



Terms of Reference for Regional Think Tank in Support of UN Women's Work in Eastern and Southern Africa

Background

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) was established by General Assembly resolution 64/289 of 2 July 2010 on system-wide coherence with the mandate to assist Member States and the United Nations system to progress more effectively and efficiently toward the goal of achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women.

To fulfill its mandate, UN Women considers a Think Tank as one of the most important constituencies providing a dynamic source for ideas, policy perspectives, partnerships and support for the organization. Closely linked is the vital advisory role that will be played by the Think Tank in advancing shared objectives in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women.

UN Women Eastern and Southern Africa (ESAR) plans to set up a Regional Think Tank comprised of a diverse team of high level technical experts in Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women in line with UN Women's strategic priorities. The Regional Think Tank will help UN Women achieve the goal of ensuring women and girls benefit and attain the aspirations of the development frameworks in Africa including agenda 2030 on sustainable development- SDGs, Financing for Development, Agenda 2063, among others.

Goals for the UN Women ESAR Regional Think Tank

1. To foster strategic dialogue and engagement, with a view of addressing the root causes of gender inequalities and advance gender equality and women's empowerment in Africa;
2. To provide a forum to enable mutually beneficial consultations between UN Women and high level technical experts and draw upon their rich and diverse expertise, experience, outreach, networks, perspectives and knowledge on a timely and effective basis for UN Women's strategic visioning, planning, programming, resource mobilization and partnerships;
3. To serve as a consultative forum to provide inputs on regional priorities and development of appropriate strategies to drive UN Women's interventions in Eastern and Southern Africa.

Roles and Functions of the Regional Think Tank

1. Upon request, review and input into UN Women ESAR's key strategic areas that will effectively address existing gender inequalities and develop innovative interventions for engagement and support at regional and national levels;
2. Review and provide inputs to UN Women during the formulation of key strategic documents e.g. the regional strategic note and plans, and support partnership development, resource mobilization, knowledge and data generation for the region;
3. Provide feedback and positive critique of UN Women's work in Africa;
4. Provide updates on political, social, economic and cultural developments and trends for consideration in UN Women's programmatic activities in the region;
5. Provide perspectives on regional scenarios and positions on key issues including for intergovernmental processes and engagements relevant to UN Women's programming in the region;
6. Provide strategic perspectives on advocacy to promote Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in the region;
7. Provide strategic perspectives on how to strengthen UN Women's engagement with all stakeholders at regional level (UN, Private sector, Civil society, media) including partnerships with relevant intergovernmental bodies.

Serving in the Think Tank is considered voluntary work and UN Women will only cover logistical expenses of the members for Think Tank meetings and any other related activities in line with UN Women corporate policies and procedures.

Membership

The UN Women ESAR Regional Think Tank shall comprise of nominated experts in diverse areas of programming around GEWE including but not limited to;

- Women's economic empowerment;
- Leadership, governance and political participation;
- Women, peace and security and humanitarian action;
- Gender Based Violence;
- 2030 agenda including Sustainable Development Goals- SDGs and Finance for Development
- Gender Responsive Planning and Budgeting
- ICT for development
- HIV and AIDS
- Climate action and environment
- Resource mobilization
- Knowledge generation and utilization including data and statistics
- Education including second chance education and vocational skills training

The nominated members of the Think Tank must be acknowledged thematic experts in the Africa region and must demonstrate concrete achievements in their areas of expertise. They must also show commitment towards the core values of the United Nations and to the mission of UN Women.

Tenure of membership

Nominees shall serve in the Think Tank for 2 years and could be renewed depending on availability and continued relevance to the UN Women's mandate. An opt-out clause is acceptable.

Meetings

Subject to the request from UN Women, The Regional Think Tank may convene virtually or physically facilitated by UN Women ESARO. In addition to the face to face meetings, UN Women will set up mechanisms for regular interaction between the Think Tank members and UN Women.

UN Women Regional Office for Eastern and Southern Africa will serve as the secretariat for the Regional Think Tank and will ensure that all relevant documentation for the meetings is circulated in advance and that outcomes of meetings are well documented and shared with all members of the Think Tank.

Expertise & Competences

The Regional Think Tank would comprise individuals with the following expertise/competencies;

- At least 10 years of working experience in gender equality and women's empowerment
- Regional experience in gender equality interventions, women's empowerment, development and or human rights
- Thematic expertise in women's economic empowerment, governance, leadership and political participation or violence against women/ girls or any thematic priority for UN Women in the region
- Knowledge and understanding of gender and women's empowerment issues in the region
- Experience in engendering policy and legislation frameworks
- Strong analytical capacity
- No active engagement in politics to safeguard neutrality of the UN

Other considerations

- The Think Tank would comprise women, men and youth
- The Think Tank would include representation from other vulnerable groups e.g. person(s) with disabilities or persons living with HIV
- If there is a gap in expertise after assessing the nominations, the Regional Director can at her discretion supplement the membership by nominating additional members to fill the gap

Nomination process:

- UN Women will circulate the call for nomination through existing regional and national gender equality, women's rights and women's empowerment networks/coalitions, organizations and movements and the media. Nominations would be sent to the Regional Director, UN Women, Regional Office for Eastern and Southern Africa, UN Complex, Gigiri, Block M, P.O. Box 30218-00100, Nairobi, Kenya or to ESARO.Thinktank@unwomen.org with the subject line; **REF: REGIONAL THINK TANK FOR EASTAND SOUTHERN AFRICA**

- The nominations should include the following: Name, organization if any for those affiliated to organizations; contacts- emails and/ or phone contacts, a short description (less than one page) on why the nominee would be a suitable candidate for the Think Tank and a detailed CV of the nominee including major regional achievements in GEWE including research pieces, publications and awards.
- The deadline for receiving nominations is **April 1st 2017**