

## **UN Women Pakistan Call for Expression of Interest for membership on its Civil Society Advisory Group**

### **Terms of Reference**

#### **Civil Society Advisory Group on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women**

#### **UN Women, Pakistan**

##### **Introduction:**

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UN Women, grounded in the vision of equality enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, works for the elimination of discrimination against women and girls; the empowerment of women; and the achievement of equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action, peace and security. UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to implement these standards.

Placing women's rights at the centre of all its efforts, UN Women leads and coordinates United Nations system efforts to ensure that commitments on gender equality and gender mainstreaming translate into action throughout the world. In Pakistan, UN Women has a strong and vibrant relationship with civil society organizations across the country through its various programme interventions.

UN Women is operational in Pakistan since 2010 on the basis of former UNIFEM projects, which were laid and active in the country from 2007. It extended continuous support to the Government of Pakistan, to key stakeholders from national and local levels, through various programmes and activities aimed at creating an enabling environment for gender equality, recognized as a prerequisite for sustainable development with a strong and active policy on gender equality.

UN Women supports UN concerted efforts on promoting gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE), coordinating the work on GEWE and Women Human Rights, leading Civil Society Advisory Group (CSAG), advancing introduction of temporary special measures and increasing women's leadership and participation in decision making in public and private sectors, strengthening Women Economic Empowerment and ensuring social protection for the women faced with internal displacement due to humanitarian crises and complex emergencies.

UN Women Country Program developed for 2014-2017 identifies four strategic areas, namely: 1. Women lead and participate in decision-making at all levels, 2. Women Economic Empowerment,

especially for the home based workers 3. Women and girls live a life free of violence, 4. Governance and national planning fully reflect accountability for GE commitments and priorities.

In order to fulfil its mandate, UN Women considers the civil society as one of the most important constituencies providing an important source for ideas, policy perspectives, partnerships and support for the organization. Closely linked is the vital advocacy role played by civil society in advancing shared objectives in promoting women's rights, gender equality and the empowerment of women. To provide strong and coherent leadership in support of the state's priorities and efforts, UN Women builds effective partnerships with a variety of actors. One of the key roles and functions of UN Women is to forge effective partnerships with civil society organizations and advocates who make important contributions to the national and global policy framework on women's empowerment and gender equality and holding international and national leaders accountable for commitments to gender equality and women's rights.

UN Women looks to civil society for support to achieve its strategic goals and fulfill its mandate on gender equality and women's empowerment. It seeks inspiration from the dynamic and creative side of civil society, which is able to forge collective identities and alliances, and create informal networks, initiatives and social movements to articulate new social concerns. Together, UN Women and civil society advocate for the importance of advancing policy and dialogue on women's rights and empowerment, development, peace and security.

Recognizing the vital role that civil society organizations, in particular women's organizations, play in promoting women's rights, gender equality and the empowerment of women the UN Women established Civil Society Advisory Group (CSAG) at the country level in 2012 to create a space for continued dialogue. It was emphasized that UN Women must continue the existing practice of effective consultation with civil society organizations to ensure their meaningful contribution to the work of the new entity.

### **Terms of Reference (ToR) for members**

The ToR includes the objectives and the role and activities of the Advisory Group members.

### **Objectives of the Advisory Group**

The Advisory Group will be a consultative forum for strategic dialogue between civil society and UN Women. More specifically the objectives will be:

1. To foster dialogue and engagement between UN Women and civil society on national development issues and trends related to gender equality, women's rights and empowerment in line with the international commitments/frameworks.
2. To inform UN Women Programs and key priorities through civil society's expertise, experience, perspective and knowledge.
3. To serve as an interface/conduit between UN Women and key stakeholders including policy makers, marginalized communities and youth groups to strengthen its mandate in taking

forward development agenda such as the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Beijing Platform for Action, Commission on the Status of Women outcomes and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

### **Role and Responsibilities of the CSAG members**

The Civil Society Advisory Group is an advisory body and an advocacy platform, with no technical mandate, to ensure that UN Women is connected to the real needs and issues of Pakistan's women and girls and to its civil society.

- i. Provide strategic perspectives to UN Women's leadership, on its current advocacy agenda, thematic priorities and policy positions.
- ii. Assist UN Women to strengthen its engagement with civil society at all levels and enhance the dialogue between UN Women and civil society for partnership and learning.
- iii. Advise on gender equality issues, practices, and policies relevant to the national context and identify contextual and systemic issues in line with the normative frameworks of CEDAW, Beijing + 20 and SDGs.
- iv. Contribute analysis on the socio-economic and political environment in the country and how it impacts on gender equality and women's rights issues.
- v. Highlight gender equality issues, analysis and lessons learnt that need to be addressed in future program.
- vi. Highlight issues/concerns on the effectiveness of government, donors, UN, and international civil society organizations working in the area of gender equality.
- vii. Facilitate and spearhead strategic exercises for capacity development, with particular focus on building and strengthening the second and third tier generations of the women's movement.
- viii. Be responsible and accountable for sharing information from CSAG meetings to the broader civil society and women's movement across Pakistan. Members will also ensure that concerns and priorities expressed by these groups are reflected within the CSAG meeting agenda.
- ix. Actively connect with the Regional Asia Pacific CSAG set up by UN Women to ensure national concerns receive adequate focus and also ensure synergy in civil society guidance at various levels to the UN's entity for women.

**Note:** The CSAG members will serve in their individual capacity and not as representatives of their organization.

### **Membership**

The Civil Society Advisory Group will have a maximum of twelve (12) members (of which at least 8 will be women), excluding UN Women staff. The members will be reputed individuals with proven track record in their respective fields preferably with strong credentials as gender, development, women's rights and or human rights advocates.

Representation should be from a diverse cross section of society including but not limited to members from grassroots organizations, media, academia, NGOs, advocates and leaders of minority and marginalized groups, including transgender, people with disabilities, and people living with HIV and AIDS as far as possible.

Wherever possible rural areas, all four provinces, Gilgit-Baltistan, Islamabad Capital Territory, Pakistan Administrated Kashmir, and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas will be represented in the Advisory Group to ensure that there is ethnic and geographic diversity. Age of member will also be considered in selection, and youth members will be included. The CSAG will also include subject matter or thematic experts of relevance to UN Women's country program in Pakistan. Membership will include both women and men. Thematic experts/resource persons can be invited to meetings on a needs basis.

The members will represent on the CSAG in their individual capacity and would ideally be drawn from or represent from the following:

- gender equality, women rights and women's empowerment networks/coalitions organizations, and movements
- grassroots rural/community based organizations and women leaders
- Outreach to communities, minority and vulnerable groups to ensure that the CSAG is more inclusive, with grassroots outreach
- thematic areas: (1) Political participation (2) Women's economic empowerment; and (3) Violence against women (4) Humanitarian response/Peace and security
- youth, media and academia

Members of the CSAG may belong to organizations that are or may be eligible implementing partners of UN Women. However, to avoid conflict of interest, CSAG members will not have any direct oversight, monitoring or decision-making role in UN Women programming activities.

The duration of membership will be two years. The UN Women Country Representative and Deputy Country Representative will have observer status on the CSAG. Meetings can be convened by the UN Women Country Office/Representative on at least a bi-annual basis and more frequently when deemed necessary. CSAG members are the primary owners of this forum and occasionally may wish to engage and meet on their own. The UN Women Country Office in Pakistan will facilitate the administration and organization of the formal meetings while the CSAG members would play a key role in setting the agenda, recording the discussions and follow-up actions.

### **Selection process**

The selection of the members of the CSAG involves several steps and will follow a transparent and an inclusive process. The finalization of the members of the CSAG will involve the following steps:

1. Nominations will be invited by sharing the concept paper for the Civil Society Advisory Group with a wide range of stakeholders including all UN Women partners and networks/Alliances of CSOs.
2. After the receipt of the expression of interest, a Selection Committee established by the UN Women Pakistan will review and finalize nominations in consensus.
3. In order to reflect and be representative of the demographic profile of Pakistan, the Selection Committee will endeavour to include at least 25% young women and young men advocates in the final nominations<sup>1</sup>.
4. A review grid will be used capturing the selection criteria and each nomination / CV will be marked / reviewed against it by each selection committee member.
5. Based on the recommendation of the Selection Committee, UN Women will make final decision in constituting the CSAG.

The following criteria will guide the selection of the members of the CSAG:

- Strong connection to national or regional women's organizations and networks, concerned with matters within the competence of UN Women and with extensive experience in national and/or regional advocacy and policy development.
- Thematic expertise/experience in one or more UN Women priority areas.
- Demonstrable understanding of the needs and interests of diverse groups of women.
- Experience in policy, legislation and/or human rights treaties is valued, particularly at the regional/international level.
- In order to ensure impartiality and in compliance with UN ethical standards, members must not be engaged in active politics.
- Age of members should also be taken into account, with an aim to ensure sufficient representation of young women, their organizations and networks.
- Observers can be invited to meetings on a need basis.

The nominations should include the following:

- Name, organization and contact details of the person nominating.
- Name, organization and contact details of the nominee.
- A short description (1-2 paragraphs) on why the nominee would be a suitable candidate for the CSAG.
- Detailed CV of the nominee.

## **Expression of Interest**

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<sup>1</sup>As per the National Youth Policy of Pakistan, youth is defined as being between the ages of 15-29  
[http://www.youthpolicy.org/national/Pakistan\\_2008\\_National\\_Youth\\_policy.pdf](http://www.youthpolicy.org/national/Pakistan_2008_National_Youth_policy.pdf)

Expression of Interest in participating in the UN Women's CSAG should be submitted by 5<sup>th</sup> February 2017 of advertisement on UN Women Pakistan website. All Expression of Interest should be sent to [registry.pakistan@unwomen.org](mailto:registry.pakistan@unwomen.org)

### **Frequency of meetings and location**

It is envisaged that at least two meetings (face to face or online/virtual), called by UN Women Pakistan, will be held in a calendar year on a geographical, rotational basis. UN Women may also request for ad hoc meeting/s, if necessary, to discuss on specific issues and may call members via skype or other online platform. Minutes of all meetings will be recorded in English, shared with all members and made public through various communication means. UN Women will be the secretariat for the CSAG.

However, the CSAG members can call their own meetings at provincial and/or district level as and when deemed necessary by them to discuss, share and disseminate information as per their own requirement and share updates with UN Women Pakistan. UN Women provides an online platform called Yammer to which all of them will be invited. They can stay in touch among them and with other members of other CSAGs through this platform.

The regular meetings shall aim to produce concrete recommendations and feedback to be submitted to UN Women leadership for consideration. The members will have continuous access to UN Women, particularly senior management, to engage on any emerging issues that should, in their view, be addressed. Observers can be invited to meetings on an ad hoc basis (according to needs).

### **Budget**

UN Women will provide space and logistics (meals and snacks) for the formal CSAG meetings. Travel and DSA will be provided for out of station members.

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