**Terms of Reference**

**UN Women Civil Society Engagement Group Serbia**

1. **Background**

At the time that the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) was established, 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 their meaningful contribution to the work of the Entity” (General Assembly resolution 64/289).  In response to this request, UN Women has set up Civil Society Advisory Groups at the global, regional and national levels to build on existing partnerships and increase strategic dialogue with civil society partners in countries, regionally and internationally. Civil society is one of UN Women’s most important constituencies - providing a dynamic source for ideas and policy perspectives, partnerships and support for the organization - which can assist UN Women in achieving its strategic goals. Closely linked is the vital role played by civil society in advancing shared objectives in promoting women’s rights, gender equality and the empowerment of women.

UN Women Serbia is seeking to establish a Civil Society Engagement Group[[1]](#footnote-1) (CSEG) for Serbia to provide a consultative forum, and a platform for regular dialogue to influence the national, regional, and global gender equality agenda. UN Women Serbia already has a strong relationship with civil society organizations across the country through its various programme interventions and recognizes their instrumental role in advancing gender equality and women’s empowerment. Through the establishment of the Civil Society Engagement Group, the UN Women Serbia Office would like to deepen the existing and create new partnerships with the Serbian civil society actors to mutually benefit from the knowledge and experience sharing and joint action. The establishment of UN Women Civil Society Engagement Group will thus provide an opportunity and venue for strategic dialogue between the civil society and UN Women around all the priority areas of UN Women’s work, also supporting identification of new priorities and emerging issues.

1. **Objectives**

* To provide a unique forum for open discussion between UN Women and civil society in Serbia on national and local developments, challenges and trends regarding gender equality, women’s rights, and empowerment.
* To exchange perspectives, knowledge, and experience, as well as policy advice that will support UN Women and civil society in Serbia to strategize, partner, advocate, and up-scale action to advance gender equality and women empowerment in Serbia.
* To serve as a consultative forum providing strategic perspectives on advocacy issues, UN Women’s thematic priorities, the development of UN Women’s strategy and programming as well as to intergovernmental and regional processes and forums.
1. **Scope of Work**

The Serbia CSEG is being established to facilitate effective, regular, and structured consultations, partnership and engagement between civil society and UN Women at country level. The Group will focus on the exchange and development of strategies, policy, and advocacy work to advance gender equality and women empowerment, contribute to UN Women’s mandate in Serbia, as well as to intergovernmental and regional processes and forums. The Serbia CSEG will:

1. Enhance the dialogue between UN Women and civil society for partnership, advocacy, learning and targeted action to enhance gender equality and women empowerment in Serbia.
2. Exchange knowledge, ideas, and information to keep members updated on socio-economic, policy and political trends, risks and opportunities pertaining to gender equality and women empowerment that may be addressed jointly in future programmatic and advocacy interventions.
3. Provide guidance, analysis and inputs on the vision and mandate of UN Women Serbia and UN Women Serbia’s strategic planning instruments such as the Strategic Note and Bi-Annual Work Plan and support intergovernmental and regional processes and forums such as Generation Equality Forum and CSW.
4. Provide inputs to strengthen linkages between UN and EU policies on gender equality and women’s empowerment in Serbia.
5. Act as a platform for engagement with the broader women’s movement in Serbia.
6. **Composition and Membership Criteria**

The Serbia CSEG will be composed of a maximum of 10 individuals preferably, but not limited to the following profiles: women's rights activists/leaders/advocates, gender experts, male gender equality advocates, youth leaders, advocates and leaders of marginalized groups, feminist media advocates and leaders, and the academia. Members should have proven and distinguished track records in the areas of gender equality and women empowerment, activism, and advocacy, and proven credentials of influence and participation in civil society organizations, women’s organizations, gender equality networks, grassroots organizations, think tanks, media, and academia. The Group’s composition must ensure that the diversity of women and variety of society perspectives in Serbia is represented.

To ensure the views and needs of larger and diverse constituencies are covered, nomination of representatives of umbrella organizations and networks, youth and grassroots organizations, male gender equality advocates who are considered leaders in this area, as well as individuals from minority groups such as Roma, women and girls with disabilities are strongly encouraged. To preserve the integrity and autonomy of the CSEG as a civil society group of eminent women’s rights advocates and gender equality leaders, private sector representatives and members of government and political parties cannot be part of a CSEG or part of any CSEG selection process. Members who are already part of the Global Group or the Regional CSEG cannot be part of the country CSEG[[2]](#footnote-2).

In all cases, members of the Civil Society Engagement Group will serve in their individual capacity (as experts and advisers) for an initial period of two years. After the period of two years, should they be nominated again, they can be selected for an additional term of two years. Members can serve a maximum of two consecutive terms. Membership in the group is honorary and members will not receive remuneration. However, UN Women will cover all travel expenses related to members’ attendance at CSEG meetings per diem in accordance with UN Women rules and regulations.

1. **Nomination and Selection Process**

To ensure a transparent and representative process, UN Women Serbia is requesting Expressions of Interest. This call will be circulated via the UN Serbia website, UN Women social media and through non-governmental networks and organizations, ensuring broad outreach. Applications are sought from individuals nominating their candidature or from individuals/CSOs/networks/coalition of CSOs nominating CSEG members. The nominations shall be in line with the criteria identified in these terms of reference and should include the application form herewith attached and the nominee’s detailed CV sent to info.serbia@unwomen.org no later than 24 June, 2022 with “UNW Serbia CSEG” as email subject.

A Selection Committee will be constituted to make recommendations. Members of the Selection Committee must not be affiliated with organizations from which expressions of interest are received. The selection process will be duly documented ensuring transparency. The Selection Committee will assess expressions of interest and make recommendations using the following criteria:

* Proven and distinguished track records in the areas of gender equality and women empowerment, activism, and advocacy, and proven credentials of influence and participation in civil society organizations, women’s organizations, gender equality networks, grassroots organizations, think tanks, media and academia;
* Work experience with diverse groups of women, particularly the most disadvantaged ones, including those who are subjected to multiple forms of discrimination;
* Thematic expertise in UN Women’s impact areas, as defined in UN Women’s Strategic Plan 2022-2025 and UN Women’s work in Serbia;
* Experience in national, regional or sub-regional advocacy;
* Experience in policy development/analysis from a gender perspective, and knowledge of relevant national legislation and international human rights standards and frameworks;
1. **Operational Framework**

UN Women Serbia Country Office will act as secretariat for the Serbia CSEG. The CSEG will meet annually or more frequent as needed. Regular meetings shall aim to produce concrete action points, recommendations, and feedback on current and emerging issues. When the Group thus decides, it can invite participants as observers. UN Women will be responsible for coordinating and financing logistics, preparing the agenda and reports of meetings.

Language: Serbian will be used as means of communication with CSEG members. Good command of English is an asset.

1. For more information on UN Women CSAGs refer to https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2016/1/civil-society-advisory-groups-CSAG-strategy [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. UN CSAG Strategy https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2016/1/civil-society-advisory-groups-CSAG-strategy [↑](#footnote-ref-2)