

United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund to Catalyze Country Action for Non-Communicable Diseases and Mental Health

Governance arrangements

13 June 2023

This document describes arrangements for the Steering Committee, the Secretariat, and a core team of staff from the three Participating UN Organizations (PUNOs) of the United Nations multi-partner trust fund to catalyze country action for non-communicable diseases and mental health (MPTF). It will be reviewed and updated as required at the request of the Steering Committee.

1. Steering Committee

The Steering Committee is responsible for the overall strategic guidance of the MPTF. The roles and responsibilities of the Steering Committee are in line with those for all MPTFs.¹ They are set out in the Terms of Reference and Annex 1. **Steering Committee roles and responsibilities.**

The Steering Committee will be expected to operate over 2-year terms.² The expectation is that the Steering Committee will meet on a biannual basis, but meetings may be more frequent if required.

The Steering Committee will take decisions by consensus, with absence of dissent considered endorsement of a decision when Steering Committee members are explicitly advised on this. Issues that require a decision will be presented to the Steering Committee by the Secretariat in advance of meetings. Decisions along with summary of issues discussed will be included in the meeting summary, which will be published online.

1.1. Chairs

The Steering Committee will have three co-chairs to lead, convene and broker consensus. In line with the ToRs, the Steering Committee will be co-chaired by WHO (as a permanent co-chair);³ a second PUNO (in rotation);⁴ and one LMIC Founding Strategic Partners (in rotation).⁵ In line with policy for all MPTFs, only the two PUNO co-chairs have authority to sign off on decisions.

1.2 Members

Members of the Steering Committee will be the three founding PUNOs, UNDS agencies and Member States. As described in the ToRs, Steering Committee members will be those with proven experience

¹ <https://mptf.undp.org/document/templates>

² Decision point endorsed during first Steering Committee meeting held on the 8th of November 2021.

³ In line with the leadership and coordination role of WHO in 'promoting and monitoring global action against NCDs' reaffirmed by the UN General Assembly³, including 'in relation to the work of other UN organizations, international organizations and development banks' when establishing the NCD and Mental Health Catalytic Fund.

⁴ In keeping with the approach used for meetings of the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on NCDs.

⁵ During the first Steering Committee meeting (8 November 2021), members endorsed the expansion of the co-chair positions from 2 to 3, to ensure that one low-and-middle income country (LMIC) was included at the highest level of decision making in keeping with the Trust Fund's "country leadership" core principle.

and expertise in global and country-level action on tackling NCDs and improving mental health and not simply those who provide financial contributions.⁶

1.2.1 United Nations agencies

One of the UN membership positions will be the PUNO not occupying a co-chair position during a given term. The Secretariat will make a recommendation for a further UN agency to join the Steering Committee (in line with the ToRs). The agency recommended will be based on demonstrated commitment to and ongoing collaboration with the MPTF.

1.2.2 Member States

Membership of the Steering Committee will be accorded to Member States across high-income countries (HIC), middle-income countries (MIC), and low-income countries (LIC). A financial contribution will be required from all Member States except LICs.⁷ Each income group can be represented by two countries. An additional small island developing state (SIDS) country will also be eligible to join the Steering Committee in recognition of the unique vulnerabilities that these countries face in terms of burden of NCDs and exposure to their risk factors.

Where additional Member States make financial contributions after the full complement of Steering Group members has been reached, the Secretariat recommends that: (i) Member States in the relevant income category will be invited to convene a “bloc”; (ii) each bloc will be responsible for assigning the two membership positions for the remainder of the two-year term;⁸ (iii) the two selected Steering Committee members will represent their bloc; (iv) remaining Member State participants within the bloc will be invited to attend meetings but will be expected to communicate their positions on agenda items through the representative membership.

Financial contributions will not be required from LIC members, to ensure they can participate fully in line with the MPTF core principles of ‘country leadership’ and ‘equity’. Low-income Member States will be invited to be members based on demonstrated political commitment and action to address NCDs and/or mental health,⁹ and an expressed commitment to support and advocate for the MPTF.¹⁰

1.3 Ex officio member

The UN Multi Partner Trust Fund Office is an *ex officio* member of the Steering Committee.

Table 1 summarizes membership of the Steering Committee.

⁶ ToRs pg. 28

⁷ Decision point endorsed during first Steering Committee meeting held on the 8th of November 2021.

⁸ For example, if an additional high-income country makes a contribution after the two membership positions are filled, all three high-income countries will convene a “high-income member state bloc” and independently decide on which two member states will represent the bloc in the Steering Committee and for what duration within any given term. The bloc is at liberty to propose any arrangement that suits them, as long as the membership never exceeds the limits set within this guidance. The bloc is responsible for communicating their decision to the Secretariat.

⁹ As demonstrated through the presence of up-to-date NCDs and/or mental health policies and inclusive strategic plans or action plans; and by their visibility on the global platform for NCDs and/or mental health.

¹⁰ For example, countries which expressed commitment to the MPTF in response to the Circular Letter sent by the WHO Governing Bodies 8 August 2021; express a willingness to leverage their relationships to mobilize additional support for the MPTF; and/or, Head of State level representation on the Steering Committee.

Table 1. Membership of the Steering Committee

Chair and membership	Approach	Incumbent
Co-chairs		
Participating UN Organization	Permanent	WHO
Participating UN Organization	Rotates between UNDP and UNICEF	UNDP
Low- and middle-income country founding strategic partners	Rotates between LMIC FSPs	TBD
Members		
UN system agencies (n=2)	1. Rotates between UNDP and UNICEF 2. An additional UN agency beyond the 3 existing PUNOs	UNICEF TBD
Low-income countries (n=2)	Membership invited based on demonstrated political commitment and action for NCDs/MH and to the MPTF	TBD TBD
Middle-income countries (n=2)	Funding required	TBD
High-income countries (n=2)	Funding required	TBD
Small Island Developing States (n=1)	Funding required if HIC or MIC but not if LIC	TBD
Ex officio member		
UN Multi Partner Trust Fund Office		

1.4 Observers

As outlined in the ToRs, the Steering Committee can invite additional partners to participate in Steering Committee meetings as observers. Observers will not participate in Steering Committee meeting decision making. Observer status will last for the remaining duration of the two-year governance cycle regardless of when the Observer is invited to participate. The ToRs indicate that NGOs, philanthropic and academic institutions are eligible to be observers.

1.4.1 Member states

While the ToRs did not include the provision for Member States to join as observers, Member States have expressed interest that there should be the provision for Member States to join as observers. The Steering Committee will therefore invite Member States to participate in Steering Committee meetings as observers on an exceptional basis.

1.4.2 Non-governmental organizations

The ToRs allow for two non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as observers. In the first instance these positions will be held by the NCD Alliance and United for Global Mental Health. Following an open call, two further NGOs will be invited to join from the Global South, one that focuses on NCDs and one on mental health; one or both of these could be an NGO that represents people living with NCDs and/or mental health. Due diligence will be conducted by the Secretariat in advance of NGOs being invited as observers. No financial commitment is required for NGOs, but in-kind commitment is encouraged.

1.4.3 Philanthropic organizations and academic institution

There is one position available for a philanthropic organization and one for an academic institution. These observer positions will be assigned on the basis of a financial contribution being made from the

former and financial or in-kind support from the latter. Due diligence will be conducted by the Secretariat in advance of these entities being invited as observers.

Table 2 summarizes current Steering Committee observers.¹¹

Table 2. Observers on the Steering Committee

Observers	Approach	Incumbent
Member States (on exceptional basis)	Not dependent on making a financial contribution	TBD
NGOs (n=4)	Not dependent on making a financial contribution	1. NCD Alliance 2. United for Global Mental Health 3 and 4. TBD
Philanthropy/academia (n=2)	Philanthropies required to provide financial contributions Academia required to provide financial or in-kind contributions	TBD

2. Secretariat

The Secretariat's roles and responsibilities are set out in the MPTF ToRs (Annex 3).

3. Focal points from the three Participating UN Organizations

The Secretariat will work closely with a set of focal points from the three PUNOs and the MPTF Office and together form the MPTF Core Team. Each PUNO is responsible for identifying members of its Core Team.

3.1 MPTF Core Team

Core Team members' roles and responsibilities are as follows:

- Function as the liaison between each PUNO and the MPTF, ensuring that their respective organizations are sufficiently apprised of relevant MPTF activity at HQ, regional and country level;
- Share information among one another;
- Lead engagement with existing and potential resource partners;¹²
- Lead each PUNO's technical engagement with the MPTF, for example, by providing support to processes such as drafting of the operational guidance, risk management strategy and other relevant documents;
- Engage with the PUNO leadership to ensure their active and informed participation in Steering Committee meetings and other relevant MPTF events and/or activities;
- Support the Secretariat to disseminate calls for proposals and provide technical support to the proposal process;
- Support the Secretariat in aligning and harmonizing activities across the PUNOs.

¹¹ The Terms of Reference allow for a business association to join as an observer. This will be considered by the Steering Committee at a later date. Note: Individual private sector organizations are ineligible to participate in the Steering Committee.

¹² The Secretariat serves as the central point of contact, providing all vital information and supporting documentation for engaging with external partners.

4. Conflict-of-interest

Steering Committee members and observers, as well as the Core Team, are required to report any current or potential conflict of interest (COI), whether actual or perceived, to the Steering Committee prior to each meeting and during discussion when necessary. When reviewing grant proposals, Steering Committee members that have a direct COI will recuse themselves from the discussion.

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Annex 1. Steering Committee roles and responsibilities¹³

The main functions of the Steering Committee, in line with UN Development Group Guidance on multi-partner trust funds are to:

- Provide general oversight and exercise overall accountability of the Fund in accordance with UNSDG Guidance.
- Endorse the strategic direction of the Fund.
- Approve Fund risk management strategy and review risk monitoring regularly.
- Review and approve proposals submitted for funding, ensuring their conformity with the requirements of the NCD and Mental Health Catalytic Fund's Terms of Reference;
- Decide the allocation of funds.
- Request fund transfers to the Administrative Agent.
- Review Fund status and oversee the overall progress against the results framework through monitoring, reporting and evaluation.
- Review and approve the periodic progress reports consolidated by the Administrative Agent and the Secretariat based on the progress reports submitted by the Participating Organizations.
- Commission mid-term and final independent evaluations on the overall performance of the Fund.
- Approve direct costs related to fund operations supported by the Secretariat.
- Approve extensions and updates to the Terms of Reference for the Fund, as required.
- Approve resource mobilization strategies to capitalize the NCD and Mental Health Catalytic Fund.
- Convene advisory expertise to provide insight to the Steering Committee on ad hoc basis.

¹³ Pg. 28-29: Terms of Reference - The United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund to Catalyze Country Action for Non-Communicable Diseases and Mental Health

Annex 2. Steering Committee approach and formulation

Roles	Approach	Incumbent
Co-chairs		
Participating UN Organization	Permanent	WHO
Participating UN Organization	Rotates between UNDP and UNICEF	UNDP
Low- and middle-income country founding strategic partner	Rotates between LMIC FSPs	TBD
Members		
UN system agencies (n=2)	1. Rotates between UNDP and UNICEF 2. An additional UN agency beyond the 3 existing PUNOs	UNICEF TBD
Low-income countries (n=2)	Membership invited based on demonstrated political commitment and action to NCDs/MH and to the MPTF	TBD TBD
Middle-income countries (n=2)	Funding required	TBD
High-income countries (n=2)	Funding required	TBD
Small Island Developing States (n=1)	Funding required if HIC or MIC but not if LIC	TBD
Ex officio member		
UN Multi Partner Trust Fund Office		
Observers		
Member States (on exceptional basis)	Not dependent on making a financial contribution	TBD
NGOs (n=4)	Not dependent on making a financial contribution	1. NCD Alliance 2. United for Global Mental Health 3 and 4. TBD
Philanthropy/academia (n=2)	Philanthropies required to provide financial contributions Academia required to provide financial or in-kind contributions	TBD

Annex 3. Secretariat roles and responsibilities¹⁴

The Secretariat will support the Steering Committee and will be responsible for preparing the necessary information to allow the Steering Committee to make its decisions. The Secretariat's functions, in line with UN Development Group Guidance on multi-partner trust funds, will be to:

- Advise the Steering Committee on strategic priorities as well as programmatic and financial allocations in accordance with the Fund Operational Manual (based on the inputs of inter-agency working groups and the Administrative Agent, if applicable).
- Provide planning, logistical and operational support to the Steering Committee.
- Serve as the NCD and Mental Health Catalytic Fund's central point of contact and liaise with other UN agencies and other related initiatives and stakeholders. This includes providing vital information to external partners, as well as liaising with existing and potential resource partners to mobilize necessary financing for the NCD and Mental Health Catalytic Fund.
- Lead the drafting of the Operations Manual and risk management strategy in collaboration with the Participating Organizations and the MPTF Office.
- Organize calls for proposals and convene the necessary technical expertise to appraise such proposals.
- Develop and implement resource mobilization in accordance with approved strategies and in collaboration with staff from the Participating Organizations.
- Ensure the monitoring of projects as well as potential operational risks and overall performance of the Fund (i.e., facilitate monitoring and evaluation of the Fund, draft risk management strategy).
- Consolidate annual and final narrative reports provided by the Participating Organizations and share with the Steering Committee for review as well as with Administrative Agent for preparation of consolidated narrative and financial reports.
- Facilitate collaboration and communication between Participating Organizations to ensure that the NCD and Mental Health Catalytic Fund's Theory of Change is implemented effectively.
- Promote harmonization and alignment and effective communication of the NCD and Mental Health Catalytic Fund within the broader health and development architecture, including the SDG 3 Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All.
- Ensure activities between the Participating Organizations are harmonized and aligned.
- Liaise with the Administrative Agent on NCD and Mental Health Catalytic Fund administration issues, including issues related to project/fund extensions and project/fund closure.

¹⁴ Pg. 31: Terms of Reference - The United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund to Catalyze Country Action for Non-Communicable Diseases and Mental Health