

Ho Chi Minh City Gender Working Group (HCMC GWG)

Terms of Reference (TOR) / November 2013

Introduction

The Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC) INGO Discussion Group recognizes the importance of improved communication and coordination between INGOs, organizations and associations working in HCMC in the fields of gender, gender and development, and gender rights.

The HCMC Gender Working Group (GWG) is a working group specifically focused on gender, gender and development, and gender rights. It will work through the auspices of PACCOM, VUFO and/or the NGO Resource Centre. While initially the HCMC GWG is a forum for the collective expression of views of organizations operating in southern Vietnam, it is anticipated the group's participants will include national membership and perspectives in due course.

A regular forum was established in late 2013 with the purpose of exchanging information and best practice on this topic. The format and approach is modeled on other working groups in the network, such as the Child Rights Working Group, Disability Working Group, Capacity Development, and the HIV/AIDS Technical Working Group.

This gender group is intended to focus on women and girls in regard to gender equality, gender mainstreaming and empowerment in order to address issues that face women and girls in particular. The GWG is guided by the principles of the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals and in particular Target 3 (Promote gender equality and empower women); UN Women's guiding documents such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (PFA). The GWG is also guided by the UN Women's principles of:

- Elimination of discrimination against women and girls
- Empowerment of women
- Achievement of equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of development and peace

The GWG group is active and anticipates achieving a membership of at least 30 members by the end of 2014.

Goal

The overall purpose of the GWG is to increase/enhance communication, collaboration and coordination and to share learning and best practice among organizations working to support

Vietnamese society to effectively manage and respond to issues related to the rights and development of women.

Specific Objectives

- To share practical experiences, successes and lessons learned for the mutual benefit of organizations and associations involved
- To facilitate networking among women-focused organizations, associations, and projects/programs to serve as a focal point in HCMC for consultation, research dialogue and common statements
- To contribute to a national dialogue
- To organize joint activities related to the rights of women and girls
- To collaborate in responding to opportunities for input on various documents, government policies and law, as well as to support the implementation of relevant government programs
- To raise a common voice and play an active role in regards to women's rights promotion and development
- To plan and implement awareness-raising activities with women-focused organizations, as well as relevant stakeholders, particularly with local, regional and national government

Main Activities

- Regular meetings on specific topics, presentations and discussions
- Joint projects/studies/activities/positioning on issues related to women, girls and development
- The working group's focus will be, but is not limited to:
 - Awareness-raising
 - Trainings
 - Providing services and/or access
 - Promotion of gender equality
- Information sharing through the working group meetings and workshops
- Developing a common ethical approach to working with women and girls
- Building capacity for all group members through training and workshops

Outcomes

- To raise the awareness of women-focused organizations, associations and programs on their own responsibility regarding gender, gender and development, and gender rights
- Improve internal and external communications
- Improve coordination between actors

Principle

The GWG welcomes attendance from anyone with an interest in this area. Meetings are open to representatives and relevant staff of INGOs, organizations, associations, international and bilateral donor agencies, as well as representatives of government institutions.

The meetings will be held bi-monthly although this can increase as necessary. Meetings will be held in an open, transparent and participative manner. The GWG will endeavor to make the meeting accessible for English and Vietnamese speakers.

In order to effectively improve ongoing communication and decision making it is requested that organizations attempt to commit at least one person to joining the working group meetings and that this should be, whenever possible, the same person/people to every meeting.

Working Arrangements

The Chair will be elected by the GWG each year during its first meeting of the calendar year. The GWG is intended to include up to two (2) Co-Chairs, but this need not be the case in future.

There will be six (6) bi-monthly (i.e. once every two months) meetings per year. Dates and topics will be agreed in advance by the GWG Core Group and circulated to working group members. These meetings will take place on the second Tuesday of every other month.

The Chair is in charge of various long-term administrative duties including:

- Hosting and facilitating the meetings
- Updating the mailing list
- Serving as a repository for information, materials, and documents
- Liaising with other Discussion Groups and Working Groups as necessary
- Liaising with NGO Resource Centre

The role of the Co-Chair(s) is to:

- Draft and circulate the agenda
- Take and distribute meeting minutes
- Host and facilitate meetings in the Chair's absence

A GWG Core Group will support the work of the GWG overall and will meet in the alternating months to progress the work and help determine meeting agendas and topics.

Drafted: November 2013

Amended: December 2013

Agreed: