

## **National Gender Youth Activists Terms of Reference**

### **1. BACKGROUND**

While great progress has been made since 189 governments adopted the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA) in 1995, many young women and girls continue to be amongst the most marginalized and vulnerable. To ensure the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development including the promise of leaving no one behind, UN Women must address the needs of all young women and girls, especially those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and marginalization. When considering the opportunities and scope for achieving gender equality and sustainable development, the poorest and most vulnerable groups of young women and girls must be prioritized. Despite these challenges, young people are continuously developing innovative and effective ways to mitigate these challenges and improve their lives, by bringing together their knowledge and creativity.

It is within this context that UN Women is mobilizing 300 National Gender Youth Activists that will drive local youth mobilization in the spirit of Generation Equality and beyond. UN Women will aim to deepen and strengthen its reach to marginalized constituencies whilst creating conditions for youth leadership in the process.

### **2. ROLE OF THE NATIONAL GENDER YOUTH ACTIVISTS**

The 300 National Gender Youth Activists represent diverse young people across intersectional complexities actively making a difference in their local communities in one way or another. They were selected by UN Women country offices with the understanding that they are already working with UN Women local offices. They will bring their local views, voice, knowledge and work into the global space in trying to build back better. They will drive and support local youth mobilization of the Generation Equality Campaign. They will be part of our Youth Journey in championing gender equality. This Youth Journey is a continuum of participation youth activists with different levels of engagement and clear actions and tasks. All activists will engage in the Generation Equality campaign and contribute to the Generation Equality Forum which will take place in 2021.

#### **Expectations:**

- Participation in introductory virtual regional calls to discuss regional priorities.
- Creating a safe space for engagement, participation, information sharing and capacity building, driving the Equality agenda forward.
- Contribute to the co-creation, design and implementation of the Action Coalitions.
- Monthly strategic discussions engaging them on regional thematic priorities especially those related to Action Coalitions (*Description of Action Coalitions below*).
- Contributing to the curation of Commission on the Status of Women 65
- Supporting and fostering momentum on youth engagement for gender equality on a national and global level by bringing and ensuring that a diverse group of youth voices are heard within the Generation Equality Campaign and Forum.

- Engaging with the Beijing+25 Youth Task Force contributing to several activities/projects for example engagement in UN Women social media series on Youth and COVID responses

Virtual meetings will be conducted in English and where possible Spanish and French with translation.

UN Women will:

- Amplify the voice, agency and leadership of the National Gender Youth Activists at the regional and global level.
- Facilitate coordination with the Beijing +25 Youth Task Force.
- Create opportunities for gender youth activists to interact with global work and other youth activists.

### **3. REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT**

UN Women will create an enabling environment for the National Gender Youth Activists to have ownership of their own personal journey in the build up to the Generation Equality Forum and beyond. They will contribute to ideas on what actions Action Coalitions should consider for the next 5 years. They will also ensure other thematic issues related to regions are analyzed in a manner that is representative of regional priorities and the experiences on the ground. Given the voluntary nature of this cohort, we are mindful of the busy schedules of the members, therefore members in each region will chose how they would like to engage.

Engagement will take place in the following regions:

- a. Eastern and Southern Africa
- b. Western and Central Africa
- c. Arab States
- d. Asia Pacific
- e. Europe and Central Asia
- f. Latin America and the Caribbean
- g. North America

Furthermore, UN Women Country and Regional Offices will continue strengthening connections the activists.

### **4. ACTION COALITIONS DISCUSSIONS**

The Generation Equality Forum launched six Action Coalitions (AC). Each AC will develop a set of concrete, ambitious and transformative actions for implementation between 2020 - 2025 in order to achieve immediate and irreversible progress towards gender equality. The themes of the Generation Equality Action Coalitions are:

#### **a) Gender-Based Violence**

Violence against women and girls is a violation of human rights, it has negative consequences on women, families and communities. Gender-based violence is shrouded in secrecy, often

made invisible due to issues such as male domination, power abuse, lack of awareness of rights, lack of services and legal redress.

**b) Economic justice and rights**

Globally women are more likely to live in poverty than men. Women work in low-paid, informal and undervalued jobs and on average earn less than men. Disparities between men and women of paid and unpaid work remains a huge issue.

**c) Bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)**

Recognising that bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights are crucial for empowering women as investment in SRH has personal, social and economic benefits, such saving and improving people's lives, slowing the spread of transmittable diseases and encouraging greater equality across genders.

**d) Feminist action for climate justice**

Feminist climate justice advocates have been critical in the fight against climate change. The movements recognize the political and economic factors that contribute to increased emissions and climate change.

**e) Technology and innovation for Gender Equality**

Technology also has proved an effective organizing tool in support the push for gender equality. Technology can be useful in engaging women democracy, civic action and peacebuilding, as well as to fight for their basic rights and gender equality.

**f) Feminist movements and leadership**

Feminist movements have driven global and national action in the push for gender equality. These movements have been driving global and national action on gender equality. These movements have been pushing for change and accountability and proven to be global leaders.

## **5. TIMELINE**

Engagement with the National Gender Youth Activists is expected to commence on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2020 through to August 2021. Activating activities will include collaborating with the Beijing+25 Youth Task Force and the launch of 'Youth and COVID-19: My lived reality' case study series.

The following are the known key dates for global engagement:

- Celebrating International Youth Day: August 12, 2020.
- Activation of the Generation Equality Forum in September 2020
- Celebrating the International Day of the girl in October
- 16 Days of activism in November and December
- Commission on the Status of Women CSW65
- Generation Equality Forum (Mexico and France): TBC.