

Asia-Pacific Regional Civil Society Advisory Group

Terms of Reference

Background

When establishing the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), the United Nations General Assembly requested “the head of the Entity to continue the existing practice of effective consultation with civil society organizations and encourage(d) their meaningful contribution to the work of the Entity” (General Assembly resolution 64/289).

So as to ensure a continued dialogue with civil society on the corporate direction and vision of UN Women and to promote dialogue and networking with civil society advisory groups which UN Women offices have established in a number of countries in Asia and the Pacific, UN Women will be constituting an Asia-Pacific Regional Civil Society Advisory Group (APRCSAG).

Scope of work

The UN Women APRCSAG is being established to facilitate effective, on-going and structured consultations between civil society and UN Women at a regional level. Rotating every two years, this Advisory Group will focus on the provision of technical advice to UN Women’s regional portfolio in Asia and the Pacific.

Composition:

The UN Women Civil Society Advisory Group for Asia and the Pacific will be composed of a maximum of 20 individuals with a track record in the areas related to gender equality, women’s empowerment and sustainable development. These individuals will be drawn from gender equality networks, women’s organizations, academia, as well as other non-governmental and grassroots organisations which are committed to the core values of the United Nations.

Group composition:

- Five members from South Asia, ensuring representation from a number of countries, particularly those countries where UN Women has not established country-level Civil Society Advisory Groups;
- Five members from East/Southeast Asia, ensuring representation from a number of programme countries, including those countries where UN Women has not established country-level Civil Society Advisory Groups;
- Five members from the Pacific, including representation from Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia;
- Five experts from Asia Pacific appointed at the discretion of the UN Women Regional Director/Asia Pacific, for their expertise on gender equality and sustainable development.



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In all cases, members of the APRCSAG will be individuals with proven credentials of influence and participation in civil society organizations. While nominated by organisations, they will serve in their personal capacity for a period of two years. In order to ensure continuity, a percentage of the members of the group (to be decided by the group once constituted) will serve for a period of three years. The CSAG should include members with experience at the grassroots level and represent diverse developmental perspectives.

Nomination and Selection Process:

To ensure a transparent and regionally representative process, UN Women requests Expressions of Interest and calls will be circulated via the UN Women Asia Pacific website and through non-governmental networks and organisations, ensuring outreach to those countries where UN Women does not have a country-level CSAG.

A six-member **selection committee** comprised of eminent women's rights and development practitioners from the AP region will be constituted to make recommendations.

This Selection Committee will function independently. Members of the Selection Committee must not be affiliated with organizations from which expression of interest may be received.

The selection committee will assess expressions of interest and make recommendations using the following criteria:

- Strong connection to national or regional women's organizations and networks, concerned with matters within the UN Women mandate and with extensive experience in national and/or regional advocacy and policy development;
- Strong connection to national or regional non-governmental or academia networks concerned with matters of sustainable development
- Demonstrable understanding of the needs and interests of diverse groups of women;
- Understanding of different development realities, including work in conflict, post-conflict, and transition countries;
- Experience in policy, legislation and/or human right treaties is valued, particularly at the regional/international level.
- Efforts should be undertaken to ensure inclusion of grassroots organizations, and in particular those organizations working with women's groups who are at times marginalized in national gender equality dialogues.
- Efforts should be undertaken with an aim at incorporating and engaging young women and men in the civil society advisory group;

Role:

The Role of the UN Women APRCSAG is to:

- Provide strategic advice to UN Women on its role within the region in advancing gender equality
- Provide strategic advice to UN Women on its overall vision and mandate at the regional level;



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- Provide advice on political, economic and social trends which impact UN Women's regional programming;
- Provide analysis on the sustainable development dialogue and its impact on gender equality and women's rights issues;
- Act as a platform for the broader women's movement in the region, so as to ensure that concerns are tabled on their behalf;
- Provide guidance to UN Women's programmes and policies, including the Regional Strategic Plan;
- Provide guidance and inputs to region-wide advocacy strategies;
- Assist UN Women in strengthening its engagement and dialogue with civil society at all levels;
- Feed into the UN Women Global Civil Society Advisory Group dialogue.

Structure and Operational Framework

The APRCSAG will meet biannually, at least once in Bangkok and will regularly engage with the UN Women's Regional Director and Senior Staff in Asia and the Pacific through teleconferences and internet.

UN Women will support the roll out of internet-based communications, including an extranet platform, to support the APRCSAG's internal discussions and their role in disseminating information to the broader women's movement in their sub-regions and countries.