

# Strategic Advisory Group to the United Nations on HIV and Drug Use

## Terms of Reference 2017-2020

The overall objective of the Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) is to advise UN participants and others on overall global policies and strategies, research and development in relation to the global HIV/AIDS response among people who use drugs. The SAG was established in April 2014 with an initial period of work agreed until December 2016. Following a review of the SAG's mandate and functioning in early 2017, the SAG agreed to continue its work under an updated and revised terms of reference outlined below.

### I. Core Principles of the Strategic Advisory Group:

Each member of the SAG agrees with these three core principles which underpin and guide the work of the group:

- 1) Harm reduction programmes, which are evidence-informed, high-quality, accessible and affordable, should be adequately resourced and scaled up, ensuring equitable access to prevention, treatment and care for HIV, viral hepatitis, tuberculosis and overdose.
- 2) The human rights of people who use drugs must be respected, protected and fulfilled.
- 3) Supportive and enabling legal and policy environments are essential to the realization of effective and sustainable harm reduction programmes.

### II. Core Functions of the Strategic Advisory Group:

1. Provide strategic advice to UN participants and others on:
  - a. The global response for people who use drugs, working towards reducing viral transmission, mortality and morbidity, as well as discrimination and violence faced by people who use drugs.
  - b. Progress made towards: ensuring comprehensive access to prevention, treatment and care services; advancing the human rights of people who use drugs; the realization of SDG 3.3 to end the HIV epidemic;<sup>1</sup> and the implementation of the relevant commitments in the UNGASS Outcome Document<sup>2</sup> and the HLM Political Declaration on AIDS 2016.<sup>3</sup>
  - c. Issues relating to non-injecting drug use and vulnerability to HIV, including changing patterns of drug use, and the risks associated with incarceration and detention.
  - d. The implementation and development of UNAIDS strategies, including processes related to the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board and the UNAIDS Fast Track Strategy.<sup>4</sup>
2. Review the progress made towards ensuring access to harm reduction including HIV prevention, testing, treatment and care services for people who use drugs, and to identify major issues and emerging challenges at national, regional or global levels, in order to facilitate a discussion within the SAG on how these challenges might be addressed and agree on possible actions to target the relevant stakeholders.
3. Contribute to the review of strategic documents and information regarding injecting drug use, non-injecting drug use, and HIV policies, programmes and services for people who use drugs – and to identify gaps in strategic information and propose possible solutions to address those gaps.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg3>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.unodc.org/documents/postungass2016/outcome/V1603301-E.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.unaids.org/en/resources/documents/2016/2016-political-declaration-HIV-AIDS>

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media\\_asset/20151027\\_UNAIDS\\_PCB37\\_15\\_18\\_EN\\_rev1.pdf](http://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/20151027_UNAIDS_PCB37_15_18_EN_rev1.pdf)

4. Provide strategic advice on issues relating to HIV and drug use to non-UN participants (such as the Global Fund).
5. Support enhanced coordination and cooperation across the UN participants and others on the global response on HIV and drug use.<sup>5</sup>
6. To be a platform for the timely sharing and exchanging of relevant information among all SAG Members.

### **III. Membership:**

Membership of the SAG will be only on the basis of an invitation agreed collectively by the existing SAG Members. Members will be leading advocates and experts on HIV and drug use from and/or representing key civil society organizations and networks, donors, and UN participants (see Annex: Composition of the SAG). The SAG will be formed to ensure that there is gender balance and representation from all geographic regions, to the extent possible.

### **IV. Roles and Responsibilities of SAG Members:**

The SAG has no executive or regulatory function. Its role is solely to provide advice, share information, and provide recommendations, including on urgent matters, as needed.

The Members of the SAG have a responsibility to provide UN participants and others with high quality, timely advice and expert recommendations on matters described in this terms of reference.

In keeping with the SAG's mandate to provide strategic advice rather than technical input, the Members will be committed to the development and improvement of policies and strategies with regard to HIV prevention, testing, treatment and care among people who use drugs. Focused technical input will be solicited from identified experts and leading academics on the specific issues to be discussed by the SAG, on a case-by-case basis as required.

SAG Members from and/or representing UN participants and donors also have a unique role to participate in order to provide and receive advice and guidance, and to work to positively influence within their own agency with respect to the core principles outlined above.

SAG Members commit to active and regular participation and engagement in the SAG meetings via e-mail, conference calls and physical presence. Absence from three consecutive meetings (both face-to-face and teleconferences) without apologies, or from five consecutive meetings with apologies, will result in a review of the individual's membership and possible exclusion from the group. In this situation, the organisation in question would be required to nominate an alternative representative, or to remove itself from the SAG entirely.

### **V. Chair and Secretariat of the SAG:**

The Chair will be nominated every two years and the seat must rotate at that time to a different member. The Chair will be drawn from one of the civil society organisations represented on the SAG. The Chair will lead on the coordination of the SAG.

The Chair will be supported by a small secretariat outside of the UN. This funded secretariat

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<sup>5</sup> Reflecting [GA Resolution A/RES/S-30/1](#), pp18, "We welcome continued efforts to enhance coherence within the United Nations system at all levels"

function will also be for two years, but may be continued, if so decided by the Members.<sup>6</sup>

#### **VI. Working Methods:**

The SAG will develop an annual work plan and set clear priorities for the group. UN participants will proactively seek advice and input from other Members by setting out their plans and priorities in relation to people who use drugs, or plans and priorities that might impact on people who use drugs.

In between meetings, UN participants and others will proactively share information and seek the advice of the SAG to bring greater attention to the needs of people who use drugs. This requires the identification of opportunities to influence, and bringing these to the attention of the SAG. Examples of opportunities include UNAIDS PCB thematic sessions, specific CND agenda items, or the development of agency policy positions and publications.

The SAG may establish smaller working groups on priority topics to advance SAG priorities.

While the Members are not in any way constrained in terms of their activities and statements when acting in their own professional capacity, independent of membership of the SAG, the Members should not engage in public communication as Members of the SAG or on behalf of the SAG, unless there has been prior agreement with the other SAG Members.

It is not anticipated that the SAG will produce reports, briefings or outputs as a Group, but rather that it will identify and discuss the need for such resources and advise that they are funded and developed by the appropriate partners.

#### **VII. Work Arrangements:**

The SAG was established in April 2014 and its current tenure will last until 31 December 2020.

It is anticipated that the SAG will meet six times a year including two formal face to face meetings, if budget allows. The SAG should take advantage of other international events to have additional face to face meetings where possible. Face to face meetings should be planned in a transparent and inclusive way, and the dates should be agreed not less than two months in advance.

The agenda will be developed by the Chair based on suggestions from the SAG Members, and will be shared with the Members at least two weeks prior to the meeting for inputs.

The SAG conference calls will take place every 2 to 3 months.

SAG Members may also be invited to participate as observers in other relevant UN participant or donor meetings.

#### **VIII. Accountability and Transparency:**

The decisions made by the SAG shall be taken to the extent possible on the basis of consensus, and they will be recorded in minutes of each meeting. The decisions of the SAG do not necessarily represent the views of every individual Member. Actions will also be recorded indicating who is responsible and with a clear timeline for delivery.

The draft minutes of SAG meetings will be shared by the Chair with all Members for their review and comments within one week, and the final minutes within two weeks after the

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<sup>6</sup> See separate Terms of Reference for the SAG secretariat function.

meeting.

**IX. Budget:**

The Members, including the Chair, of the SAG will serve on a voluntary basis and will not be compensated for their participation in the work of the SAG.

Travel and other costs associated with the face to face meetings of the SAG will be covered jointly by the UN participants in accordance with the UN rules. The travel costs of SAG Members who are UN staff and donors will be covered by their respective employers. The secretariat function will be funded jointly by UNODC, WHO and the UNAIDS Secretariat. Teleconference costs will also be borne by UNODC, WHO and the UNAIDS Secretariat.

UNODC will fund and manage a dedicated web-page on their website for the SAG, which will feature updated Membership contacts and links, this terms of reference, minutes from previous meetings, and relevant documents and resources.

**Annex: Composition of the SAG:**

<b>Civil Society Members (8)</b>	International Network of People who Use Drugs (1)
	International Network of Women who Use Drugs (1)
	International Drug Policy Consortium (1)
	Harm Reduction International (1)
	International HIV/AIDS Alliance (1)
	Eurasian Network of People who Use Drugs (1)
	Asian Network of People who Use Drugs (1)
	African Network of People who Use Drugs (1)
<b>Donors (5)</b>	Open Society Foundations (1)
	Netherlands (1)
	Norway (1)
	USA (1)
	Global Fund (1)
	<i>Others to be confirmed</i>
<b>UN Participants (8)</b>	UNODC (2)
	WHO (2)
	World Bank (2)
	UNAIDS (2)
	<i>Others to be confirmed</i>