



hbsc

**HEALTH BEHAVIOUR IN SCHOOL-
AGED CHILDREN (HBSC):**

TERMS OF REFERENCE





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Requests for further information on this publication

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PREFACE

HBSC is an international study devised and conducted by a network of researchers in Europe and North America in partnership with the World Health Organisation. The HBSC network collaborates on the production of the study's scientific content, decides its methodological approaches, and cooperates on the dissemination of its research findings through journal articles and policy reports. The conceptual framework applied adheres to the social determinants model which aims to understand the health and health related behaviour of school-aged children within the context of family, peers, school and socioeconomic environment, as well as developmental processes.

Definition of terms

The Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) Study: WHO Collaborative Cross-national Study ('the HBSC Study') is the work of the HBSC network members, both individually and collaboratively, in relation to HBSC research at national and international levels.

The HBSC network is the international group of researchers who make up national HBSC research teams, who are actively involved in the HBSC Study's work as outlined above, and who are registered as HBSC network members.

A HBSC member country ('member country') is a country that is represented in the HBSC study by a Principal Investigator and a National Team. Member countries are WHO member states in the European Region (see Appendix 1), and in North America (Canada and USA).

HBSC study partners may be any organisation, agency, body or network with which HBSC sets up formal collaboration at an international level. WHO Regional Office for Europe is the primary partner of HBSC.

The HBSC International Research Protocol is the research instrument and its scientific rationale produced by the HBSC network every four years. It is used to conduct the HBSC survey in each member country.

HBSC data files are produced from national HBSC surveys conducted in each member country using the HBSC Research Protocol instrument. National HBSC data files are submitted to the HBSC International Databank and the HBSC International data file is created. Principal Investigators from each member country have access to the international datafile.

The HBSC survey cycle: The work of the study is ongoing and continuous. For the purposes of these Terms of Reference a survey cycle is the four-year period that covers the following activities:



Acronyms and abbreviations

DBM	Data Bank Manager	CC	Coordinating Committee
FG	Focus Group	NRT	National Research Team
IC	International Coordinator	PDG	Policy Development Group
ICC	International Coordinating Centre	PI	Principal Investigator
MDG	Methodology Development Group	SDG	Scientific Development Group

1. Introduction

Background

Since its initiation in 1983, the HBSC study has grown rapidly in size from the original three member countries to over 44 countries and regions throughout Europe and North America. The need for a clear set of organisational procedures soon became apparent as the management of the study and its activities became increasingly complex. A Terms of Reference were established and accepted by PIs and the WHO in 1989, with subsequent amendments in 1991, 1996, and 1998 (following a major organisational restructuring). In 2014 some new terms have been included, for example, on co-Principal Investigators.

Purpose

The purpose of the Terms of Reference (ToR) remains: to set out the aims and objectives of the study; and to provide a clear set of principles, rights and responsibilities. Operational procedures for the activities of network members, study partners, and the production of collaborative work from the study are also described .

The purpose of the external ToR is to provide a useful example to other international studies of rules of engagement of the HBSC international research network. It is also intended to show how decisions are made which is through democratic procedures. By sharing this information, stakeholders may gain insight and understanding about how the challenges of managing such an international research enterprise are met and how barriers to cooperation may be overcome. The ToR will also enable understanding of specific procedures of interest such as rules of publication and data access for those wishing to work with HBSC data.

Study Partners

The World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe (WHO Euro) is the primary partner of HBSC and has been since 1983. The operational aspects of this relationship are detailed within this document.

In order to maximise the potential of HBSC, partnerships with other organisations and agencies in the field have been and continue to be developed, for example, with the EC, UNICEF and OECD on specific joint projects. These Terms of Reference are written with a view to capitalise on such collaborative efforts. As such, the term “study partners” is used throughout the document.



2. Aims & objectives of HBSC

Aim:

HBSC is an international research study that aims to gain new insight into, and increase understanding of health behaviours, health, well-being, lifestyles and social contexts of young people in different countries.

Objectives:

1. To initiate and sustain national and international research on health behaviour, health and well-being and social contexts of school-aged children.
2. To contribute to theoretical, conceptual, and methodological development in the said area of research.
3. To monitor and to compare health behaviour, health, well-being and social contexts of school-aged children in member countries through the collection of relevant data.
4. To disseminate findings to researchers, health and education policy makers, health promotion practitioners, school staff, parents, young people and other relevant audiences.
5. To develop partnerships with relevant external agencies to support the development of health promotion with school-aged children.
6. To promote and support the development of national expertise on health behaviour and the social context of health in school-aged children.
7. To establish and strengthen a multi-disciplinary international network of researchers in this field.
8. To provide an international source of expertise and intelligence on adolescent health for public health, health education and health promotion.

3. Primary activities of HBSC

1. The development of research protocols and instruments for the scientific study of health behaviour, health and well-being and social contexts among school-aged children at national and international levels.
2. To conduct regular cross-national HBSC surveys among school-aged children.
3. The publication and dissemination of the findings of the study through various channels including scientific peer-reviewed journals, books, reports, factsheets, policy briefing papers and online through the HBSC website and twitter account.
4. The organisation of international meetings and workshops for the coordination of work, scientific exchange, research development and the production of publications.
5. Collaboration with WHO Euro as its primary study partner.
6. The development of partnerships and collaborations with other related projects, organisations and agencies.
7. To provide access to HBSC databases for partners and external researchers at appropriate times for coordinated work and external data use.
8. The development and maintenance of a members' intranet for internal resources and a public website as a source of information on the study for external audiences.

4. Principles of the HBSC Network

The HBSC network is an international alliance of groups of researchers (national teams) in member countries who conduct the HBSC study. The network operates through mutual adherence to the rules laid down in the Terms of Reference. The HBSC study is not the property of any single group, person or organisation; rather it is a product of national and international collaboration. These collaborative efforts are coordinated by an elected International Coordinator (IC).

The following guiding principles are aimed to foster such collaborative work:

1. Inclusion: the network respects differing research perspectives and the promotion of a supportive learning environment.
2. Participation: all members are expected to participate in, and contribute to, the development of the study. This obligation includes not only active participation in the research activities but also in operational aspects of the study.
3. Communication: network-wide, ongoing communication is essential. Members are expected to respond to and initiate communications. Working groups/committees are also expected to regularly inform others of developments.
4. Language: the working language of the network is English. All efforts are made to ensure that communication – both oral and written – is clear and comprehensible to all members, the majority of whom are not native English speakers.
5. Ongoing evaluation of the network's organisational structure: in order to remain dynamic the network must be prepared to regularly review and to change the organisational structure and/or operational issues whenever necessary.
6. Management of change: any changes in the study's organisational structure always take place through consultation with the network members and are agreed by its executive body – the HBSC Assembly which comprises the Principal Investigators of member countries.

5. HBSC membership

5.1 National Teams

National teams represent member countries and are led by Principal Investigators (PIs). Maximum national team membership is fifteen members, including the PI. Each national team submits one nationally representative data file to the Data Bank for inclusion in the international data file.

5.2 Principal Investigators (PIs)

PIs are expected to fulfil the following criteria:

1. To have recognised research skills and experience in health/social/behavioural research and to be able to contribute to the theoretical, methodological, analytical or policy-related development of the study.
2. To be based in a university department; a research institute; or in a research department in a government public health institution. If the latter, then it is also recommended that there is cooperation with a relevant university department in the country.
3. To lead a national research team – or be in the process of building a research team – that has expertise in health/social/behavioural science and is capable of participating in the collaborative work of the study.
4. To hold a PhD or have an equivalent level of research experience.
5. To take overall responsibility for carrying out the survey in their country and the production of national reports.

5.3 National team members

National team members are researchers who are invited or selected by their PI to be included in the national team and, as such, are registered as members of the Network. In accordance with the network principles, a multi-disciplinary team with complementary skills is encouraged.

5.4. Procedures for joining HBSC

Unsolicited applications are welcomed from researchers in member states in the WHO European region that are not yet represented in HBSC. The HBSC PI Assembly can invite applications from suitable researchers where known. The WHO Regional Office for Europe, as primary partner, may also suggest new member countries.

Applications must be made well in advance of a survey year to allow new national teams sufficient time to prepare to conduct the survey and to be incorporated into the Network.

Criteria:

1. Applications are only accepted from countries where an HBSC national team does not already exist.
2. Applications must come from individual researchers based in an institution. Applications from an institution or organisation to join the study are not accepted.
3. Prospective PIs must meet the criteria outlined in 5.2.
4. The team must be prepared to conduct at least two consecutive surveys and demonstrate realistic possibilities of funding. In addition to data collection, funds are necessary to: cover piloting, statistical analyses, publication writing and travel to at least one of the bi-annual international HBSC meetings. Also each team must have funds to pay a subscription that contributes to international coordination/ data management costs. Subscriptions are paid on an annual basis and are determined according to a fee scale based on the country's financial situation (GDP).

6. Organisational Structure

In order to remain productive, the organisational structure of the HBSC network needs to be dynamic and able to change according to developing needs and interests. Therefore, the nature of the working groups and roles described below may change at the discretion of the PI Assembly and the Terms of Reference amended accordingly.

6.1 Roles

6.1.1 Principal Investigator's (PI) Assembly

The PI Assembly consists of PIs from network teams, and is the basic steering and decision-making body of the HBSC network. PI Assembly meetings are held at the bi-annual HBSC international meetings. They are convened and chaired by the International Coordinator (or by a chair appointed by the IC). Decisions and elections are taken by simple majority rule on the basis of one national team - one vote.

6.1.2 The International Coordinator (IC) of the Study

The International Coordinator is elected by the PI Assembly every four years. Nominees must be PI of a HBSC national team. S/he can be self-nominated or nominated (with the candidate's agreement) recommended by a fellow PI.

Responsibilities of the IC:

1. To establish the International Coordinating Centre (ICC) for the Study and to ensure that its responsibilities are fulfilled (see 6.2.1).
2. To coordinate the activities of the Network, including international survey work in order to fulfil the study's aims and objectives.
3. To chair the PI Assembly, the Coordinating Committee and the Scientific Development Group.
4. To provide the key link between the HBSC network and study partners, and ensure workplans are established and undertaken.

Tenure and election process of the IC:

The IC serves a term of four years. Applicants for International Coordinator are required to demonstrate that they have sufficient resources and expertise for the position and the potential to raise the necessary funding. An IC can stand for re-election. There is no limit to the number of times an IC may stand for re-election. If an IC resigns before the end of his/her term, the PI Assembly will elect a new IC from nominees.

6.1.3 The Data Bank Manager (DBM)

The DBM must be a full member PI. The Data Bank Manager is elected by the PI Assembly in the same way as the International Coordinator, i.e. by self-nomination or recommended by a fellow PI.

The Data Bank Manager has the following responsibilities:

1. To establish the International Data Bank for the study.
2. To coordinate international survey work jointly with the IC.
3. To design the codebook for the HBSC survey Protocols.
4. To set the standards for data entry and the export of data for inclusion in the international file.
5. To organise the storing of a complete set of HBSC study data (national and international) and related documentation under protection.
6. To respond to and manage requests for access to international data files by external researchers.

Tenure and election process of the DBM:

The Data Bank Manager serves a term of four years. Applicants are required to demonstrate that they have sufficient resources and expertise for the position and the potential to raise the necessary funding. A DBM can stand for re-election. There is no limit to the number of times a DBM may stand for re-election. If a DBM resigns before the end of his/her term, the PI Assembly will elect a new DBM from nominees. The PI Assembly votes on whether to accept a change in DBM or not.

6.1.6 Financial resources for international activities

Financial resources are required to support International Coordination and Data Bank Management of the study. Candidates are required to demonstrate commitment to fund raising in line with the resources needed to run the two centres. The An international funding strategy for HBSC is required to raise these funds. Part of this strategy involves raising funds through a subscription system for member countries (as mentioned above); however additional funds need to be raised. .

Applications to national and international funding agencies by the IC and the DBM are also made. Study partners may also contribute financial support for international activities.

6.2 Centres

6.2.1 International Coordinating Centre (ICC)

In order to fulfil his/her duties the International Coordinator (IC) must establish a centre with a recommended minimum of two additional staff to assist in the day-to-day running of the network.

Responsibilities of the ICC:

1. To provide full technical and administrative support to the IC.
2. To manage the network's communication systems.
3. To manage/maintain the HBSC public website and members' intranet.
4. To organise international meetings in collaboration with the PI hosting these meetings. host PI.
5. To hold and maintain databases and archives of all HBSC activities, publications, registration of network members and external use of data.

6.2.2 Support Centre for Publications (SCP)

The SCP oversees the planning and production of scientific publications from the study. The SCP works under the auspices of the International Coordinator. The SCP has the following responsibilities:

1. To facilitate registration of planned, submitted and published papers and to ensure that the HBSC publication database is maintained.
2. To ensure that the rules for publications are adhered to.
3. To stimulate collaboration between individuals or groups with mutual interests.
4. To provide an overview of topics dealt with in scientific publications from HBSC and to support strategic planning of prioritised topics for future publication.

6.2.3 Data Management Centre (DMC)

In order to fulfil his/her duties the Data Bank Manager (DBM) must establish a centre with a recommended minimum of two additional staff to support countries in preparing and conducting HBSC data collection in the following areas:

1. Providing ad hoc support and guidance to teams during fieldwork.
2. Production of the international data file.
3. Setting and enforcing deadlines for data submission and implementation of agreed sanctions.
4. Analysis for the international report, and support in writing and production of the report.
5. Management of external access to data including data access portal launch with completion of data documentation of past surveys.

6.2.4 WHO Collaborating Centres

“A WHO collaborating centre is a national institution designated by the Director-General of the World Health Organization to form part of an international collaborative network carrying out activities in support of WHO’s mandate for international health work and its programme priorities”.¹

WHO Collaborating Centres that have included HBSC activities in their workplans have played an important part in the development of the study’s infrastructure, in particular through enabling fundraising for International Coordination and Data Bank management.

Although it is not a requirement that the International Coordinating Centre and the Data Bank are situated in an institution designated as a WHO Collaborating Centre, proposals for the institution to become a WHO Collaborating Centre may be put forward.

6.3 Groups

6.3.1 The HBSC Coordinating Committee (CC)

The Coordinating Committee is the body that supports the International Coordinator in overseeing the progress of the study and the functioning of the network between bi-annual meetings. Members of the CC are from national teams and are representative of the organisational structure in the Network and of the general membership, including geographic regions..

Responsibilities of the CC

1. To deal with the internal policy and strategic planning of the network.
2. To support the IC and the DBM in all general coordination and decisions.
3. To oversee the progress of working groups (SDG, PDG, FGs and any sub-groups formed on specific issues or geographic areas) and to provide advice and support where appropriate.

6.3.2 Scientific Development Group (SDG)

The Scientific Development Group comprises the Focus Group (FG) chairs (or representatives), the chair of the Methodology Development Group (MDG), the International Coordinator and the Data Bank Manager. The function of this group is to oversee and coordinate the scientific work of the study by providing a forum in which information on FG activities and ideas can be shared.

Responsibilities of the SDG:

1. To develop theoretical and empirical aspects of the study through the development/ production of Survey Research Protocols and scientific papers.
2. To take an active role in the quality control checking process of international datafiles, and to stimulate the production of scientific papers based on these.
3. To work together with the Policy Development Group (PDG) on the planning, production and dissemination of relevant international publications.
4. To ensure that FGs fulfil their commitments and to take appropriate action if a group fails to do so (for example, if a group disbands).
5. Specific responsibilities of Focus Group chairs within the FGs are described in 6.3.5.

6.3.3 Methodology Development Group (MDG)

The Methodology Development Group focuses specifically on the discussion and development of methodological issues in the study. The MDG consists of at least one representative from each of the Focus Groups and any network members with appropriate skills and experience. The DBM is automatically a member of the group.

Responsibilities of the MDG:

1. To oversee, and provide advice on, the methodological work of the FGs and national teams.
2. To work with FGs in producing items for inclusion in the study.
3. To coordinate the quality control checking process of the international datafiles, under the guidance of the DBM.
4. In addition to the above specific responsibilities and activities throughout the survey cycle, the group aims to:
 - provide support with analysis of existing data and use of statistical software (e.g. multilevel/multivariate statistics).
 - inform the network of methodological advancements through workshops and presentations.

6.3.4 Policy Development Group (PDG)

The Policy Development Group consists of at least one representative from each of the Focus Groups. Membership is also open to any network member who has experience and/or an interest in contributing to policy related work. Representatives from the WHO Regional Office for Europe are also invited to join the PDG to contribute their expertise in this key area. The main purpose of this group is to oversee and coordinate the policy related work of FGs.

Responsibilities of the PDG:

1. To evaluate and advise on the adolescent health policy-related work of the FGs.
2. To guide and oversee the production of policy publications.
3. To develop, plan and oversee the implementation of international/national dissemination strategies and activities.
4. Specific responsibilities of the FG representatives within their FGs and the tenure and election process are described below.

6.3.5 Focus Groups (FGs)

The Focus Groups are research working groups focussing on a specific research topic area within the study. The aim of the Focus Groups is to provide a framework through which collaborative cross-national research can take place. Each FG represents a forum (a 'mini-network') in which network members can participate and contribute to work within an area of their own interest and/or expertise.

Throughout a survey cycle, the FGs are responsible for all aspects of work within their area, from conceptual development, development of survey items and production of scientific rationales, through to publications. FGs are expected to produce and contribute to both scientific and policy related HBSC research outputs.

6.3.5 Focus Group Chairs:

Each FG elects one of its members to act as the group's chair. The role of FG chair is to co-ordinate the group's activities and to facilitate member participation. Each FG chair represents their group on the Scientific Development Group (SDG) and contributes to SDG activities.

Focus Group representatives on the Policy Development Group (PDG):

Each FG elects one of its members to represent the group on the PDG. The role of the PDG representative is to oversee the policy related activities and products of the group and to contribute to PDG activities.

6.4 Linked Projects

Researchers who use or are interested in using HBSC instruments in a) special projects within Europe or North America or b) in countries outside of Europe and North America are eligible to become HBSC linked projects. HBSC has created the Linked Project Status in order to gain further understanding and provide information on HBSC to such researchers and research groups. Via the HBSC website they may register as HBSC linked projects and to have access to the most recent HBSC International Research Protocol. Currently they are not eligible for other HBSC membership which is reserved for national teams in countries in Europe, the US and Canada, although in future this may change.

The benefits of becoming a Linked Project are that findings from such projects may be presented on a special Linked Project area of the HBSC website; researchers will be invited to any open non-member HBSC conferences and scientific meetings; and will be able to participate on a digital forum where you will be able to leave questions for and communicate with HBSC members. Linked projects will have the opportunity to develop contacts with relevant members of the HBSC network whose expertise is described on the HBSC membership database.

7. Specific Activities

7.1 HBSC Research Survey Protocols

A full Research Protocol is produced by the HBSC Research Network for each survey. The Protocol contains all the information and instructions necessary for carrying out the HBSC survey. The HBSC PI Assembly approves the final version of each Research Survey Protocol.

External access

The full Survey Research Protocol is an internal document for the sole use of HBSC network members and study partners. Its primary use is to conduct the national HBSC Survey in each country; it may also be used by national teams and their collaborators to conduct regional surveys within the country. Other internal uses may include: related research, funding applications, teaching and training. External requests for access to the full protocol for the purpose of conducting research will be considered for:

1. HBSC study collaborators in member countries who are working with the national team on analyses and publications
2. External researchers who specifically request access to the full protocol for the purposes of aiding secondary data analyses following successful applications for international data access
3. Other requests will be considered on a case by case basis.

For general external access an Abridged Survey Protocol will be publicly available provided following the completion of the survey by member countries. External access requests are made via the HBSC website. The Abridged Survey Protocol will be considered after the relevant survey has been completed. Exceptions to this rule are cases where regional data is being collected at the same time as a national HBSC survey.

7.2 Production of International data files

The international data file from each HBSC survey is compiled according to the Survey Research Protocol. All national datasets must comply with the criteria laid down in the Survey Research Protocol before they may be included in the international data file. The Data Bank Manager has the responsibility to check that criteria have been met and enforce sanctions where this is not the case.

7.3 Production of the HBSC International Report from each survey

At least one International Report presenting the cross-national findings from each survey is produced as soon as possible after the completion of the international datafile. The aim of the International Report(s) is to attract the attention of key international audiences and stakeholders.

8. The HBSC-WHO partnership

HBSC supports WHO in its efforts to improve knowledge and understanding of adolescent health and its needs for information for policy and programme development. Specifically HBSC contributes to WHO's Child and Adolescent Health Strategy.

WHO supports the network and its members, and facilitates and supports the utilisation of HBSC research for policy and programme development on adolescent health. WHO may also, where appropriate, provide support to countries in their applications to become members of HBSC.

8.1 Terms of the partnership

The HBSC PI Assembly :

- keeps WHO fully informed of scientific developments within the study
- consults with WHO over any proposals to establish links or collaboration with external agencies and/or potential study partners
- consults with WHO over proposals to allow membership to the HBSC Research Network of non-WHO European member states

WHO :

- informs the HBSC Research Network in good time about the use and dissemination of HBSC research findings
- references HBSC findings whenever used
- consults with the relevant PIs before proposing to establish or extend links between the study and national governments with the aim of creating favourable conditions for the development of HBSC

9. International Working Meetings

International meetings - either full network or focus group meetings - are organised twice a year or as appropriate for the coordination of work and scientific exchange within the network. The International Coordinator is responsible for organising meetings jointly with the host PI, the CC and the ICC.

9.1 Full network meetings

Full network meetings are usually held in the spring. All network members are invited to participate in this meeting. The full meeting includes an open paper presentation session and concludes with a PI Assembly meeting.

9.2 Focus Group meetings

Focus Group meetings generally take place in autumn. They are primarily for FG and other groups to progress their work on protocol development or publication production. Normally there are no open paper presentation sessions at the FG meetings as time is reserved for group work.

9.3 Hosting working meetings

Network and Focus Group meetings are hosted by member countries and funded by them. Hosts meet the costs of venue accommodation (meeting rooms, equipment hire etc), refreshments and additional staff required. To assist with covering some of the costs of hosting meetings, all participants are required to pay a basic registration fee, the sum of which will be kept at a low and reasonable rate. Participants cover their own travel, accommodation and subsistence costs.

10. HBSC Publications

In order to fulfil its primary objectives of contributing to the knowledge base and the development of research on adolescent health and well-being, the dissemination of findings from HBSC data takes many forms. The publication of scientific papers in peer-reviewed journals is the basis of the study's work and therefore this section refers primarily to such publications

- Findings from the international data should not be released prior to the publication of the International Report that follows each survey and is published by WHO unless sanctioned by the PI Assembly. There are no time restrictions on the release of findings from national data.
- All planned scientific publications, journal articles and PhD theses must be registered on the HBSC publications database.
- The SCP is responsible for maintaining the publications database.
- All network members who are working within the topic area of a planned publication on international data must be given the opportunity to collaborate.
- Collaboration on publications using international data with external collaborators (i.e. any researchers who are not registered network members) must follow the rules on the use of international data.

10.2 Authorship Guidelines

There must be at least one full member PI as co-author or taking a consultative role on any HBSC-related publication. This PI is responsible for ensuring that the rules on publications are adhered to and that communication on progress to network members is maintained.

First author role

The first author is the individual who initiates the manuscript by beginning conceptualisation, analysis and soliciting co-authors. Designation of first author should be confirmed by the group that has agreed to work together on preparing a paper. The first author is expected to chair meetings, set agendas and keep the process moving. The first author should initiate first drafts and contribute a major portion to writing the paper.

If a first draft is not produced after a reasonable period of time someone else (a co-author) has the right to step in and take over the production.

Order of authorship

Order of authorship is granted by the first author in order of the level of contribution to the production of the paper. All authors must have contributed to some aspect of the publication (such as conception and design, analysis and interpretation of the data) and be able to take public responsibility for the publication.

11. Rules on use of HBSC international data

The HBSC network carries the scientific responsibility to ensure that data are correctly interpreted and takes a disciplined approach to its use at all times. In order to maintain a comprehensive archive as a resource for internal and external use, careful monitoring of the use of HBSC data and related publications is necessary through the procedures outlined below.

11.1 Internal use of data

- The data will be stored under protection at the designated Data Bank, and at local computers in each member country.
- Automatic access to the international data file can only be given to members who deposit their own national data set with the International Data Bank according to the research protocol and are therefore registered PIs and national teams.
- The inclusion of a national dataset in the international datafile assumes that permission to use that dataset is granted to all members who have access to the international datafile.
- The data will be available to member PIs exclusively for a period of three years after the final version of the international data set has been approved. Following this period the data is available for public use. To date this has been through access requests but soon this will also be through a public HBSC data portal.
- The international data file must not be copied other than for the purposes of analysis by national team members, save for exceptional circumstances.
- Findings from the international data should not be released until after the International Report has been published.
- The publication of findings from the international data file must conform to the rules and procedures laid out in the Publications section.

11.2 External use of data

The HBSC network is committed to developing ways to increase use of the study data by external researchers in order that this rich resource may be put to full use. As indicated above, the scientific responsibility to ensure accurate and proper use of the data necessitates the following terms:

- Access to HBSC data is given only to academic or public sector researchers working in the health field. Access will not be given, under any circumstances, to commercial interests.
- After a period of three years from the date that the international data file is finalised, access to specified parts of the file can be requested by researchers other than members of the HBSC network.
- The mechanism for data access will soon also be via a public HBSC data portal – more details will be provided on the HBSC website in due course.

11.3 Use of data in collaboration with study partners

HBSC study partners can request access to international datafiles, including the most recent file prior to the end of the three-year exclusion period. HBSC study partners can also commission research (analyses or publications) as part of agreed study partner workplans.

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Design by Felicity Wild, HBSC International Coordinating Centre