

Operating Guidelines for Health Systems Global Thematic Working Groups

This document provides guidelines for the establishment and the management of thematic working groups (TWGs), which are a core component of Health Systems Global's (HSG) identity as a member-driven organization. The TWGs represent a significant accomplishment of HSG and along with the Symposium are one of the critical services offered to HSG members.

These guidelines are based on some key principles that have emerged during the initial phase of TWG functioning 2013-2015.

- In broad terms, TWGs are expected to align their work plans with HSG's strategic priorities, and be explicit where and how they align and contribute to the mission and strategic objectives of the organization;
- TWG governance should be generally consistent across TWGs, but at the same time allow for TWGs to evolve their governance to meet their specific needs while assuring greater member engagement;
- TWGs are expected to capture/document TWG achievements against set objectives over the course of a year and publish on the TWG website and reflect in the annual report and in other documents they may produce for dissemination;
- The HSG Secretariat will provide tools and support to the TWGs.

I. TWG Functions

1. TWGs are self-organized and self-governed bodies, established following an application to HSG and subject to review and formal approval by the HSG Board.
2. The overall purpose of a TWG is to facilitate debate, promote knowledge-sharing, promote the field of health systems research and build capacity around a key issue (or set of issues) in the field of health systems research.
3. In fulfilling this purpose, each TWG shall:
 - a. Determine how the TWG is aligned with the HSG strategic objectives and priorities and spell out TWG objectives accordingly;
 - b. Create, build and expand TWG membership;
 - c. Determine how the TWG will communicate with members and carry out its activities, using social media channels, mailing lists and/or HSG website or other means, and inform HSG Secretariat about the communication means;
 - d. Organize a TWG annual meeting at least once per year (and definitely during the symposium). The annual meeting is open to all members of the working group with the aim to discuss, plan and coordinate TWGs activities. HSG Secretariat could facilitate annual

meetings in the non-symposium years by offering GoToWebinar platform at no cost to TWGs (based on request)

- e. Liaise with the Health Systems Global Secretariat on a regular basis;
- f. Produce at least one educational/engagement event per year (webinar, twitter chat, discussion club, brainstorm session, etc.) for HSG members and the broader health systems research community;
- g. Establish a newsletter that will be produced quarterly (optional)
- h. Establish an annual plan (with planned and scheduled activities and outputs) along with expected support from the HSG secretariat. The plan can be re-visited and updated on a bi-annual basis (see Annex 1 for annual plan template). The plan should be shared with the TWG members and HSG Secretariat and further discussed during the quarterly calls with the Secretariat. Such an arrangement is essential: a) for coordination purposes with HSG Secretariat to determine the scope and kind of support the TWG may require from the Secretariat; b) for coordination purposes with TWG members to identify the level of effort and time required from members; and c) for use as a framework/basis for the TWG's annual report. TWG members and the Health Systems Global Secretariat should be notified of any changes in the agreed quarterly plans (in writing and/or discussed during the quarterly calls between the TWG leads and HSG Secretariat).
- i. Provide the Secretariat with a short written annual report by March 1st of every year covering annual activities and describing specific outputs. Importantly, the report should provide information on where and how the TWG's work contributed to HSG's strategic objectives and priorities. The reporting is intended to be as minimally burdensome for TWGs as possible. The annual report should follow the template in Annex 2. The template includes basic indicators on TWG functioning and open-ended questions to elicit qualitative responses on TWG success and challenges.

II. TWG Governance and Requirements

4. TWG are self-governed bodies, but their governance arrangements have to meet the following minimum requirements of HSG:
 - Each TWG shall have at least three leadership positions that include:
 - 4..1. Chair – responsible for calling and chairing meetings, leading the planning and implementation of TWG activities, monitoring implementation, and serving as the primary contact with the HSG Secretariat on all TWG related matters;
 - 4..2. Vice-Chair(s) – who serves as a chair of TWG in the chair's absence and assists the Chair as requested in carrying out the Chair's responsibilities.
 - 4..3. Coordinator – responsible for taking minutes for quarterly calls with individual TWG organized by the Secretariat, and distributing minutes to TWG members and the HSG Secretariat. Upon request of TWG leadership the coordinator maybe asked to take minutes of TWG formal meetings as well.

Notes:

- Some TWGs may choose to have a shared leadership structure (co-chairs e.g. covering different regions in an equitable manner) in which case the roles and responsibilities between the chair and vice-chairs must be discussed, clarified and communicated in writing to the HSG Secretariat.
 - Importance of emphasis on coordination role does not preclude additional function. In case if a person assumes multiple functions (e.g. coordinates TWG activities as well as provides e.g. communications support to the group – position could be titled accordingly (e.g. coordinator/communications expert) to recognize both.
5. All TWG leadership positions shall be filled for two-year renewable terms, subject to approval from TWG members. The maximum term limit allowed in a given position is three two-year terms or six years in total. The terms do not have to be consecutive.
 6. TWG leadership is expected to be HSG members. However, HSG membership is not mandatory to become a TWG member.
 7. Each TWG shall have clear written and transparent governance policies or is welcome to use the policies developed by HSG for TWG Governance (see Guidance in TWG Governance in Annex 3). The governance policies include the following:
 - a) Job descriptions for all leadership positions
 - b) Processes for identifying candidates for TWG leadership;
 - c) Voting procedures for leadership election and term extensions;
 - d) Succession planning to maintain continuity and engage a wider range of members in the work of the TWG.
 8. Each TWG shall hold an annual meeting at least once per year. This meeting would ideally take place at the Symposium so a critical mass of members can meet face-to-face and in the off symposium year be held virtually. TWGs may decide to convene virtually more often, e.g. on a quarterly or semi-annual basis, if so decided by the members.
 9. A TWG may decide to create sub-groups or ad hoc committees to address specific topics.
 10. Membership and/or participation in a TWG is non-remunerative including the work of the leadership. (Note: provision of limited financial support to TWGs primarily for part-time TWG coordinator support is under the Board's deliberation and is subject to HSG Board's final decision not expected until November, 2016). However, if TWG leadership decides, the coordinator could be remunerated out of resources raised for the TWG work by the leadership.

III. Responsibilities of TWG Leadership

11. The leadership of each TWG is expected to do the following:

- a) Plan, lead and manage the work of TWG to produce the TWG's outputs;
- b) Organize TWG annual meeting at least once a year (one definitely during Global Symposia);
- c) Request HSG Secretariat's support when needed following established procedures (procedures include the following: specifying in TWG quarterly plans the expected scope and type of support required from HSG secretariat; notifying the Secretariat at least three weeks prior to the specific date; and participate in the Secretariat-TWG quarterly phone calls in addition to regular email correspondence and face-to-face meetings at the Symposia);
- d) Respond to occasional requests from the Secretariat for information;
- e) Include the HSG Secretariat on the TWG mailing list (formal communication with members, TWG business meetings, etc.);
- f) Submit an Annual Report to the Secretariat. Information on TWGs achievements and challenges will be included in quarterly reporting to the HSG Board. Quarter-specific information will be collected through quarterly calls with HSG secretariat.
- g) Participate in cross-TWG information and knowledge sharing meetings that will be organized by the HSG Secretariat semi-annually;

IV. TWG Membership Responsibilities

- 12. Membership in a TWG is free and not limited to HSG members only. However, all TWGs shall encourage their members to become HSG members.
- 13. TWG Members are expected to actively engage in the work of the TWG. TWG success depends on an active membership, which includes responding to TWG communications; participating in webinars, online discussions and other TWG fora; and participating in committees that the TWG may establish.
- 14. TWG members are expected to contribute their time to make the biannual Symposium on Health Systems Research a success by serving on the scientific committee, serving as track leaders, and submitting proposals for organized sessions. TWGs are expected to be linked directly with the Symposium, which may include but not be limited to:
 - a) TWG engagement in the symposium and program planning processes
 - b) Setting up the process to assist others/LIMIC participants to submit organized session abstracts (through "help develop the abstract" process)
 - c) Establishing TWG track, designated TWG session, or joint TWG booth in the marketplace, and building in TWG meeting time into the symposium agenda
 - d) Assuring active engagement of TWG members willing to contribute to the abstract review and selection processes

V. Benefits Offered to TWGs

15. Each TWG has the option of organizing and running a dedicated 90-minute session at the Society's biennial symposium, subject to approval of the TWG's non-competitive application by the symposium Program Working Group (PWG) assuring that the TWG submission is aligned with a theme/sub-theme/track of the symposium. When the TWG organized session is approved, TWGs are expected to identify senior technical people in their thematic area to review individual abstracts and develop the content of the session.
16. HSG will be provided a joint table (including all TWGs) at the symposium marketplace at no cost, but application has to be filed through symposium application system for marketplace and all TWGs will be expected to produce and bring display materials on their own.
17. At the symposium TWGs will be allocated space and time on the agenda for each TWG membership to meet along with others interested in their themes and use the time for business meetings. TWG Leaders are expected to plan for such a meeting and request the Secretariat's support at least two months prior to the Symposium, late request may not be accommodated due to logistical challenges. The HSG Secretariat will assist in scheduling so that people who are members of multiple groups may attend more than one.
18. Each TWG has up to five free HSG memberships each year to be awarded to an active TWG member from a low or middle income country for the duration of two years. Each TWG can decide how to award these free memberships based on self-established criteria. TWGs are expected to establish the procedures for such awards or are welcome to use the procedures developed by the HSG (see Annex 4 for Guidelines for free HSG membership). TWGs are responsible to inform the HSG Secretariat about the policies and the names of those selected annually. Award process for free membership should be initiated/advertised during January each year and decisions/selected members should be announced by March 1st.
19. TWGs will have their own page on the HSG website, which is maintained by the Secretariat and updated at the request of TWG leadership.
20. TWGs will be provided with full range of support services (technical and communications) to conduct successful webinars. These services include: advertising event through HSG communication channels; providing training(s) to the webinar team through pre-planned rehearsal sessions; providing technical support to the webinar team during the live webinar; and disseminating learnings from the webinar among wider audience through various communications channels. GoToWebinar platform will be provided to TWGs at no cost.
21. TWGs will get support from HSG secretariat in organizing and hosting Twitter Chats that will include advertising event through HSG communications channels, developing summary of Twitter Chat and publishing in a Storify post after the session.
22. TWGs will be provided an opportunity to disseminate TWG outputs (blogs, opinion pieces, various announcements, etc.) among wider audience (within and outside of HSG community) through various HSG social media channels (Facebook, Twitter), HSG website, HSG monthly update newsletter etc.

VI. Services Available to TWGs from the Secretariat

Communications

23. To design and adequately feature the outputs of the TWG on the HSG website, through social media and with the help of the HSG monthly newsletter or through news flashes the Secretariat will provide communications support.
24. Upon request by a TWG, the HSG Secretariat is prepared to provide the following assistance:
 - a. Organize webinars or discussion clubs using web-based platforms at no cost to a TWG, which includes:
 - i. Help plan, organize practice runs, and conduct webinars for HSG members and non-members;
 - ii. Broadly disseminate information about the planned webinar using HSG newsletter, social media outreach and various other communication channels to increase the reach and generate greater interest;
 - iii. Provide technical support throughout the webinar process to manage any technology or other issues and assure smooth implementation of the webinars;
 - iv. Develop and deliver special training courses for the TWGs to facilitate their webinar planning and communication skills development.
 - b. Provide support in organizing social media events, like twitter chats

Cross TWG support areas

25. Using its HSG monthly newsletter and other means of communication, the HSG Secretariat will facilitate cross-TWG information and knowledge sharing.
26. In addition, the Secretariat will assist in promotion and conduct of joint TWG webinars, joint ops, and other joint activities. These could be discussed during the semi-annual cross-TWG meeting with the Secretariat. Such meetings will be organized by the HSG Secretariat every six months and TWG chairs and vice chairs/secretaries will be invited to participate. Cross-TWG calls will focus on the following:
 - a. Based on TWG work plan analysis [conducted by the HSG Secretariat], present identified overlaps/duplications in the areas of work of various TWGs
 - b. Identify opportunities/areas for joint work/coordination between two or more TWGs
 - c. Discuss common challenges faced by the TWGs and suggestions for possible solutions
 - d. Discuss any other matters that have relevance to all TWGs

27. Alternatively, TWGs could raise such needs directly via e-mail or quarterly TWG calls organized by the HSG Secretariat.

Linking TWGs with the Global symposium

28. The HSG Secretariat will work to ensure that TWGs link with the Global Symposium in the following ways:

- a. Facilitate TWG engagement in a symposium/program planning processes
- b. Will facilitate establishing TWG track or designated TWG session(s), organizing a TWG booth in the marketplace and build in TWG meeting time into the symposium agenda
- c. Communicate the role of the TWGs as 'go-to' place, coordinating work in the respective thematic area/s.

TWG coordination / general support areas

29. The HSG Secretariat will organize quarterly or semi/annual calls with individual TWGs to understand their needs, plan for TWG outputs and for areas where the Secretariat's support is required. The objectives of the quarterly calls with individual TWGs are:

- a) Review/discuss quarterly plans of individual TWG and agree on planned outputs
- b) Plan for and agree on the secretariat support for TWG that needs to be provided during a quarter
- c) Discuss any outstanding/urgent issue related to TWG work

30. Organize TWG annual meetings during the symposium

31. Use HSG web-site undertaking online survey among TWG and HSG members and HSG web-site visitors on a specific set of questions related to a TWG's work

32. Use HSG website TWG specific pages to solicit/accept comments submitted by members

33. In order to receive such services TWGs shall develop quarterly plans and identify the kind of support they may request from the HSG secretariat. These plans should be submitted to the HSG Secretariat and also discussed during the quarterly calls to be able to plan and prepared for further action. This process will allow the Secretariat to be more responsive towards emerging needs of the TWGs. In case of ad hoc requests from TWGs, **at least 3 weeks' advance notice to HSG secretariat is required.**

VII. TWG Funding

34. TWGs are expected to be largely self-financing through contributions (in-kind and financial) of institutional employers of TWG members as well as by TWG-led fundraising efforts. TWGs are not expected to require substantial funding so these contributions are expected to be modest. The HSG Secretariat, where possible, may also be able to direct TWGs to funding sources for

specific activities and/or raise funding in close cooperation/coordination with TWG(s) in support of HSG/TWG program.

35. When circumstances permit and when HSG Board and/or Secretariat raises donor funding to support TWG work, TWGs may be offered additional financial support, which may be earmarked (at the request of a funder) for pre-agreed outputs.
36. TWGs can seek seed funding from the Secretariat or from other sources for facilitating collaborative/joint activities between established TWGs.
37. When seeking donor or HSG funding the following guidelines apply:
 - a) No TWG should ever Acceptance of funds for TWG/HSG activity into an individual TWG member's account is strictly forbidden;
 - b) All funds for TWG must flow through established and bona fide organizations (e.g. universities, consulting firms, research institutes).
38. TWGs have the option of channeling funding through Health Systems Global and should liaise with the Secretariat if they wish to do so. If funds are channeled through the HSG secretariat 15% overhead charges to cover the secretariat costs will apply.

VIII. TWG Identity Principles

39. All TWGs should follow and maintain HSG branding and identity principles and guidelines. TWGs should use visible elements of the HSG brand (color, design, logo type, name, and symbol) that together identify and distinguish the HSG brand. All documents that are developed as part of the HSG TWG activities should contain the HSG logo and name of the TWG.

IX. TWG Evaluation principles (process, frequency, criteria etc.)

40. TWG evaluation will be a transparent process organized annually or biennially, depending on the Board decision. The purpose of this evaluation is to document major achievements of TWGs and identify challenges faced by the TWGs.
 - a) TWG outputs will be planned during annual and quarterly planning processes;
 - b) The TWG activity dashboard (see Annex 5 for TWG Activity dashboard template) will be informed by the information presented in TWGs' annual reports that will include quantitative and qualitative information (see Annex 2 for TWG Annual Reporting Template).
 - c) Based on TWG annual reports, the HSG Secretariat will populate the TWG dashboard that will be reviewed by the Board.
 - d) The TWG Activity Dashboard will be placed in HSG's closed group and become accessible to all TWGs leads.

X. New TWG Application Procedures / Criteria

41. New TWG proposals should be submitted to the HSG Secretariat at: HSG_secretariat@curatio.com. The Secretariat will review the submission and prepare materials for the Board's consideration.
42. Proposals should consist of a 1-3-page expression of interest and must include the following:
 - a) Name of the proposed group
 - b) Clarification of the concept/topic/area proposed for the TGW work
 - c) Detailed scope of the group's focus area
 - d) Group objectives
 - e) Proposed activities incl. examples
 - f) Contact information of leaders and members of the group (name, affiliation, email, telephone)
43. New requests for establishing TWGs will be announced and reviewed by the HSG Board, collectively rather than individually.
44. Criteria of evaluation will include the following:
 - a) Leadership of the proposed TWG has prominent standing in the proposed field and the group size is adequate (at least 30 members) to assure at least two cycles of leadership transitions within TWG governance structure
 - b) The focus/theme of the proposal is strongly aligned with HSG strategic priorities and there is no overlap with the focus area/work being undertaken by other TWGs
 - c) TWG focus/theme fills in the well identified gap not addressed by existing/functioning TWGs and gap analysis/justification is well presented in the application
 - d) The proposal is clear on how the TWG will contribute to HSG's strategic objectives and help achieve HSG its mission
 - e) The proposal clearly presents the case assuring sustainable operation of a TWG at least for the next 3-4 years

XI. TWG Sun setting reasons or triggers

45. A TWG can be closed in the course of its functioning. The following circumstances are the basis for a TWG sunset:

Internal TWG Factors

46. TWG leadership is no longer able to dedicate and commit to the work of the TWG (due to lack of time, lack of enthusiasm, and lack of resources both human and financial) and the TWG is not in a position to identify and elect new leadership.
47. TWG runs out of volunteer energy and cannot be as active as originally planned (e.g. planned outputs cannot be produced, leadership and/or member engagement is very low)
48. Merge with another TWG (in case such need is warranted)

49. TWG successfully accomplished its purpose/objective

Note: HSG Secretariat will be engaged with a TWG in case if such issue/need emerges and work towards an acceptable scenario for particular case

HSG Board Decision

50. The HSG board can make the decision to close a particular TWG. Reasons can include but not limited to the following:

- a) TWG report and TWG dashboard revealing low or no contribution of the TWG to HSG priorities over past year(s)
- b) The visibility that TWG work is largely serving only TWG leaders and does not provide space for broader membership engagement

Annex 1: TWG Annual Planning Template

Note: Annual cycle refers to calendar year (Jan-Dec)

TWG Name:

Plan for Year:

Author (Name, Last name, Position):

Plan submission date (day/month/year):

1. Annual Plan *(Note: for each question, please as many rows/spaces as required)*

#	TWG objective (as defined in your TWG proposal)	Description of activities planned for the given quarter	Main deliverables/ outputs	To which strategic objective/strategic action under HSG's Strategy Framework for 2016-2020 does this activity contribute?	What support would you need/expect from HSG Secretariat to fulfil this activity?
Q1		e.g. survey aimed at exploring available HSPR courses in HICs	e.g. Teaching material/ online database		
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

...					
Q2					
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
...					
Q3					
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
...					

Q4					
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
...					

Indicative list of Key TWG activities:

- Facilitating **active and engaged dialogue** within TWG using web-based and social media platforms or other formats/means of engagement
- **Hosting webinars** on various topics:
 - For dissemination health systems research methods, including methods for knowledge translation
 - For capacity-building for the conduct, translation and utilization of health systems research
- **Participating in organization** of the biennial symposium on health systems research and **contributing** to its theme and content
- **Preparing and issuing** policy briefs, publishing editorials and commentaries and other documentation that promotes the field of health systems research
- **Developing a repository** of research methods and tools, knowledge translation tools, training materials, etc. relative to TWG’s work area
- **Conducting needs assessment** in their field and advocating for the field

Annex 2: TWG Annual Reporting Template

Note: Annual cycle refers to calendar year (Jan-Dec)

TWG Name:

Reporting period (from - to):

Author (Name, Last name, Position):

Report submission date (day/month/year):

This reporting template is intended to be used on an annual basis. The template includes basic indicators on TWG functioning and open-ended questions to elicit qualitative responses on TWG success and challenges.

1. Quantitative reporting

Indicator	Unit	Results	Comment
# of <u>TWG members</u> (including both, members and non-members of HSG, engaged in TWG LinkedIn Groups) as of December 31/ reporting year	Number		
# TWG <u>virtual or in-person meetings</u> during a reporting year	Number		
# of <u>webinars</u> conducted during a reporting year	Number		
# of <u>blogs</u> published during a reporting year	Number		
# of <u>twitter chats</u> organized and hosted during a reporting year	Number		
# of <u>opinion pieces</u> (policy briefs, commentaries, editorials) shared through HSG website, HSG monthly update Newsletter, Journals and/or Newspapers during a reporting year	Number		
TWG leadership is compliant with the HSG policy (adhered to leadership terms established by TWG and HSG membership obligation)	Y/N		
# of TWG members contributed to pre-Symposium planning and program development through curating sub-theme(s) and/or contributing to abstract review	Number		
TWG organized session at the symposium is conducted	Y/N		

2. Qualitative reporting

- a. What were the main activities carried out during the year by your TWG? Please list all activities and refer to the annual plans.
- b. To what extent were the objectives of your TWG achieved? Please explain.
- c. What do you consider your TWG's most important accomplishments during the reporting year (list achievements according to the priority order)?
- d. To which strategic objectives/priorities of Health Systems Global did your TWG contribute and how? (Please explain)
- e. What are the main factors that facilitate the achievement of the objectives of your TWG?
- f. What were the main challenges during the reporting year experienced by your TWG?
- g. Which of the planned activities were not accomplished and why? What can the Secretariat do to help address these issues?
- h. How would you evaluate the effectiveness of the HSG Secretariat in terms of providing timely and needed support to your TWG? Please provide examples of effective support you received from HSG secretariat; and suggest areas where support could be improved (*please explain and provide any suggestions you may have to improve Secretariat's performance*)
- i. Are there any other issues you would like to communicate that were not covered under previous questions?

Annex 3: Guidance in TWG Governance

1. Job descriptions

Roles and responsibilities for leadership positions

TWGs have the flexibility to determine their own leadership structure. HSG suggests as a starting point that TWGs consider a three-member leadership team, each with the following core responsibilities.

A. Chair

- Chair TWG meeting
- Assure diversity and engagement across TWG membership
- Lead the development of an annual work plan
- Lead the planning and implementation of TWG activities
- Monitor the implementation of TWG activities
- Serve as the primary point of contact with the HSG Secretariat
- Serve as the public face of the TWG to external audiences
- Identify funding needs and in close cooperation with the Secretariat develop strategies for fundraising
- Participate in quarterly check-in with the HSG Secretariat
- Submit annual reports to the Secretariat
- Assure the TWG page on the HSG website is updated
- Develop and implement an internal communications strategy for TWG members
- Look for opportunities for cross TWG collaboration

B. Vice-Chair

- Serve as the chair in the chair's absence
- Assist the Chair in carrying out the chairs responsibilities

C. Coordinator

- Organize calls/meetings (identifies convenient dates/times for the calls/meetings)
- Take minutes at TWG meetings (for TWG's virtual business meetings and quarterly calls with HSG Secretariat) and distribute to HSG and TWG members
- Maintain an updated mailing list of TWG
- Oversee implementation of internal communications strategy
- Implement process for selecting TWG leadership

Qualifications of a TWG Chair and Vice Chair

- Professional interest and good standing in the subject matter focus of the TWG

- Commitment to serve a full two-year term
- Willingness to spend/donate the time required
- Support from employers to play the leadership role
- English language fluency
- Spoken and written communication skills
- Knowledge of other organizations involved in the topic

Note: The above responsibilities are illustrative and each TWG has the flexibility to add to the list and to distribute them across the leadership positions.

2. Selecting TWG leadership (including TWG coordinators)

HSG has several core requirements for TWG leadership positions. These requirements include:

- All TWG leadership positions must be HSG members and preferably Chair and Vice Chair should be representatives of different WHO regions to assure diversity;
- Terms are for two years renewable and could be nonconsecutive.
- Leaders can serve a maximum of three terms or six years in the same position. So, for example, an individual can serve three terms as vice chair and three terms as chair.
- Rotation of TWG leadership after term expiration is necessary to afford equal opportunities to representatives from different geographies, genders and HIC/LMIC
- The process for electing members must be transparent and allow for members to vote.

A. Processes for identifying candidates

- Three months prior to the end of the terms of current leadership, the Chair will inform all TWG members that elections will take place.
- The Chair will circulate the job descriptions for the leadership positions to all TWG members along with the qualifications.
- Potential candidates, who have to be HSG paying members, will be encouraged to speak with current TWG leaders and members to learn more about what the position entails. This is intended to help candidates make an informed decision about running for one of the leadership positions.
- TWG members can encourage others to run for the leadership positions.
- One month prior to the election, members will be asked to declare their candidatures. This declaration consists of two parts:
 - Submitting brief bio, maximum 100 words, which will be used on the HSG website if the candidate is elected
 - Submitting Current CV
 - One-page statement on why the candidate would like this position and if elected what he or she would focus on.

B. Voting procedures

- The Chair will send out a list of candidates for each position.
- Members will be asked to vote for one candidate for each position. All TWG members are eligible to vote.
- Each TWG will devise a voting process. Options include electronic ballots that do not indicate who cast the vote.
- The voting system will be set up by the HSG secretariat and circulated among the people entitled to vote
- If no candidate receives a majority of votes cast, the top two will participate in a runoff election, thus ensuring that the winning candidate is supported by more than 50% of members.
- The Chair will appoint a two-person committee to implement the process and count the votes with the support provided from the Secretariat.
- The Chair will announce the results of the election.

3. Succession planning

- TWG leaders are encouraged to think about succession planning soon after they are elected.
- TWGs should ask members to express interest in eventually serving in a leadership position.
- The TWG leadership should make a focused effort to create opportunities to demonstrate interest and capacity in leadership. These opportunities include serving as chairs of sub-groups (some TWGs have a sub-group structure), heading a task force on a specific issue, and taking the lead on an activity in the TWG work plan.
- These leadership experiences will result in increased exposure to other TWG colleagues and deepen familiarity and understanding of how the TWG operates.

Annex 4: Guidelines for Free HSG Memberships

Each TWG has up to five free HSG memberships per year to offer to TWG members from low and middle income countries. While TWGs have the flexibility to develop their own policies to award these free memberships, this document provides a sample policy that TWGs can adopt or adapt.

1. Criteria

- a) Must be a citizen and resident of a low or middle income country
- b) Must be an active member of TWG over the past six months, which is reflected through her/his engagement in TWG social media channels, in postings on TWG/HSG blog, and in contributing to TWG organized events, etc.
- c) Must have demonstrated interest and involvement in health systems strengthening

2. Application Process

- a) The process must be transparent and open to all eligible TWG members.
- b) TWGs will announce the award of five free memberships in a communication sent to all TWG members. The announcement will consist of the criteria and application process.
- c) The application should consist of the following information
 - Name
 - Organization
 - Role in the organization
 - Number of years of experience
 - 250-word statement in English that explains how I will benefit from membership in HSG, how my organization will benefit, and what I will bring to HSG

3. Selection process

- a) The TWG Chair will appoint a three-person committee to review the applications. Applications not meeting the basic criteria above will not be considered
- b) The committee will establish a point system for scoring the 250-word statements of all those who meet the basic criteria. An illustrative point system might be:

Quality of written statement	25 points
Benefits to the individual	25 points
Benefits to the TWG the individual belongs to	25 points
Contribution to HSG	25 points

- c) The committee will average the scores and rank order the five highest.
- d) The TWG Chair will inform those selected and the HSG Secretariat