

The **second WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine**, held in New Delhi, India, on 17–19 December 2025, has the theme of “Restoring balance: The science and practice of health and well-being”. The Summit aligns with the [Global Traditional Medicine Strategy 2025–2034](#), which recognizes Traditional Medicine as a living science that contributes to universal health coverage, health equity and sustainability. The Summit serves as a global platform to accelerate implementation of the new strategy, foster partnerships, and translate pledges and commitments into concrete action.



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### Parallel session 4.D

## Charting the way forward for progress with accountability

Plenary 4 and associated parallel sessions will focus on how data, technology and ancestral knowledge can work in balance to establish the standards, ethical frameworks and mechanisms needed for tracking progress, ensuring accountability and operationalizing the future of Traditional Medicine.

This parallel session aims to advance the operationalization of the Global Traditional Medicine Strategy 2025–2034. Building on insights generated during the 2025 World Health Summit (WHS) dialogue on operationalizing the Global Traditional Medicine Strategy, this session focuses on defining how progress will be measured, reported and collectively advanced. Anchored in the Strategy’s four strategic objectives, it seeks to establish a shared foundation for accountability by identifying priority indicators and data structures, articulating actionable multisectoral commitments, ensuring equity and community voice in accountability design, and initiating the first reporting cycle. Together, the WHS dialogue and this session form a continuum – from identifying implementation challenges to establishing mechanisms that make the integration of Traditional Medicine trackable, transparent and globally aligned.

### Rationale

Delivering on the promise of the Global Traditional Medicine Strategy 2025–2034 requires more than well-articulated ideas; it demands shared commitment, collective action and robust accountability across all strategic pillars. Evidence synthesized through the strategy development process and recent reviews indicates persistent gaps across the Traditional Medicine ecosystem, particularly concerning accountability on research agenda implementation and funding (strategic objective 1), the integration of Traditional Medicine into health systems (strategic objective 3), and governance frameworks and equity (strategic objectives 2 and 4). These challenges include fragmented and under-resourced research capacity, uneven regulatory mechanisms, limited and inconsistent uptake of WHO classifications such as the International Classification of Diseases 11th Revision (ICD-11) and International Classification of Health Interventions (ICHI) for standardized documentation, and major variability in data collection and quality.

All such gaps hinder comparable measurement, evidence generation and coordinated monitoring of progress (1–4). Insights from the WHS dialogue further highlighted the need for context-appropriate evidence generation and raised long-standing concerns about integrating traditional healers and Indigenous knowledge into formal systems (5). These concerns parallel broader literature describing gaps in safety monitoring, practitioner engagement and governance of biodiversity-linked knowledge within digital health and AI ecosystems (6–8). Additional analyses emphasize that equity, community participation and data sovereignty remain insufficiently embedded within national Traditional Medicine architectures, limiting trust and accountability (9).

Across these sources, a consistent picture emerges: global implementation is hindered by the absence of shared indicators, inadequate follow-up structures, limited financing models and insufficient safeguards to ensure Indigenous and community voices shape governance processes. Aligned with the Summit’s theme of restoring balance, this session responds directly to these gaps by defining measurable indicators, outlining a reporting cycle, and catalysing multisector commitments supported by sustainable financing and inclusive accountability

frameworks. Through this emphasis on measurable, transparent and equitable implementation, the session ensures that the Strategy's aspirations translate into coherent, globally aligned and meaningful progress.

## Objectives

- Define priority indicators for accountability to guide strategy implementation.
- Identify actionable commitments from governments and partners, including policy steps, regulatory milestones, funding intentions and pilot initiatives.
- Discuss practical approaches to strengthening evidence, data structures and reporting mechanisms aligned with the Strategy's four strategic objectives.
- Build consensus on next steps for a cross-sector accountability and reporting cycle.
- Highlight equity and inclusiveness by ensuring that community voices, Indigenous perspectives and data sovereignty considerations inform the design of accountability mechanisms.
- Strengthen collaboration pathways across public, private, academic and community sectors to support sustainable and ethical integration of Traditional Medicine.

## Guiding questions

1. **Defining what to measure – indicators for progress:** What feasible, high-value indicators aligned with the Strategy's four strategic objectives – evidence, regulation, integration and community/cross-sector value – should guide progress in the first reporting cycle?
2. **Strengthening evidence and data structures:** How can data quality be practically improved, including through the use of ICD-11 and ICHI, responsible data governance and ethical approaches to digitizing traditional knowledge?
3. **Regulatory and policy priorities:** What near-term regulatory actions and policy steps can Member States realistically commit to, building on the examples and challenges that surfaced in the earlier WHS session?
4. **Financing and partnerships for sustainable implementation:** Which models for cross-sector partnerships and resource mobilization can support equitable integration of Traditional Medicine and ensure sustainability over time?
5. **Equity, community voice and data sovereignty:** How can accountability mechanisms best reflect Indigenous and community perspectives, uphold data sovereignty and protect biodiversity-linked knowledge – a key cross-cutting priority of the Summit?
6. **Building a shared accountability pathway:** What should the first reporting cycle look like, including roles, responsibilities and mechanisms for follow-up across countries and partners?

## Session format

The proposed session format adopts a high-level, multisectoral roundtable format designed to translate the Summit's agenda into concrete action for progress with accountability. It opens with a welcome and framing, followed by an evidence-focused introduction that anchors accountability in the four strategic objectives of the Global Traditional Medicine Strategy 2025–2034, and links back to insights from the WHS dialogue to establish the baseline from which progress must be measured. The core of the session is a moderated, multisectoral roundtable that examines the objectives of the Global Traditional Medicine Strategy, and the outcomes of earlier sessions through four accountability lenses. These are: 1) collaboration: featuring researcher perspectives and practitioner and healer insights on healer-regulator partnerships and protection of Indigenous sovereignty; youth perspectives on responsible technology and delivery of equitable, shared benefits over the long term; and civil-society reflections on practitioner engagement and community-led accountability; 2) financing, industry and partnerships: examining ethical commercialization, financing enablers and protection of biodiversity-linked and community-held knowledge; 3) ethics, knowledge and communities: addressing cultural rights, equity and the social foundations that sustain Traditional Medicine; and 4) government integration: comparing national and regional models to identify the accountability mechanisms most essential for effective implementation.

The session concludes with a focused shift to implementation, beginning with a moderator-led Action Roundtable in which each panellist proposes one key indicator combined with one brief actionable recommendation derived from their sector to guide tangible progress during the first reporting cycle for the Summit. An interactive audience Q&A

engaging both in-person and online participants will follow. The moderator will synthesize the combined inputs from the panellists and the audience Q&A into two to three core recommendations to inform the Summit's final action agenda in the Closing Plenary. The session closes with remarks from the moderator, summarizing key insights, underscoring the commitments articulated during the dialogue, and outlining the pathway toward accountable, measurable implementation of the Global Traditional Medicine Strategy.

## References

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