



TERMS OF REFERENCE OF WHO Youth Council

I. Mission

The mission of the WHO Youth Council is to foster meaningful youth engagement within the WHO- leveraging the insights and expertise of diverse young people globally to shape health policies and strategies- including through strategically utilizing its advisory capacity to the organization's senior leadership.

II. Status

The WHO Youth Council is a WHO network for stakeholders to amplify the voices and experiences of young people, and to harness and expand their expertise, energy and ideas to promote public health.

The WHO Youth Council is not a separate legal entity and derives its legal status from WHO. Thus, it shall be administered and housed in WHO. The operations of the WHO Youth Council shall in all respects be administered in accordance with the WHO Constitution and General Programme of Work, WHO's Financial and Staff Regulations and Rules, WHO's manual provisions, and applicable WHO rules, policies, procedures and practices including the WHO *Framework of engagement with non-State actors* (FENSA).¹

III. Vision and Goal

The goal of the Youth Council is to raise the profile of youth contribution to public health at a global, regional, national and local level and to support WHO in its efforts to strengthen youth contributions to public health systems through advocacy actions.

To achieve this goal, the WHO Youth Council will drive a global advocacy initiative that has a well-defined mandate and indicators. The goal is summarized in the Council's vision statement: 'A WHO secretariat that meaningfully engages with and that supports the leadership of young people in global health'.

¹*Framework of engagement with non-State actors* https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/wha69/a69_r10-en.pdf

IV. Core Principles

The WHO Youth Council is governed by the following principles:

- to be inclusive and diverse in membership and structure, ensuring adequate representation from different stakeholder groups, geographical regions and income settings;
- to be transparent in all processes, including the operational strategy and activities;
- to ensure all activities align with WHO's norms and standards; and
- to facilitate coordination among interested parties to advance WHO's priorities on the contribution of youth to public health agenda.

V. Objectives

The WHO Youth Council will advise WHO:

1. in its efforts to advance technical matters relating to youth contribution and involvement in public health agenda;
2. on existing and new meaningful youth engagement initiatives;
3. on fostering innovation, as and when appropriate, of new initiatives relating to youth and public;
4. on possibilities to engage youth in WHO's governance processes, as and when appropriate;
5. by providing recommendations on the elaboration and implementation of a WHO Youth engagement strategy;
6. by providing recommendations, as and when appropriate, on strengthening youth involvement in WHO's work; and
7. by strengthening networking and knowledge sharing among different stakeholders including youth organizations to facilitate and increase communication between the participants and other stakeholders.

VI. Governance and structure

The WHO Youth Council comprises a Steering Committee and Working Groups. The WHO Youth Council is an advisory network of stakeholders and not a decision-making body.

6.1 Steering Committee

The Steering Committee comprises up to 7 participants including the Co-Chairs, who are appointed by WHO. The selection process will strive for balanced representation of the WHO Youth Council participants, with respect to gender, age, geographical area and organization type. Steering Committee recommendations will be made on the basis of consensus. In the event that a consensus is not reached, the Secretariat takes a decision in consultation with the Co-Chairs. With the exception of WHO, the duration of the term of appointment of the Steering Committee participants shall be for an initial term of two (2) years, with the possibility of renewal once. The Secretariat, as the Chair of the Steering Committee, will appoint, from among the members of the Steering Committee, two Co-Chairs of the Youth Council.

Key responsibilities of the Steering Committee are as follows:

- Provide overall strategic direction, for the work of the WHO Youth Council. This includes supporting development of the overall WHO Youth Council workplans and strategies.
- Jointly coordinate with the Secretariat annual participants meeting of the WHO Youth Council, including development of relevant documentation and logistical support.
- Advise WHO on membership applications.
- Coordinate the establishment of working groups, approve their workplans, and oversee all working group activities.
- Monitor and evaluate activities and processes of the WHO Youth Council with a view to optimize WHO Youth Council functioning and impact.

6.2 Working Groups

Working Groups may be established subject to the approval of the Secretariat and the WHO Youth Council. The area of focus of the working groups will be decided jointly by the Secretariat and Council. The terms of reference for each working group are approved by the Secretariat. The Working Groups will be guided and supported by relevant technical departments.

All participants of the WHO Youth Council participate in working groups. The purpose of the working groups is to bring together participants with similar interests, to share information and collectively work on specific activities that align with the WHO Youth Council's overall mission and objectives. Each working group will have an area of focus with corresponding workplan, that is approved by the Steering Committee, which outlines its objectives, key outputs, priorities and methodology.

In maintaining the effectiveness and integrity of these working groups, the WHO Secretariat, in agreement with the working group chair and co-chair, reserves the right to discontinue the membership of any participant in a working group whose contribution or conduct is found to be inconsistent with the group's functionality and objectives. This measure ensures the ongoing productivity and alignment of working groups with their intended goals.

A Chair and co-Chair will be appointed in each working group by the Secretariat. They are responsible for:

- coordinating working group meetings and activities;
- facilitating communication within the group, ensuring balanced participation of its group participants; and

- Providing verbal and written reports of working group progress to the Secretariat and the WHO Youth Council.

The Chair and co-Chair of each working group will report on their progress at each WHO Youth Council meeting, the annual participants meeting, and through reports to the Steering Committee, as required.

6.3 Regional Chapters

Regional Offices may establish Regional Chapters of the WHO Youth Council. These Chapters will operate under the guidance of their respective Regional Offices and align with the overarching goals and objectives of the WHO Youth Council. Each Regional Chapter will delegate a representative to observe the meetings of the WHO Youth Council, ensuring communication and coordination between the regional and global levels.

VII. The Secretariat

Subject to the availability of sufficient human and financial resources for this purpose, secretariat support and coordination for the WHO Youth Council will be provided by WHO. Secretariat support will be provided in accordance with WHO's rules, regulations, policies and procedures. The role of the Secretariat is to oversee the day-to-day management of the WHO Youth Council's work, including coordination of discussions across stakeholders on priorities and gaps, preparation of draft work plans for discussion by the Steering Committee and/or the Working Groups along with administration and budget management.

More specifically, key responsibilities of the Secretariat are as follows:

- Serve as the interface between the WHO Youth Council and its participants.
- Select and manage the WHO Youth Council's membership in line with WHO rules and policies.
- Appoint the WHO Youth Council Co-Chairs and define the Terms of Reference for the role.
- Coordinate the development, implementation and maintenance of the WHO Youth Council work plans in consultation with the Steering Committee.
- Oversee implementation of the WHO Youth Council workplans, in collaboration with the Steering Committee.
- Chair the Council and Steering Committee meetings.
- Monitor and evaluate activities and processes of the WHO Youth Council, making amendments as necessary, in consultation with the Steering Committee, to optimize overall WHO Youth Council functioning and impact.
- Coordinate correspondence with WHO Youth Council participants, as required, to facilitate participation and collaboration of all participants.

- Coordinate meetings of the WHO Youth Council, in collaboration with the Steering Committee, including development of relevant documentation (e.g., agenda), logistical support and meeting modalities.
- Develop a central repository for the WHO Youth Council to house all relevant documents and resources.
- Develop and regularly update the WHO Youth Council website (hosted by WHO).

The Secretariat reserves the right not to implement any WHO Youth Council recommendation or activity which it determines gives rise to undue financial, legal or reputational liability or is contrary to WHO policies, regulations and procedures.

VIII. Membership

The WHO Youth Council membership² will be drawn from organizations representing civil society organizations, which are either youth-led, youth-focused or youth chapters within larger organizations – with and without a primary health focus

Members of the WHO Youth Council must meet the following criteria:

- The aims and purposes of the entity should be consistent with the WHO Constitution and conform with WHO's policies.
- The Entity should demonstrate a commitment to the advancement of public health, to the objectives, vision and goal of the WHO Youth Council and to support the WHO work and activities on youth.
- The entity should respect the intergovernmental nature of WHO and the decision-making authority of Member States as set out in the WHO Constitution.
- The entity should actively work at the international level in the field of youth and should either:
 - work in the field of public health with a focus on youth
 - be composed of a youth constituency with an interest to work on health.
- The entity should have an established structure, constitutive act, and accountability mechanism.
- The entity, if a membership organization, should have the authority to speak for its participants and have a representative structure.
- If a non-governmental organization is applying, they need to be a member of the WHO Civil Society Commission to be considered as member of the WHO Youth Council.
- If a non-State actor is applying, the entity is required to provide the following information and documents: name, objectives and mission of the entity, copy of the

² Individuals acting in a personal capacity are not eligible for the WHO Youth Council membership.

legal status (such as bylaws, constitution), governance structure, names and affiliations of the participants of main decision-making bodies (such as Board, Executive Board), the assets, annual income and funding sources (list of donors and sponsors), main relevant affiliations and website address. The entity will also sign the tobacco-arms disclosure statement without alteration.

Each participant of the WHO Youth Council must:

- adhere to the Terms of Reference of the WHO Youth Council;
- actively participate in and support the WHO Youth Council, its purpose, goals, objectives, guiding principles, work and activities;
- attend and actively participate at the WHO Youth Council's various meetings;
- take responsibility according to the division of labor, and make meaningful contributions, in connection with the work and activities of the various WHO Youth Council working groups;
- share knowledge and information with other participants (such as resources, data, case studies, experience etc.);
- act in the best interest of public health in alignment with WHO policies; and
- ensure effective communication with Secretariat and with the Steering Committee related to activities relevant to the WHO Youth Council's mission and vision.

Participants shall not make public statements about WHO Youth Council activities or on behalf of the Secretariat without the prior written consent of the Secretariat acting in consultation with Steering Committee.

8.1 Membership applications

In the appointment of members to the Youth Council, the Secretariat will look to create a balance of organizations working directly on public health, those representing and supporting patients and people with disabilities, and broader youth organizations. Where they appoint regional organizations, the Secretariat will work to ensure that the Youth Council remains global in nature, through the appointment of organizations from different regions. The secretariat should also consider the size of the organizations, the age range of their members and their structure, when appointing organizations to the Youth Council with a view to ensuring a diverse membership.

A standardized form and online application process will be developed by the Secretariat. Membership approval will be based on an assessment, due diligence process and review of submitted documents, in accordance with the eligibility criteria part of the current terms of reference and in accordance with WHO's rules and policies. Membership applications will be reviewed and approved by the Secretariat. Following this, membership applicants will be notified of their membership approval (or otherwise) by the Secretariat. Members will be selected for a term of two years, with the possibility of

renewal once.

8.2 Observers

The Secretariat may invite representatives from organizations that have specific subject matter expertise relating to the work of the WHO Youth Council to Annual Participant, Working Group or Steering Committee meetings as observers, subject to the outcomes of an assessment, due diligence process, and review performed on the observers. Observers shall only take the floor at the invitation of the Chair.

IX. Meetings

Annual Participants Meeting

As the Secretariat of the WHO Youth Council, WHO convenes an annual participant meeting, however additional meetings may be scheduled as necessary. The annual participant meeting is open to all WHO Youth Council participants. Each participant will be able to nominate their delegates to attend, taking into account capacity.

The aim of the annual participants meeting will be to:

- review the WHO Youth Council work plan
- serve as a platform and network for knowledge sharing amongst participants
- discuss issues put forward by the Steering Committee.

Steering Committee meetings

The Steering Committee will every month, to report on progress of the working groups, discuss issues and revise the WHO Youth Council workplan.

Steering Committee participants are accountable for informing their respective organizations on the recommendations, commitments and plans of the WHO Youth Council.

Working group meetings

Each working group will have meetings, attended by working group participants. The frequency of working group meetings will be determined by the Chair and co-Chair of the respective working group.

X. Termination and withdrawal

Each participant has the right to withdraw from participation in the WHO Youth Council, at any time, subject to providing one month written notice to the Secretariat and to the orderly conclusion of any ongoing activities.

If a participant does not attend two consecutive Council, Steering Committee or Working Group meetings, without explanation to the Secretariat, the Secretariat may conclude that the

participant has withdrawn from the WHO Youth Council.

The Secretariat also has the right to terminate the membership of any participant at any time, upon providing written notice thereof to such participant. Without limiting the foregoing, the participation of any entity in the WHO Youth Council shall terminate if and when such participant: (a) no longer subscribes or adheres to the goals, objectives and/or guiding principles of the WHO Youth Council, as described in these Terms of Reference; (b) engages in activities that are not compatible with WHO Policies, and/or (c) ceases to meet the membership criteria for the WHO Youth Council, as set forth in these Terms of Reference. In such instances, the decision to terminate the involvement of a participant will be made by the Secretariat, in consultation with the Steering Committee.

WHO reserves the right to withdraw from administration of the WHO Youth Council at any time, subject to providing the WHO Youth Council participants with at least six (6) months' prior written notice and to the orderly conclusion of any ongoing activities. WHO also has the right, exercisable in its sole discretion, to close the WHO Youth Council, to terminate any membership, its Steering Committee and/or to terminate any (Co-)Chairmanship, in each case, at any time upon providing written notice thereof to the participant(s) concerned.

XI. The WHO Youth Council evaluation

The Secretariat, in consultation with the Steering Committee, will evaluate the overall processes and outcomes of the WHO Youth Council on annual basis, with the aim of assessing whether WHO should continue to host the WHO Youth Council.

XII. Communications

12.1 Visual Identity

To ensure that the WHO Youth Council is deliberately communicating with one voice to external parties on topics of substance (principles, priorities, target product profiles, standards, plans and actions, funding, and all confidential information, etc.) any communication in the name of the WHO Youth Council will take place upon approval by the Secretariat.

The WHO Youth Council may develop a visual identifier such as a logo which will help identify the network to its audience. The visual identifier will be accompanied by the statement "WHO hosted Network". The right to use the logo, including on publications, may be granted to participants on a case-by-case basis with prior written approval of the Secretariat. Participants shall not use WHO's name, acronym and emblem. This includes, inter alia, the display of the WHO logo and name on any premises, equipment, as well as on any communication and/or training materials, training certificates, social media tools or publications.

12.2 Publications

The WHO Youth Council shall not produce publications, unless exceptional approval is given by the Secretariat. Any publication by a participant, other than WHO, referring to WHO Youth Council activities shall contain appropriate disclaimers as decided by WHO, including that the content does not reflect the views or stated policy of the participants.

The participants must ensure that the work of the WHO Youth Council is not misrepresented, and appropriate disclaimers are included where necessary. The WHO Youth Council activities shall not include the development of technical materials, normative documents or policy papers.

12.3 The WHO Youth Council website

The WHO Youth Council has a webpage that is housed within WHO's domain. The webpage includes a list of participants' entities, subject to their consent.

XIII. Finance

Participants will be responsible for their own expenses in relation to all WHO Youth Council activities (including participation at meetings), unless agreed otherwise by the Secretariat. If participants receive third party funding to support participation in WHO Youth Council meetings and activities, this must be disclosed to the Secretariat.

The Secretariat may raise funds to support the work of the WHO Youth Council, in accordance WHO rules and procedures, as appropriate. All Secretariat funds shall be received, administered and acknowledged in accordance with WHO's policies including its financial regulations, rules and practices. However, grant applications made by the participants for raising funds in the name of the WHO Youth Council require prior consultation with and endorsement by the Secretariat to ensure alignment with the goals and principles of the network. The Secretariat reserves the right to require that the WHO Youth Council name not be used in such grant applications. Contributions by participants including donations (in cash or in kind), will be acknowledged by the Secretariat in accordance with WHO's applicable rules, policies and practices.

XIV. Confidentiality

Depending on the agenda item being discussed, each participant in the WHO Youth Council may be required to abide by confidentiality obligation and sign a standard confidentiality undertaking using the form provided by WHO for this purpose.

XV. Amendments

These Terms of Reference may be amended from time to time by WHO in consultation with the Steering Committee.