

Terms of Reference for the Health Sector Working Group (HSWG)

These terms of reference clarify the Health Sector Working Group's (HSWG) background, objectives, leadership, membership, modalities and frequency of meetings under National Strategy for Transformation (NST1) institutional framework.

1. Background

Since 2017, the Government of Rwanda started implementing its National Strategy for Transformation (NST1) which covered the period 2017-2024. Currently GoR is implementing its second NST1 which runs from 2013-2018 and represents the comprehensive development agenda of the nation in the medium term which is aligned to the Vision 2050 and embeds the spirit of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The NST1 is a national strategy which involves all stakeholders at all levels in its elaboration and the same approach has and will be maintained during the implementation and evaluation phases, hence the need to continue to strengthen the SWG approach.

2. Membership

The HSWG brings together Central and Local government institutions, Development Partners, Civil Society and the Private Sector involved in the Sector or with an interest in the Sector's development. Members of the HSWG include but are not confined to the following;

- The Ministry of Health (MOH) and its implementing agencies
- Development Partners active in the sector
- Prime Minister's Office
- Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN)
- Representative of the Ministry of Local Government
- Civil Society
- Private sector institutions
- Higher learning training institutions for health professionals

3. Objectives

The overall objective of the HSWG is to:

- Provide a forum for dialogue, ownership and accountability of the development agenda by all stakeholders at Sector level.
- Build synergies in policy formulation, implementation and enhance regular reviews.

The specific objectives of the Health Sector Working Group are:

- Coordination of activities within the sector and ensure alignment and harmonization to reach sector outcomes
- To develop and update the Health Sector Strategic Plan (HSSP)
- To update the Health Sector Logical Framework (log frame) as needed
- To develop, update and validate the sector M&E Framework
- To Conduct Joint Sector Reviews (JSR) at least twice a year as per planning calendar; and timely disseminate related reports
- To strengthen the Sector-wide Approach (SWAp).
- Facilitate dialogue and report to MINECOFIN on Sector Budget Support (SBS) - related indicators, including NST1 indicators related to the sector
- Regularly discuss issues related to sector budgets (according to requirements of SBS development partner and/or development partner contributing to joint financing mechanisms)
- Mobilizing of resources for the sector in line with Rwanda's Aid Policy

4. Key roles and responsibilities

4.1 Ministry of Health (Chair of the HSWG)

It is the responsibility of Ministry of Health (Chair) to:

- Convene HSWG meetings, including setting the agenda in consultation with the lead development partner (co- chair).
- Chair HSWG meetings.
- Ensure relevant government institutions, civil society organizations and private sector are invited to participate in the HSWG and its Technical Working Groups (TWGs).
- Prepare bi-annual backward- and forward-looking JSR meeting.
- Lead the preparation and update of the Health Sector Strategic Plan and present it to the HSWG for validation.
- Lead the development the Sector M&E framework, present it to the HSWG for validation, and ensure its operationalization.
- Update the Health Sector log frame as needed and present such updates to the HSWG for validation.
- Update the health-specific elements of the NST1 matrix.

- Communicate all relevant information concerning the HSWG to members; this may include strategic documents, reports, meeting agenda and schedules.
- Establish TWGs wherever necessary and appropriate.
- Assign to member institutions of the HSWG any other relevant work as deemed necessary and appropriate.
- Mobilize resources for the sector in line with Rwanda's Aid Policy.

4.2 Lead Development Partner (Co-chair)

It is the responsibility of the lead development partner (Co-chair) to:

- Co-Chair HSWG meetings.
- Assist MOH with the coordination of the HSWG and to ensure the development partners active in the sector are fully represented in every HSWG meeting.
- Support MOH in preparation of Joint Sector Reviews.
- Coordinate common development partner responses and activities in line with sector priorities and plans.
- Approve the updated NST1 health sector matrix annually with the Chair.
- Contribute to the mobilization of resources for the Sector in collaboration with the Ministry of Health.
- Contribute to the improvement of the development partners scoring in the HSWG on the Development Partners Assessment Framework (DPAF).
- Co-sign the agreed minutes of HSWG meetings
- Contribute actively to and ensure effective dialogue within the health sector.
- An alternate lead development partner, nominated by Development Partners, assists the lead development partner (Co-chair) in discharging its duties and serves as the de facto Co-chair in the absence of the lead development partner.

NB: The Chair of the HSWG may notify MINECOFIN of a request to change the Co-chair. However, the Development Partners Coordination Group (DPCG) has the mandate to approve the new Co-chair.

4.3 Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN)

It is the responsibility of MINECOFIN to:

- Provide overall Leadership.

- Act as a second Co-chair in Joint Sector Reviews.
- Provide strategic orientation on the planning, budgeting as well as monitoring and evaluation process to the HSWG.

5. Frequency of meetings

The HSWG holds its meetings at least on a quarterly basis. However, the HSWG may convene extra meetings whenever the Chair and Co-Chair deem appropriate. In line with the national planning calendar, the HSWG will convene as the Joint Sector Review (JSR) forum. The first JSR will be primarily backward-looking, focusing on sector performance as agreed in the NST1 sector matrix and budget execution for the previous fiscal year. Backward-looking reviews will typically be held during the first quarter of the new Fiscal Year.

The chair and co-chair will make sure that backward-looking JSRs are conducted in line with the terms of reference provided by MINECOFIN. Budget Support development partners are requested to provide firm commitments of budget support by 15th January beginning of 3rd quarter – to the extent possible. The second JSR will be mainly forward-looking, focusing on plans and proposed budget outlays for the next Fiscal Year and medium-term. These plans will be aligned to sector strategic plans and NST1. Forward-looking Joint Sector Reviews will typically be held toward the end of the third quarter of the Fiscal Year in line with the terms of reference provided by MINECOFIN so that they can inform annual budget preparations.

6. Reporting and information sharing

The HSWG reports directly to MINECOFIN through its Chair. The HSWG chair will ensure forward and backward linkages between the HSWG and NST1 Thematic Working groups, including in terms of information sharing and updates on progress. Within the HSWG, the reporting system is to be facilitated by a secretariat composed of at least one representative from the Lead Ministry, Lead Development partner and MINECOFIN. The goal of the secretariat is to ensure the effective functioning and coordination within the sector.

Specific tasks of the secretariat include:

- Developing agendas for HSWG meetings;
- Recording meeting minutes;
- Ensuring monitoring and follow-up of decisions taken in the meetings;
- Ensuring coordination and coherence within the HSWG;

- Circulating/publishing information to all HSWG members through their e-mail or web site,
- Managing logistics for the HSWG.

The secretariat will be working closely with planners from Ministries/Agencies and technical officers from member institutions of Development Partners, Private Sector and Civil Society. It is the responsibility of all the members of the HSWG to share information relating to their development interventions as required by the HSWG Chair.