

WOMEN & GENDER CONSTITUENCY

Charter of the Women's and Gender Constituency

Updated: February 2022

Article 1. Goal

The goal of the Women's and Gender Constituency (WGC) is to formalize the voice of the women's rights, feminist and gender equality-focused civil society organizations present and regularly active in UNFCCC processes, and, to develop, streamline and advocate common positions. The Constituency aims to bring together as many NGO observers accredited to the UNFCCC as possible to work democratically towards achieving its goals. Individuals and organizations who are not accredited to the UNFCCC are encouraged to work through those accredited members and participate in the WGC-hosted advocacy network.

The Constituency draws upon global commitments to gender equality and women's rights, especially as they relate to climate change, and toward the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and related commitments and Rio-Conventions. The Constituency works to ensure that human rights and gender equality are firmly anchored in all climate actions under the UNFCCC and to challenge the extractive, exploitative and patriarchal economic model which has resulted in the climate crisis.

Article 2. Principles

The principles of the Women and Gender Constituency are based on:

- Feminist collective leadership and global solidarity;
- Democratic and participatory governance;
- Respectful and supportive participation;
- Wide and inclusive membership of accredited CSO observers, encouraging regional balance;
- Transparent procedures and clear, timely and flexible communication;

- Participation processes that allow for effective participation of members from all regions and backgrounds;
- Building on intergenerational knowledge of global advocacy spaces (collectively and individually);
- Mentoring (young feminists/ future generations and other newcomers);
- Provide a platform for feminist, women's rights leadership in climate policy-making, including especially the leadership of grassroots and Indigenous women and LGBTIQGnC people - with broad and participatory access.

Article 3. Objectives

The main objectives of the Women and Gender Constituency include:

- Ensuring the representation of feminist, grassroots, Indigenous women and LGBTIQGnC people's voices, experiences, needs and capacities in the UNFCCC process and to provide perspectives in all related discussions;
- Developing and advocating for common positions based on climate justice principles and work together towards achieving shared goals;
- Contributing women's rights and gender equality perspectives and a wider critical analysis of current developments within and around the official negotiations to help foster communication between feminist, women's rights and gender organizations and groups, and national- or international fora;
- Facilitating and engaging in the daily women and gender caucus during the negotiations;
- Liaising with other caucuses and constituencies, especially to identify and build upon common ground;
- Collaborating on funding opportunities in a transparent manner and according to agreed guidelines, in order to support the collective work and diverse representation of the Constituency in the UNFCCC process and allow for enhanced capacity building and knowledge sharing.

Article 4. Framework

The coordination and work of the Women and Gender Constituency will be made within the framework and guidance of the following key considerations as outlined in the WGC 2015 position paper, WGC advocacy briefs and annual feminist demands for COPs:

- A **just and gender-responsive climate framework** can take different forms, but fundamentally it must:
 - o respect and promote human rights and gender equality;

- ensure sustainable development and environmental integrity;
- require fair, equitable, ambitious and binding mitigation commitments in line with the principles of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR);
- call for urgent and prioritized adaptation action and resources that respond to the most vulnerable countries, communities and populations;
- demand a sustainable energy paradigm that prioritizes safe, decentralized renewable energy systems that benefit people and communities;
- challenge false solutions such as geoengineering, REDD+, nuclear, etc.;
- ensure adequate, new, additional and predictable climate finance for developing countries;
- provide resources to reconcile loss and damage already incurred from climate inaction;
- ensure full, inclusive and gender-equitable public participation in decision-making, with increased mandatory ex-ante and periodic human rights and gender equality impact assessments;
- ensure that gender equality, equal access to decision making, and benefit sharing are integrated into all its provisions, including through gender-responsive means of implementation;
- ensure sex and gender disaggregated data and analysis of the underlying causes of any gender disparities must be mainstreamed in all information, communication and reporting systems.

Article 5. Membership

To become a member of the constituency, the organization must be recognized as an observer to the UNFCCC process. Information for organizations wishing to apply to observe the UNFCCC process can be found on the UNFCCC website.

Upon application, organizations will be asked to align themselves with a Constituency. Members wishing to be part of the WGC should tick the box 'Women and Gender'. To further be engaged in collaborative advocacy, members are required to endorse the objectives and guiding principles reflected in this Charter and respective advocacy principles in order to participate in the work and governance of the WGC.

Article 6. Governance structure

The WGC has a flexible governance structure which can be adapted to best meet the demands of its membership and ensure proper international and regional coordination and guidance. The governance structure is to be transparent and accountable to the members of the WGC.

It will compose of:

- A facilitating committee (FC), made up of:
 - o 6-8 individual members with a strong regional diversity and balanced representation of global North and global South;
 - o 2 members from outside the WGC Constituency (i.e. from the WGC Advocacy groups – individuals should have been engaged in WGC Advocacy mailing list and activities for at least one year);

Active constituency members and members of the WGC advocacy network can nominate themselves for election to the FC, which will be formed bi-annually and will serve to support and facilitate the work of the Constituency and focal points. Re-election is possible.

- The FC members will nominate two of its members (Global North / Global South) or (Global South/ Global South) to serve in the role of co-Focal Points for any given meeting of the UNFCCC (ideally to serve over the full two-year term or on rotation).

The elections are only open to WGC member organizations. Each organization will have one official voting member who will have six votes to distribute among WGC member candidates and two to WGC advocacy network candidates. This governance structure aims to guarantee an effective and inclusive working mode of the constituency, as well as to ensure sustainability and decentralized leadership. It does not mean that other WGC members cannot take on responsibilities and defined roles, such as coordination of working groups, etc. The governance body of the WGC will encourage the active involvement of all WGC members.

Article 7. Further clarification of roles and responsibilities

The activities of the WGC, the co-focal points and the facilitating committee will be conducted according to guidelines regarding specific functions and responsibilities outlined in **Annex I** of this Charter.

Article 8. Women and Gender Constituency Coordinator

Working in close coordination with the Facilitative Committee of the Women and Gender Constituency, as well as the financial intermediary or any organization serving in a "Secretariat"

function, a WGC Coordinator can be appointed. The coordinator will support the WGC and Facilitative Committee. The coordinator’s tasks and responsibilities are outlined in **Annex II** of this Charter.

Article 9. Communication and decision-making

The WGC will communicate via a mailing list created and maintained by the FC. It is recommended that the number of members from each organization represented on this list is limited to 2-3 people (exceptions can be made on request), however, voting procedures will follow the principle of one vote per organization.

When feedback or decisions are required from WGC members, the relevant information will be shared within a reasonable timeframe and if no objections are raised by the set date, consensus will be assumed. Ad-hoc decision making processes may be adopted under circumstances such as a COP, where shorter turnaround time may be necessary, with consultation and agreement from members.,

Decisions will therefore be adopted according to consensus of members actively engaged in Constituency work, and according to the principles outlined above. If conflicts occur, the co-focal points and/or the facilitating committee will be asked to mediate. The facilitating committee merely serves to assist and direct the work of the WGC and has no decision-making capacity of its own accord.

Guidelines on information sharing for the different mailing lists (WGC, advocacy, caucus) will be provided.

Annex 1. - Terms of Reference – Women and Gender Constituency Facilitative Committee

Scope

The Facilitative Committee (FC) serves as a working body and governance advisor to support the implementation of collective work of the Women and Gender Constituency, including a process to further regionalize the make-up of the WGC, as well as providing the guidance and support needed for the WGC to co-create and implement influential advocacy strategies towards gender and climate justice under the UNFCCC.

Key Responsibilities

The FC will:

- Delegate two of its members (Global North / Global South) or (Global South/ Global South) to serve in the role of co-Focal Points for any given meeting of the UNFCCC (ideally to serve over the full two-year term or on rotation);
- Lead processes of analysis and review of Key Demands document, as well as key strategies and campaigns that are drawn from it;
- Develop a WGC yearly workplan and communications strategy, including key activities and trainings to undertake;
- Ensure WGC representation across the Boards and Bodies of the UNFCCC;
- Undertake a four-year strategy to enhance the regional structure under the WGC, including the potential for regional hubs and focal points.

Commitment

By joining the FC, members are committing to:

- Commit to a two-year time period;
- Attending monthly meetings;
- Engaging actively in all WGC advocacy and constituency meetings;
- Contributing to the co-creation of policy demands and interventions of the WGC;
- Attending – where finance is available – the intersessional and COP sessions of the UNFCCC;
- Commit to uphold the WGC principles and key considerations as outlined in the WGC 2015 position paper, advocacy briefs and annual feminist COP demands.

FC Composition

The FC aims towards a composition which is:

- 6-8 individual members with a strong regional diversity and balanced representation of global North and global South;
- 2 members from outside the WGC Constituency (i.e. from the WGC Advocacy groups – individuals should have been engaged in WGC Advocacy mailing list and activities for at least one year);
- Ensuring representation include young feminist and other intersectional identities.

Annex 2. - Terms of Reference – Women and Gender Constituency Coordinator

Scope

Working in close coordination with the Facilitative Committee of the Women and Gender Constituency, as well as the financial intermediary or any organization serving in a “Secretariat”

function, the WGC Coordinator will support the WGC to influence the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) with a goal to ensure that global climate change policies are founded on core principles of gender equality and justice, women's rights and environmental sustainability. The tasks during this period will remain generally in line with the areas outlined below, and deliverables will be further elaborated in a work plan.

Administration & Logistical Coordination (20%)

- Liaise with UNFCCC Secretariat to forward/ share information related to UNFCCC meetings, Boards and Bodies and support nominations/ representation of the WGC in these spaces;
- Maintain WGC membership & mailing lists, including regular addition of new members and onboarding with the Facilitative Committee;
- Coordination of travel granting process: disseminate applications, monitor applicants, facilitate selection committees;
- Maintain WGC related work budgets and work with Secretariat to ensure timely reporting back on financial status to Facilitative Committee;
- Schedule monthly Facilitative Committee check ins and regular WGC and WGC Advocacy calls;
- Coordinate WGC shared calendar, including outlining working availability as well as key calendar of events and deadlines (both processes and internal reporting);
- Prepare WGC Guidance Spreadsheet in advance of intersessional and annual COP meetings.

Communications and Outreach (20%)

- Contribution to the online presence of the WGC and communications strategy: draft, edit, post updates and news articles on the WGC site; contribute to Twitter and Facebook;
- Help coordinate global WGC outreach events such as, webinars, side events, etc.

Advocacy and Strategy (40%)

- Support to WGC Facilitative Committee in preparation for UNFCCC meetings: monitor progress of the UNFCCC and its multiple inputs; track upcoming meetings and opportunities; review and disseminate relevant policy and other documents; identify relevant existing publications and positions of the WGC; draft inputs to papers and meetings;
- Participation in meetings with members of the WGC to communicate advocacy priorities to UN and government representatives, as well as civil society counterparts;
- Meeting attendance and reporting back as necessary on related topics;
- General reading and knowledge building on the WGC niche and interlinkages to support all responsibilities in the position;

Regional Support (20%)

- Provide guidance, where necessary, to the regionalization process of the WGC, including but not limited to: organizing meetings for capacity building, connecting to support platforms (webinar, surveys, mailing lists) that can be set up and maintained to support OPs, initial availability for calls / attending meetings where need is identified, list serve management, etc.