

The accountability and responsibilities of Simavi's supervisory board are described in the organisation's Declaration of Accountability (see www.simavi.org/declaration-of-accountability).

About the supervisory board

- Throughout the year the supervisory board and the management team operated entirely according to the declaration's rules and intent.
- The supervisory board is the managing director's employer and supervisor and acts as her adviser. The board itself has no managerial or operational responsibilities.
- The supervisory board members are recruited according to pre-agreed profiles to ensure the board's composition encompasses diverse areas of expertise. Vacancies are publicly advertised.
- The supervisory board appoints new board members. The supervisory board may involve the managing director in the assessment and selection procedure.

Composition

Simavi's supervisory board is composed as follows:

Supervisory board members	Area of expertise	Current position	Other ancillary positions
Michiel de Wilde, chair, remuneration committee, strategy committee	Strategy and organisation, international development, corporate social responsibility, donor relationships	Member of the executive board / Director at Goldschmeding Foundation for People, Work and Economy until November 2020	Chairman of the board of Vrijzinnig-Christelijk Lyceum (The Hague)
Jeroen Wels, remuneration committee, strategy committee	Human Resources Management	Executive Vice-President Human Resources, Unilever	–
Willem van de Put	International health development	Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Tropical Medicine Antwerp	Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of International Humanitarian Affairs, Fordham University (New York); Co-founder/Director of Culture4Change
Hans Valkenburg, audit committee	Planning & Control, Theory of Change, international development, poverty alleviation, journalism	Self-employed consultant on finance, strategy and planning	Non-executive member of the board of Tear; Member of the supervisory board of Holland Zorggroep
Joyce Browne	Global health, maternal health, epidemiology	Assistant Professor, UMC Utrecht	Board member of the Netherlands Society of Tropical Medicine and International Health (NVTG), Founder/Organiser of Dutch Global Health Film Festival, Board member of Global Health Knowledge Centre Foundation
Vera Arnoldus (as from March 2021) audit committee	Legal, governance	Corporate Secretary, Atalmedial	–

Rotation and election procedure

Supervisory board members are appointed for a maximum of two four-year terms. The board's rotation schedule is as follows:

Supervisory board members	Appointed as of	End of first term	End of second term
Michiel de Wilde	2014 (November)	2018	2022
Jeroen Wels	2014 (November)	2018	2022
Willem van de Put	2018 (December)	2022	2026
Hans Valkenburg	2019 (September)	2023	2027
Joyce Browne	2020 (January)	2024	2028
Vera Arnoldus	2021 (March)	2025	2029

Recent changes

In January 2020 Joyce Browne was appointed a member of the supervisory board. Mirjam Bakker stepped down in September 2020 after completing her first term of four years. The supervisory board wishes to express its gratitude for her contributions. In March 2021, Vera Arnoldus was appointed as her successor on the board and the audit committee.

Compensation

The remuneration policy for the supervisory board remains unchanged. Members of the supervisory board do not receive any form of compensation. Actual expenses incurred may be reimbursed.

Supervisory board meetings in 2019

The board convened seven times in 2020. The standard agenda items for supervisory board meetings throughout the year are:

- the annual plan and budget,
- the annual report,
- programme implementation and societal impact,
- strategic partnerships and alliances,
- formal audits, evaluations and risk assessments,
- risk management and fraud prevention,
- review of the governance structure,
- development of the organisation, its capabilities and the strength of its leadership,
- employee engagement.

In addition to the standard agenda items, the board also discussed and reviewed the following items this year:

- impact of and response to Covid-19,
- fundraising strategies and plans, in particular private fundraising,
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs Strategic Partnerships calls,
- vacancies and capabilities,
- Simavi brand positioning,
- financial investment,
- succession of supervisory board members.

2020 in review

Simavi aims to continually improve its capabilities as a future-proof, learning and agile organisation that combines professionalism, a strong global network and 95 years of experience.

During the first six months of the year the supervisory board took a deep dive into Simavi's organisational structures to review its policies and governance systems. Furthermore, all eyes were on the progress of the three proposals for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Strategic Partnerships call. Several scenarios were drawn up, taking all possible outcomes of the call into consideration.

By April the Covid pandemic had become a leading topic of concern during the supervisory board meetings. Input from the supervisory board members was taken into consideration when adapting the organisation to this new working situation. Throughout the year this was a recurring subject, focusing on the operational side of the Simavi programmes, the health and well-being of Simavi employees and the possible longer-term funding consequences.

As a result of not being granted the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Strategic Partnership calls, the supervisory board engaged with the managing director and director of finance and operations to analyse the proposal process, distil lessons learned and further clarify the financial outlook. A financial plan was developed for 2020 and 2021 based on the strategic scenarios that had been constructed at the start of the year. Also, the fundraising plan was adapted. A Private Fundraising Circle was introduced and the strategies for Partnership Development and Private Fundraising were improved and aligned. Simavi's strong financial position enabled the supervisory board to approve a significant investment in fundraising capacity and expertise to offset the consequences of the disappointing outcome of the Strategic Partnerships call in the years to come.

In mid-July the organisation started the process of creating a new brand positioning, based on insights from the Reinventing Ourselves project, interviews with selected external stakeholders and input from Simavi's employees. The resulting insights and choices were outlined in the Simavi Brand Book. By the end of November Simavi had developed an inspiring communication concept that will deliver the brand promise and start raising visibility and awareness. Vital parts of the strategy detailed in the Theory of Change, such as the women-centred, rights-based and impact-oriented approach, will remain key elements of new programmes and programme proposals.

The past year has been a prelude to consolidating what has been learned from several large programmes that came to the end of their final years of implementation. Insights and overviews of the impact Simavi has created in the many lives of women and girls are described in the Impact Report 2020. Towards the end of the year, the organisation was again looking ahead, forming new partnerships, reinforcing existing ones and developing new programme formats that build upon Simavi's well-defined expertise and the lessons learned.

All in all, 2020 was a challenging and in some respects disappointing year. However, the Simavi organisation and its partners have proven to be very resilient. The team kept Simavi's programmes running as well as possible and responded with a great effort to develop the new tools and equipment needed to hit the ground running in 2021.

Evaluation of the managing director

Each year the supervisory board – through its remuneration committee – reviews the managing director's past performance and personal development goals for the coming year. The board is satisfied with Ariette Brouwer's leadership under challenging circumstances and has expressed its continued confidence in her. In addition, and taking the longer-term funding challenges into account, the supervisory board stressed its strong interest in the 'Simavi 3.0' strategy project to be launched in 2021. This will lead to a clarification of the strategic direction against the background of post-Covid recovery and a number of strong trends affecting the focus, funding and implementation of international development programmes. In particular, the board will continue to reflect on how impact is measured and can be enhanced.

Audit committee

The audit committee convened five times in 2020. Meetings took place about two weeks before the regular supervisory board meetings. Simavi's managing director and director of finance and operations also attended. Topics included the annual budget and forecasts, the internal financial reports and annual accounts, the auditor's report and the governance structure. The external auditor also participated in the discussions of the annual accounts and the auditor's report.

Self-evaluation of the supervisory board

In line with Simavi's governance code, the supervisory board annually evaluates its performance. In 2020 it was decided to combine the evaluation with a session on team dynamics including a DISC personality test. However, due to the recent changes of the composition of the board, it was decided to reschedule the evaluation and team dynamics session for the first half of 2021, once the newest member has started.

Recognition

In 2020 Simavi and its partners operated under difficult circumstances due to the Covid pandemic. The supervisory board applauds the commitment and perseverance shown by Simavi's volunteers, employees and management team throughout the year. The supervisory board especially thanks Simavi's partners in the field for their cooperation and impactful work on the ground, and expresses its appreciation for the strong relations with the organisation's Dutch and international stakeholders.

Looking forward to 2021 and beyond, the supervisory board has confidence that the Simavi team will find new and effective ways to achieve our common purpose: powerful women, healthy societies.