

**NY NGO Committee**

**A CIVIL SOCIETY GUIDE**

**TO THE**

**UNGASS 2016**

**OUTCOME DOCUMENT**

Draft as of june 2017

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1. What is this document for?

The aim of this guide is to highlight the potential for civil society participation in the implementation of the operational recommendations listed in the UNGASS 2016 Outcome Document. It highlights key provisions concerning civil society, presenting them in a practical, action-oriented language related to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to help organisations better understand their role and suggest strategies for implementation in cooperation with Member States and other relevant stakeholders.

guideUNGASS ensure the ation ofe Outcome Document’s numerous recommendations and commitments

2. What is civil society?

The [United Nations](http://www.un.org/en/sections/resources/civil-society/index.html) calls civil society the “third sector” of society, along with government and business. It comprises civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations. The [World Bank](http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/CSO/0%2C%2CcontentMDK%3A20101499~menuPK%3A244752~pagePK%3A220503~piPK%3A220476~theSitePK%3A228717%2C00.html) has adopted a definition of civil society developed by a number of leading research centers:

“the term civil society to refer to the wide array of non-governmental and not-for-profit organizations that have a presence in public life, expressing the interests and values of their members or others, based on ethical, cultural, political, scientific, religious or philanthropic considerations. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) therefore refer to a wide of array of organizations: community groups, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), labor unions, indigenous groups, charitable organizations, faith-based organizations, professional associations, and foundations”.

The Vienna and New York NGO Committees on Drugs (VNGOC and NYNGOC) are examples of civil society networks that operate within the UN system to facilitate the participation of national, regional, and international organisations at UN meetings, and with UN agencies.

3. What was UNGASS?

The UN General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on the world drug problem[[1]](#footnote-2) was held in April 2016 at the UN Headquarters in New York. At this meeting, countries agreed a lengthy Outcome Document outlining how to continue tackling these issues. The Outcome Document was the product of years of discussion both within and between members states, and with inputs and advocacy from civil society organisations at the national, regional, and global levels. It explicitly recognises the role of civil society in assisting member states to implement its practical policy recommendations – as this document will demonstrate.

The Outcome Document contains seven inter-related chapters that address:

1. demand reduction and health (including prevention, harm reduction and treatment)
2. access to controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes
3. supply reduction and law enforcement
4. cross-cutting issues: drugs and human rights, youth, children, women and communities
5. evolving realities and trends
6. international cooperation and shared responsibility, and
7. development-oriented drug control policies.

The Outcome Document recommends that countries develop policies that are gender and age sensitive, and situated within a framework of public health and human rights. It explicitly notes the need for member states to collaborate with multiple UN agencies in a holistic fashion.

4. What are the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2020 Agenda?

[ADD]

**The UNGASS Outcome Document and civil society**

Below are the paragraphs from the UNGASS Outcome Document that specifically mention the role and value of civil society participation. Each of these passages of text has been agreed by consensus by all UN member states:

[Preamble]:

We recognize that civil society, as well as the scientific community and academia, plays an important role in addressing and countering the world drug problem, and note that affected populations and representatives of civil society entities, where appropriate, should be enabled to play a participatory role in the formulation, implementation, and the providing of relevant scientific evidence in support of, as appropriate, the evaluation of drug control policies and programmes, and we recognize the importance of cooperation with the private sector in this regard;

[Preamble]:We express deep concern at the high price paid by society and by individuals and their families as a result of the world drug problem, and pay special tribute to those who have sacrificed their lives, in particular law enforcement and judicial personnel, and to the health-care and civil society personnel and volunteers who dedicate themselves to countering and addressing this phenomenon;

[Add others from across the document here – and also mention the improved visibility of civil society. You can quote from the forthcoming IDPC report which analyses outcome documents since 1990 to highlight trends in the rhetoric – including a lot of progress in terms of CS mentions]

[Paragraph X, Prevention of drug abuse]

Involve, as appropriate, policymakers, parliamentarians, educators, civil society, the scientific community, academia, target populations, individuals in recovery from substance use disorders and their peer groups, families and other co-dependent people, as well as the private sector, in the development of prevention programmes aimed at raising public awareness of the dangers and risks associated with drug abuse, and involve, inter alia, parents, care services providers, teachers, peer groups, health professionals, religious communities, community leaders, social workers, sports associations, media professionals and entertainment industries, as appropriate, in their implementation;

[Paragraph X, Treatment of drug use disorders, rehabilitation, recovery and social reintegration]

Intensify, as appropriate, the meaningful participation of and support and training for civil society organizations and entities involved in drug-related health and social treatment services, in accordance with national legislation and in the framework of integrated and coordinated national drug policies, and encourage efforts by civil society and the private sector to develop support networks for prevention and treatment, care, recovery, rehabilitation and social reintegration in a balanced and inclusive manner;

[Paragraph X, ]

[Paragraph X, ]

[Paragraph X, ]

[Paragraph X]

**4. Chapter 1: Drugs and health**

*Encourage the voluntary participation of individuals with drug use disorders in treatment programmes, with informed consent, where consistent with national legislation, and develop and implement outreach programmes and campaigns, involving drug users in long-term recovery, where appropriate, to prevent social marginalization and promote non-stigmatizing attitudes, as well as to encourage drug users to seek treatment and care, and take measures to facilitate access to treatment and expand capacity;*

**The Associated SDG for these chapters is Target 3.5 of Agenda 2030** calls on countries to “strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol.” Civil society organisations that include people who use drugs, such as INPUD, can be involved in setting up prevention and treatment programs, as they are experts on what works and what does not.

**Chapter Two: Operational recommendations on ensuring the availability of and access to controlled substances exclusively for medical and scientific purposes, while preventing their diversion**

This chapter of the Outcome Document recommends the training of healthcare providers in the rational use of controlled medicines, and the review of regulations for unduly restrictive clauses that hamper availability in the name of preventing addiction, diversion and abuse. Civil society organisations can and do already engage in both of these activities. Controlled essential medicines are unavailable in more than 75% of the world, mostly in the Lower and Middle Income Countries. They are necessary for both medication assisted treatment, and for pain and palliative care. To see more, go to the [IAHPC](http://hospicecare.com) or [WHPCA](http://thewhpca.org) websites, and the report of the [Global Commission on Drug Policy.](http://www.aidsdatahub.org/sites/default/files/highlight-reference/document/The_negative_impact_of_drug_control_on_public_health_2015.pdf)

**Associated SDG: Target 3.8:** Achieve universal health coverage (UHC), including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all age groups

**Chapter Three:**

**Operational recommendations on supply reduction and related measures; effective law enforcement; responses to drug-related crime; and countering money-laundering and promoting judicial cooperation**

We reiterate our commitment to protecting the safety and assuring the security of individuals, societies and communities by intensifying our efforts to prevent and counter the illicit cultivation, production and manufacture of and trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, as well as drug-related crime and violence, through, inter alia, more effective drug-related crime prevention and law enforcement measures, as well as by addressing links with other forms of organized crime, including money-laundering, corruption and other criminal activities, mindful of their social and economic causes and consequences, and we recommend the following measures:

**Prevention of drug-related crime**

Strengthen multidisciplinary measures at the international, regional, national, and local and community levels to prevent drug-related crime, violence, victimization and corruption and foster social development and inclusiveness, integrate such measures into overall law enforcement efforts and comprehensive policies and programmes, and promote a culture of lawfulness, (et.seq).

**Associated** **SDG #11 Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.**

**Chapter Four: Operational recommendations on cross-cutting issues: drugs and human rights, youth, children, women and communities**

**For NGOs**: Educate yourselves and your organisation about how problematic drug use affects your community. Build relationships with community, political, and thought leaders in your countries and invite them to visit your program and interact with your colleagues and populations. Get to know staff in regional branches of UNODC and WHO, and other relevant United Nations entities. Hold educational sessions on aspects of the drug problem that affect your communities, including individuals in recovery from substance use disorder and their families. Work with health professionals, national human rights organisations, and political leaders to ensure that national drug policies are comprehensive, integrated and balanced. Learn about [the human rights conventions](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/WorldDrugProblem.aspx) and [their impact on drug policies](https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/publications/human-rights-and-drug-policy). See [“The Impact of Drug Policies on Children and Young People”.](http://www.apple.com) Legitimate drug control policies must respect all human rights and fundamental freedoms, and protect the health, safety and well-being of individuals, families, vulnerable members of the society, communities and society as a whole.

**Related SDG:** [Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.](http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/women-and-the-sdgs/sdg-5-gender-equality)

**Relevant Targets:**

* End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere
* Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation
* Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decisionmaking in political, economic and public life
* Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws
* Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels

**See** [The Impact of Drug Policy on Women.](https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/reports/impact-drug-policy-women)

Women form part of affected populations who can participate in prevention and education, who have substance abuse disorder and need treatment and rehabilitation; who need access to controlled medicines for pain and palliative care; who are incarcerated as “drug mules”; who families suffer when they both use drugs problematically, and are detained. These are only a few examples that emerge from a gender-sensitive approach to drug policy analysis.

**Chapter Seven: Operational recommendations on alternative development; regional, interregional and international cooperation on development-oriented balanced drug control policy; addressing socioeconomic issues**

**For NGOs**: Convene a study group to read the [Addressing the Development Dimensions of Drug Policy](http://www.apple.com) and related literature. Hold information meetings with local farmers and grower communities to learn about their issues. Contact representatives of local, regional, and national units of government, including narcotics police, to exchange ideas about how to pursue beneficial policies guided by affected communities.

**Related SDGs:**

#1 End Poverty in all its forms everywhere;

#2 End hunger, achieve food security, and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

#3 Ensure healthy lives and promote well being for all at all ages

# 6 Ensure availability and sustainable management of water

#8 Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all

#12 Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

#13 Take urgent action to combat climate change

#15 Protect, promote, and restore sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss

#16 Promote peaceful and inclusive societies, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.

**For NGOs**: Research prospective private sector partners and build relationships with representatives at all levels of government to create conditions more conducive to productive investments targeted at job creation in areas and among communities affected by or at risk of illicit drug cultivation, production, manufacturing, trafficking and other illicit drug-related activities in order to prevent, reduce or eliminate them, and share best practices, lessons learned, expertise and skills in this regard.

**Related SDG:**

**Goal #17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnerships for sustainable development.**

**For NGOs**: Contact other civil society organisations to form and join local, national, and regional networks to exchange information and do advocacy work. Build relationships with representatives of government agencies, and other international organizations to implement the above-listed operational recommendations.

**Related SDG:** As above. We need more content here.

1. <http://www.unodc.org/ungass2016/en/about.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)