of 2.0 from the previous 1.2 for the new office building, thereby allowing more room to meet all the anticipated requirements of the Organization's regional headquarters in New Delhi.

19. At the time of writing this report the Government of India and the World Health Organization are finalizing an agreement to document the generous in-kind contribution being made by the former and the relevant provisions to ensure that there is no interruption to WHO's continued lease of the existing land and ownership of the new building once handed over as has been conferred to WHO vide the Perpetual Lease Deed and Sale Deed of 14 September 1971.

20. The agreement being concluded also includes in its ambit the professional and safe removal of highly valued artworks from the old building, their secure storage in climate-controlled conditions, and integration of these artworks into the design of the redeveloped Regional Office Building. This includes artworks donated by Member States and others, which will also be safely preserved for incorporation into the overall design elements of the new Regional Office Building.

21. Importantly, the agreed scope of works include ensuring compliance with LEED Platinum rating, meaning that the SEARO building will be among the "greenest" constructions in New Delhi. In addition to this, WHO has prioritized specifications which ensure a healthy workplace for staff and visitors, including automated ambient air and lighting controls, appropriate spaces for movement and physical activity and a working plan which encourages collaboration and cooperation. Pledges of funds from other Member States will be used to cover these important health related aspects of the new building construction.

Expected timeline for the reconstruction project

22. All drawings and designs to secure the required permits and authorizations were submitted by NBCC and the architects by 30 June 2018.
23. WHO will hand over a vacated old Regional Office Building and dispose of all moveable inventory by the end of August 2018.
24. Dismantling and removal of artwork will be carried out during the remainder of 2018.
25. The bidding process for the project is expected to be completed in January 2019. The construction company selected is expected to start work during the second quarter of 2019.
26. Keeping in mind an estimated two-year timeline for construction, handover of the building is projected to take place before the end of the second quarter of 2021.
27. The Secretariat will continue working closely with the MoH&FW towards making this project a success within these timelines and report on the progress of the project to the Regional Committee each year.
28. The working paper is submitted to Seventy-first session of the Regional Committee for noting.