



**Sixteenth Meeting of the United Nations Inter-Agency
Task Force on the Prevention and Control of
Non-communicable Diseases**

16-18 March 2021

Sixteenth meeting of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases, 16-18 March 2021

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This publication contains the collective views of the Sixteenth meeting of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases and does not necessarily represent the decisions or policies of WHO.

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INFORMAL SUMMARY OF THE SIXTEENTH MEETING

A. OBJECTIVES AND PARTICIPATING AGENCIES

1. The Sixteenth Meeting of the United Nations Interagency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases was held by videoconference on 16-18 March 2021. Twenty-nine Task Force members participated as well as the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office.¹ The World Health Organization and the International Atomic Energy Agency co-chaired the meeting. The agenda is Annex 1 (which includes links to the background papers²), and the list of participants is Annex 2.

2. The main objectives of the meeting were (i) to review progress since the Fifteenth Task Force Meeting (3-5 November 2020); (ii) to update on a range of joint programmes and other workstreams, including tobacco control to identify opportunities for further interagency collaboration; (iii) to discuss opportunities to scale up multisectoral support to countries in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, including mobilizing resources for the NCD and Mental Health Multi-Partner Trust Fund; and (iv) to review the recent evaluation of the work of the Task Force.

B. REVIEW OF THE SUMMARY OF THE FIFTEENTH MEETING AND UPDATE ON GLOBAL EVENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

3. Members reviewed the summary of the Fifteenth Task Force Meeting and noted that progress has been made across the majority of agreed actions. Participants noted the opportunity to provide feedback with regard to the WHO options paper on the WHO Global Coordination Mechanism on NCDs.

4. The Task Force received an update from WHO on global events and assignments since the Fifteenth Meeting.

Actions

B1. Complete outstanding actions from 15th Task Force Meeting:

- Continue with United Nations country team interviews on integrating NCDs and mental health in UN planning frameworks with an analysis of results.
- Continue to work with the UN Development Coordination Office on opportunities to include NCDs and mental health into country level UN planning guidance.

B2. Agencies to continue to share technical tools and publications for inclusion on the Task Force webpages.

¹ African Development Bank (AfDB), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), International Development Law Organization (IDLO), International Labour Organization (ILO), International Organization for Migration (IOM), International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM), Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-HABITAT), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Nutrition (UN Nutrition), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control Secretariat (WHO FCTC), World Bank, World Trade Organization (WTO), World Health Organization (WHO).

² Available only to Task Force members.

C. NCDs AND COVID-19

5. UN COVID-19 specific planning instruments such as COVID-19 socio-economic response plans (SERPs) are gradually being incorporated and aligned with broader UN planning frameworks such as the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNDCFs). Ensuring NCDs are reflected in this process was recognized as critical to building back better. The focus of the SDG3+ Global Action Plan determinants of health accelerator is now around COVID-19 vaccination equity in the context of broader response and recovery.

6. Participants provided updates on their work and identified future entry points for further action. It was agreed that *'Responding to NCDs during and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic: examples of actions'*, should be reviewed and updated. Participants agreed that there remains the need for better dissemination of broader issues around NCDs, COVID-19 and development frameworks as updated guidance on planning emerges from the UN Development Coordination Office.

Actions

C1. Task Force to work closely with the UN Development Coordination Office on the changing landscape with regards to COVID-19 planning (SERPs, humanitarian plans) and how they are being aligned with UNSDCFs to identify future entry points for NCDs and actions that the Task Force can take to ensure NCD prevention and control, including the implementation of the WHO FCTC, is a key part of countries' efforts to build back better.

C2. Once guidance is received from the UN Development Coordination Office, develop and deliver a set of webinars for UN country teams and whole-of-government audiences on NCDs as part of building back better, with the initial focus on countries where the Task Force has been operational (Task Force Secretariat and interested Members).

C3. Agency actions under the Task Force COVID-19 NCD paper to be updated to include review of actions, lessons learnt, future actions for COVID-19, including implications for future pandemics.

D. TOBACCO CONTROL

7. WHO provided an overview of the latest evidence linking tobacco use to higher susceptibility to and more severe outcomes from COVID-19 infection. Members discussed opportunities to strengthen the tobacco control response, in line with the tobacco cessation initiatives proposed within the WHO-led year-long campaign to help 100 million people quit tobacco.

8. An update on progress of tobacco-related activities was provided, including the Alternative Livelihood for Tobacco Farmers initiative, which is expected to pilot its advocacy toolkit in selected countries by the end of 2021. Members discussed opportunities to get all UN campuses smoke-free and to take greater action to stop tobacco industry interference in line with the UN Model Policy.

9. WHO and the Convention Secretariat consulted Task Force Members on the opportunity to establish and join a workstream on tobacco and child development, and a workstream on the implementation of the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade of Tobacco.

Actions

Alternative livelihood for tobacco farmers

D1. Draft toolkit to be shared with all agencies in the thematic group in mid-April 2021 for feedback and consolidation. Once finalized, toolkit to be piloted in a few countries. (Tobacco thematic group)

Model Policy and Smoke-free UN

D2. Convention Secretariat to set up bilateral calls with all members of the task force to understand how to best move forward with implementing the [UN Model Policy](#). The Convention Secretariat will resend the survey. In the meantime, Task Force Members are reminded to respond to the survey on implementing the Model Policy.

D3. High-level interagency group to be established to encourage agencies to implement 100% [smoke-free UN campuses](#) as soon as possible, in the first instance developing a mutually agreed time bound action plan. In support of this, map where individual agencies are with regards to implementing smoke-free campuses and the political and technical support that they require for implementation. (Task Force Secretariat, WHO and Convention Secretariat)

D4. Solicit support from the UN High-Level Committee on Management for 100% [smoke free UN campuses and full observation of the UN Model Policy](#), in line with the August 2019 UN Secretary-General memo. (WHO, Convention Secretariat, Task Force Secretariat)

D5. Hold a side event on [smoke free UN campuses and the UN Model Policy](#) during the 2021 ECOSOC High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. (Convention Secretariat, Task Force Secretariat, WHO, other interested members of the Task Force)

Tobacco-free schools

D6. Scale up implementation of the Tobacco-free schools guide. (Tobacco thematic group, UNICEF)

Tobacco and child development

D7. Continue to promote a workstream on tobacco and child development. (Tobacco thematic group)

Implementation of the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products

D8. Establish a workstream on Implementation of the Protocol and invite interested members to join the workstream. (Tobacco thematic group, UNODC)

Access Initiative for Quitting Tobacco (AIQT)

D9. Task Force Members to take note of the tobacco & COVID-19 risks, and consider joining forces with WHO, PATH and the Task Force Secretariat to support and scale up the year-long campaign on tobacco cessation, including World No Tobacco Day on 31 May 2021. (All)

COP9 (8–13 November 2021) and MOP2 (15–17 November 2021)

D10. Task Force Members to register for the Conference of Parties and Meeting of Parties where they are already observers. Those that are not yet observers to either or both are encouraged to apply for observer status before 15 August 2021. (All)

E. UPDATE ON SELECTED JOINT PROGRAMMES AND INITIATIVES, INCLUDING REPORT BACK FROM AGENCIES WORKING ON NCDS, LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS

10. Updates were received from the following joint programmes and initiatives that Task Force members are working on: (i) NCD 2030; (ii) SAFER; (iii) the Health Environment and Climate Change Coalition (HECCC); and (iv) NCDS, law and human rights, including the WHO-IDLO Global RECAP. Progress on each of these, along with other joint programmes and initiatives has been included in this year's report to ECOSOC.

Actions

E1. Joint programmes and initiatives to continue their activities, reaching out to other agencies as required and report back to the 17th meeting.

F. UN NUTRITION

11. The Chair of UN Nutrition, Dr Naoko Yamamoto, described the recently established interagency coordination and collaborative mechanism for nutrition at global and country levels, which resulted from the merger of the UN Network of the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement and the UN System Standing Committee on Nutrition. FAO hosts the Secretariat for UN Nutrition, which includes staff seconded from UNICEF and WFP, and the UN-REACH team. The 2021 workplan and 5-year strategy are being finalized. Two upcoming events were described: (i) the UN Food System Summit (pre-summit Rome, 26-28 July 2021, Summit New York, September 2021); and (ii) the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021 (December 2021).

12. The UN Nutrition Secretariat, on behalf of the Task Force Thematic Group Nutrition and NCDs, provided an update on progress made by the Group. Participants described opportunities for supporting countries scale up actions on Nutrition.

Actions

F1. UN Nutrition and TWG on Nutrition and NCDs to structure its work and align its activities with the four priority activities of UN Nutrition's workplan.³

F2. As part of F1, UN Nutrition and TWG on Nutrition and NCDs to work with the investment case component of the WHO-UNDP joint programme to develop this work at country level.

F3. As part of F1, UN Nutrition and TWG on Nutrition and NCDs to identify examples of successful country action including investment cases for the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021.

G. MULTI-PARTNER TRUST FUND

13. The Task Force Secretariat described progress, including that WHO, UNDP, UNICEF and the MPTF Office were in the process of signing the Memorandum of Understanding. The critical next step was to mobilize resources. The Task Force Secretariat has received funds to employ two consultants

³ The Four priority activities are: (i) support to key global processes; (ii) support to country action; (iii) knowledge management and communications; and (iv) stewardship.

to support the work of the MPTF Secretariat, the first for mobilizing resources, the second on policy and strategy.

14. The UNDP Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office in New York provided an overview on mobilization resources for MPTFs and the role of innovative financing. The WHO Resource Mobilization Department described strategies for donor engagement, including seizing the opportunity presented by COVID-19.

15. Task Force members discussed approaches to successfully engage with potential donors for the MPTF, including learning from the experience of other organizations. Agencies expressed interest in joining forces with the MPTF.

Actions

G1. Task Force Members to work with development partners, civil society and the private sector to mobilize resources for the Trust Fund, while giving due regard to managing conflicts of interest, including through establishing a resource mobilization group. (Task Force Secretariat, WHO, UNICEF, UNDP)

G2. MPTF Secretariat to learn from the experience of TB Reach and Access Accelerated.

G3. Task Force members that wish to join the MPTF as a PUNO (Participating UN Organization) to inform the MPTF Secretariat. MPTF Secretariat to circulate undg guidance on PUNOs.

H. NCDs AND THE GLOBAL FUND

16. WHO presented three asks that it is making of the Global Fund: (i) WHO and the Global Fund to conduct a feasibility study for a potential evolvement of the existing country funding model of the Global Fund by also addressing co-morbidity and mortality rates from NCDs; (ii) WHO and the Global Fund to develop an innovative partnership for chronic care of HIV, TB and NCDs; and (ii) WHO and the Global Fund to develop a joint project to help countries restore disrupted health services for HIV, TB, malaria and NCDs and recover from the deadly interplay. Task Force members were reminded that the Global Fund had a policy for supporting co-infections and co-morbidities⁴ but that countries were not making the most of it.

17. Participants welcomed the proposal from WHO for the Task Force to step up its advocacy to encourage greater support on NCDs from the Global Fund.

Actions

H1. Establish a work stream to explore country level understanding of comorbidities with a view to advocating and building the case at country level for Global Fund applications to include NCDs. (Task Force Secretariat, Global Fund, WHO, UNAIDS, UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, FCTC Secretariat)

⁴ See: https://www.theglobalfund.org/media/4167/bm33_11-co-infectionsandco-morbidities_report_en.pdf

I. SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES (SIDS) SUMMIT FOR HEALTH

18. WHO described three top strategic priorities for action in Small Island Developing States (SIDS): climate change, NCDs and malnutrition and COVID-19 response and recovery – all of which are relevant for the Task Force, alongside recent activities to drive forward political, technical actions as well as mobilizing resources. A roadmap leading up to the SIDS Summit for Health, 28-29 June 2021 was shared, along with a possible ministerial meeting on NCDs in 2022 and follow up health summit in 2023. The 2021 Summit would provide a call to action and strengthen financial and implementation partnerships.

Actions

I1. Task Force Secretariat and WHO to work with Task Force Members to provide examples of joint action on NCDs and mental health (including linkages with COVID-19) in SIDS for promotion in the SIDS Summit, 28-29 June 2021 and follow-up actions in SIDS. (Task Force Secretariat, WHO)

J. TASK FORCE AWARDS

19. Task Force Members noted details and the timeline for this year's awards. In line with discussions at the Fifteenth Meeting, the call for nominations encourages proposals that highlight action: (i) taken by children and youth groups as well as those working with minority communities; and (ii) on the NCD-related SDGs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

20. The Task Force Secretariat encouraged agencies to: (i) disseminate the call, in particular highlighting the importance of getting nominations from ministries and government agencies outside health; and (ii) join the selection committee.

Actions

J1. Agencies to promote the 2021 awards and identify nominations, especially focusing on non-health sectors, and encouraging nominations that highlight action taken by children and youth groups as well as those working with minority communities, and action on the NCD-related SDGs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

J2. Agencies to nominate themselves to serve on the awards panel.

K. MID-POINT EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WHO NCD GLOBAL ACTION PLAN, INCLUDING IMPLICATIONS FOR THE WORK OF THE TASK FORCE AND UPDATING THE TASK FORCE STRATEGY 2019-2021

21. The mid-point evaluation of the WHO NCD Global Action Plan included a review of the work of the Task Force. The consultants that undertook the evaluation presented their work, including a standalone report on the work of the Task Force for the benefit of Task Force members. A summary briefing paper on the evaluation is available on the Task Force webpages.⁵

⁵ See: <https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/who-ncd-global-action-plan-evaluation-key-messages-on-the-task-force>

22. Task Force Members welcomed the positive feedback on its work and discussed the findings of the report and implications for its future work. Task Force members agreed that the findings should be used to support the development of the next Task Force strategy.

Actions

K1. Building on joint programming missions and further discussions with UNDCO, develop and start implementing a strategy for stepping up discussions, engagement and a package of support with and for UN country teams and governments on NCDs.

K2. Task Force focal points to ensure that discussions and decisions from Task Force meeting are reported back to their senior management in order to build even greater support for the work of the Task Force.

K3. Task Force Secretariat to support Members include NCDs and mental health in governing body and senior management discussions as and when appropriate.

K4. Task Force Secretariat to work with members to develop the successor to the 2019-2021 strategy for review at the 17th Task Force meeting, building on the findings of the mid-point evaluation.

L. ECOSOC 2021 REPORT – CURRENT STATUS AND HEADLINE MESSAGES

23. Comments from Task Force Members on the draft report on the work of the Task Force had been integrated into the final version, which had been submitted to UN DESA on 17 March 2021. Task Force Members were reminded of the key messages in the report.

M. DATES AND VENUES FOR FUTURE TASK FORCE MEETINGS

24. It was agreed that the 17th meeting would be in the autumn. Participants agreed that once the COVID-19 situation allows for face to face meetings, the Task Force should move to alternate virtual and face-to-face meetings.

Actions

M1. Identify a co-host for the autumn 2021 meeting of the Task Force, which logistics to be determined by the COVID-19 situation. (Task Force Secretariat)

Annex 1. Agenda

Co-Moderators

Werner Obermeyer, Director, WHO Office at the United Nations, New York

May Abdel-Wahab, Director, Division of Human Health, Department of Nuclear Sciences and Applications, IAEA

DAY 1: Tuesday 16 March 2021

Time	Agenda item	Presenters	Background papers
15:00 – 15:10	Welcome and introductions	Werner Obermeyer (WHO) May Abdel-Wahab (IAEA)	
15:10 – 15:20	Opening remarks	Svetlana Akselrod (WHO) Najat Mokhtar (IAEA)	
Agenda item 1	Tobacco control		
15:20 – 15:40	Opening remarks	Adriana Blanco (FCTC) Ruediger Krech (WHO)	
15:40 – 16:20	Tobacco and COVID-19	Convention Secretariat and WHO Roundtable discussion	01.1 Presentation Tobacco and COVID-19
16:20 – 17:00	Updates on the thematic working groups: - Alternative livelihood for tobacco farmers - Smoke free UN - UN Model Policy - Smoke free schools	Members of the Tobacco TWG	01.2 UN Model Policy Brochure 01.3 Presentation Alternative Livelihood for tobacco farmers
17:00 – 17:20	Proposal of new thematic working groups: - Tobacco and child development - Protocol to eliminate illicit trade of tobacco	Convention Secretariat and WHO	01.4 Tobacco control to improve child health and development 01.4a Presentation on tobacco control to improve child health and development 01.5 Presentation on the Protocol
17:20 – 17:50	World No Tobacco Day and Access Initiative for Quitting Tobacco	Task Force Secretariat, Convention Secretariat and WHO	01.6 Presentation by WHO/CS/UNIATE
17:50 – 18:00	Update on COP9 and MOP2	Convention Secretariat	

DAY 2: Wednesday 17 March 2021

Time	Agenda item	Presenters	Background papers
Agenda item 2 15:00 – 15:30	Review of actions agreed at the 15th meeting	Task Force Secretariat	02.1 Review of actions agreed at the 15th Meeting 02.2 Summary of 15th Task Force Meeting 02.3 Governments and United Nations Country Teams 02.4 Task Force as a platform for joint programming missions 02.5 Agency publications
Agenda item 3 15:30 – 16:15	Update on global events and assignments	Menno Van Hilten	03.1 Presentation on global events and assignments

			03.2 Midpoint evaluation of the WHO Global NCD Action Plan 03.3 Final evaluation of the WHO Global Coordination Mechanism on NCDs
Agenda item 4 16:15 – 16:45	Mid-point evaluation of the implementation of the WHO NCD Global Action Plan, including implications for the work of the Task Force and updating Task Force strategy 2019-21	WHO Evaluation Team and Task Force Secretariat	04.1 NCD Global Action Plan Final Report 04.2 UNIATF Evaluation Brief 04.3 What the WHO NCD GAP evaluation says about the UN NCD Task Force 04.4 Task Force Strategy 2019-2021 04.5 Presentation Mid-point evaluation of the NCD GAP 04.6 WHO Executive Board Declaration on NCDs
Agenda item 5 16:45 – 17:05	Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Action for Health Summit	Diana Weil	05.1 Presentation SIDS Health Strategic Actions 2021
Agenda item 6 17:05 – 18:00	UN Nutrition	Naoko Yamamoto and Stineke Oenema	06.1 Presentation Nutrition Thematic Working Group

DAY 3: Thursday 18 March 2021

Time	Agenda item	Presenters	Background papers
Agenda item 7 15:00 – 15:30	Update on selected joint programmes and initiatives, including lessons learnt during the pandemic. Given the limited time we will focus on a small number: • NCD 2030 • SAFER • NCDs and the Environment	Alexey Kulikov and Dudley Tarlton on behalf of NCD 2030 Dag Rekve on behalf of SAFER Alexandra Egorova on behalf of the Health and Environment Climate Change Coalition	07.1 Presentation NCD 2030 07.2 Presentation SAFER 07.3 Presentation HECCC
Agenda item 8 15:30 – 16:00	NCDs and the Global Fund	Bente Mikkelsen Michael Borowitz	08.1 Presentation NCDs and the Global Fund 08.2 Global Fund support for co-infections and co-morbidities
Agenda item 9 16:00 – 16:20	Multi-partner Trust Fund	Task Force Secretariat WHO Corporate Resource Mobilization	09.1 ToR MPTF 09.2 Memorandum of Understanding
Agenda item 10 16:20 – 16:40	NCDs and COVID-19 – next steps	Task Force Secretariat Roundtable discussion	
Agenda item 11 16:40 – 17:00	Report back from agencies working on NCDs, law and human rights	UN Nutrition WHO & IDLO	11.1 Presentation Global RECAP
Agenda item 12 17:00 – 17:15	ECOSOC 2021 report – current status and headline messages	Task Force Secretariat	
Agenda item 13 17:15 – 17:25	Task Force Awards	Task Force Secretariat	13.1 Presentation Task Force Awards 13.2 Task Force Awards – Call for nominations

Agenda item 14 17:25 – 17:30	Dates and venues for future Task Force meetings	Task Force Secretariat	
Agenda item 15 17:30 – 18:00	Review of action points	Task Force Secretariat	

Annex 2. List of Participants

SIXTEENTH MEETING OF THE UN TASK FORCE ON THE PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF NCDs 16, 17 AND 18 MARCH 2021 VIRTUAL MEETING

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**WHO INDEPENDENT CONSULTANTS RESPONSIBLE
FOR THE MID-TERM EVALUATION OF THE GLOBAL
ACTION PLAN**

Roger DREW
Florianne GAILLARDIN

TASK FORCE SECRETARIAT

Rita APPIAH
Nick BANATVALA
Alexey KULIKOV
Nadia PUTAUD
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