



World Health  
Organization

Report of the first meeting of the

**Strategic and Technical  
Advisory Group for  
Noncommunicable Diseases:**

virtual meeting, 27–28 October 2021



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ISBN 978-92-4-004115-8 (electronic version)

ISBN 978-92-4-004116-5 (print version)

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**Suggested citation.** Report of the first meeting of the Strategic and Technical Advisory Group for Noncommunicable Diseases: virtual meeting, 27–28 October 2021. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2021. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO.

**Cataloguing-in-Publication (CIP) data.** CIP data are available at <http://apps.who.int/iris>.

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# Acronyms and abbreviations

CARICOM	Caribbean Community
HLM	high-level meeting
FCTC	Framework Convention on Tobacco Control
FENSA	Framework for Engagement with Non-State Actors
LMICs	low- and middle-income countries
MPTF	Multi-Partner Trust Fund
NCD	noncommunicable disease
NCD-GAP	Global action plan for the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases
ODA	overseas development assistance
OECD	Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development
PHC	primary health care
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
STAG-NCD	Strategic and Technical Advisory Group on the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases
UHC	universal health coverage
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
WHA	World Health Assembly
WHO	World Health Organization

# Introduction

**The World Health Organization (WHO), through its global programme on noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), leads and guides the global effort on surveillance, prevention and control of NCDs to reduce the avoidable burden of morbidity, mortality and disability due to noncommunicable diseases (NCDs).**

Its major functions include:

- providing global leadership to reduce the avoidable burden of morbidity, mortality and disability through strategy development, political and multisectoral engagement, strengthening accountability, advocacy and partnerships, including with civil society;
- developing policy options, norms and standards of NCD prevention and care;
- facilitating universal access to people-centred prevention and care;
- shaping the NCD research and innovation agenda and stimulating the generation, translation and dissemination of knowledge;
- working with WHO regional and country offices, providing technical support for Member States and partners, to catalyse change and build sustainable capacity; and
- monitoring, evaluating and reporting on the status of the NCD epidemic and progress in attaining the voluntary global NCD targets and the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 3.4 on NCDs.

## Mission and functions of STAG-NCD

**The Strategic and Technical Advisory Group on the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases (STAG-NCD) acts as an advisory body to WHO to further its efforts and work in addressing the prevention and control of NCDs.**

The aim is to strengthen international and national action to: reduce premature mortality from NCDs through prevention and treatment; progressively cover additional people with health services, medicines, vaccines, diagnostic and health technologies; and strengthen efforts to address NCDs as part of Universal Health Coverage (UHC).

In its capacity as an advisory body to WHO, the STAG-NCD has the following functions:

1. To identify and describe current and future challenges;
2. To advise WHO on strategic directions to be prioritized;
3. To advise WHO on the development of global strategic documents; and
4. To propose other strategic interventions and activities for implementation by WHO.

The Terms of Reference for STAG-NCD are provided [here](#).

The first meeting of the STAG-NCD took place virtually from 27–28 October 2021 (see agenda in Annex 1). The meeting was organized by the WHO NCD

Programme, which provides the Secretariat for the advisory body. For 2021–2022, there are 24 members of STAG-NCD. Twenty-two members were in attendance for the first meeting. The STAG-NCD members were joined by staff from WHO headquarters and representatives from its six Regional Offices (see list of participants in Annex 2).

A background paper summarizing the key milestones in the development of the global public health agenda for addressing NCDs over the last two decades was circulated among all STAG-NCD members (Annex 3). The purpose of the document was to provide the necessary background information and key questions to guide the discussions of the first meeting of STAG-NCD. The agenda for the meeting and the list of participants are in Annex 2 and Annex 3, respectively.

This report provides a summary of the first meeting of STAG-NCD, with a focus on the strategic discussions and recommendations of STAG-NCD to WHO for the topics addressed.

The consolidated report was reviewed by the STAG-NCD Chair and by STAG-NCD members. An outcome document containing the recommendations of this report is submitted by the Chair of the STAG-NCD and the Director of the WHO NCD Programme to the Director-General of WHO.

## Objectives of the first meeting of STAG-NCD

At this first meeting, WHO requested STAG-NCD to review and advise on a number of areas of WHO NCD work. The WHO STAG-NCD Secretariat and the Chair of STAG developed the agenda for the first meeting based on the priorities of WHO's NCD work in 2021–2022, notably on the recommendations outlined in the *Mid-point evaluation of the implementation of the WHO global action plan for the prevention and control of NCDs 2013–2030* (1).

The agenda items are summarized below:

### Day 1

- Introduction and welcome remarks;
- Setting the scene, scope and purpose;
- Introduction, vision and contribution of STAG-NCD members;
- Focusing the limited financial resources available for NCDs and raising resources for scale-up of the most cost-effective options, considering the impact of COVID-19; and
- Exploring why progress in addressing tobacco use has not yet been seen in

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