

CONSULTANT TERMS OF REFERENCE

I. Contract Overview	
Reference Number:	TOR-VNM-2026-022
Consultancy Title:	National Consultant on CSO Engagement (retainer)
Location:	Home-based
Travel:	Travel required
Practice Area:	Gender equality, women's empowerment, CSO engagement
Category (Eligible applicants):	External
Post Type and Level:	National Consultant VNM4 UN-EU Cost Norm 2022
Starting Date:	1 November 2026
Duration of Contract:	November 2026 –October 2029 (maximum 300 days for the whole contract period)

II. Consultancy Assignment
1. Background/Context UN Women, grounded in the vision of equality enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, works for the elimination of discrimination against women and girls; the empowerment of women; and the achievement of equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action and peace and security. Placing women's rights at the center of all its efforts, UN Women leads and coordinates United Nations system efforts to ensure that commitments on gender equality and gender mainstreaming translate into action throughout the world. It provides strong and coherent leadership in support of Member States' priorities and efforts, building effective partnerships with civil society and other relevant actors. In Viet Nam, UN Women contributes to the development objectives of Viet Nam's Socio-Economic Development Plan and the National Strategy for Gender Equality. Its Country Strategy Note for 2022-2026 is aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (CF) 2022-2026 and upcoming CF 2027-2031 and is focused on supporting Viet Nam's fulfilment of Gender Equality commitments under The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and the promise of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda to "leave no one behind". UN Women upcoming SN 2027-2030's priorities are: SN Outcome 1 (CF Outcome 2): <i>By 2031, people in Viet Nam, especially those at risk of being left behind, are empowered to shape and benefit from a more inclusive, sustainable and gender-responsive economy driven by green transformation, industrialisation, innovation, productivity and decent work.</i> SN Outcome 2 (CF Outcome 4): <i>By 2031, people in Viet Nam, especially those at risk of being left behind, benefit from and contribute to a more just, safe and inclusive society based on good governance, more responsive institutions, strengthened rule of law, and the protection of and respect for human rights, gender equality and freedom from all forms of violence and discrimination, in line with Viet Nam's international commitments.</i>

UN Women Viet Nam works with civil society organizations (CSOs), women's rights groups and networks to strengthen women's voice, leadership and participation in gender equality policy processes and to translate international commitments into national action. CSOs contribute community evidence, monitor implementation, advocate for reforms and support women and girls facing discrimination and violence.

UN Women works with diverse CSOs and networks on international normative processes, national policy dialogue, evidence generation, community engagement and collective advocacy. These partnerships require continuing support to connect organizations across thematic and geographic areas, strengthen their capacity to participate in policy processes, and communicate evidence and recommendations effectively. Engagement may concern CEDAW follow-up, the Beijing Platform for Action and CSW, gender equality law and policy reform, ending violence against women and girls, care, gender statistics, climate and other priorities within UN Women's programme.

UN Women therefore seeks a national consultant on a retainer basis to provide demand-driven technical support for CSO engagement over the contract period. Each assignment will be separately authorized through a written work request.

2. Description of Responsibilities/ Scope of Work

The objective is to strengthen meaningful, inclusive and effective CSO participation in gender equality policy, monitoring, advocacy and international normative processes in Viet Nam. Under the overall guidance of the Country Representative and in close coordination with the designated UN Women programme manager, the consultant will provide support in three interrelated areas, as specified in individual work requests:

- **CSO network coordination and inclusive participation**

- Map relevant CSOs and networks, identify opportunities for collaboration, and support coordination within and across networks on shared gender equality priorities.
- Plan, facilitate and document inclusive consultations, network meetings and exchanges, ensuring meaningful participation by women-led organizations and groups facing intersecting discrimination.
- Support CSOs to identify common priorities, coordinate inputs, develop joint action plans and participate in national, regional and global processes such as CEDAW follow-up, the Beijing Platform for Action and CSW, while preserving their independence and distinct perspectives.
- Liaise with participating organizations, UN Women and relevant partners on technical preparation and follow-up, as agreed; synthesize consultation outcomes and track agreed actions.

- **Capacity building and experience sharing**

- Assess CSO learning needs and develop practical capacity-building plans, agendas, Vietnamese-language briefing materials, presentations, case studies, guidance notes and tools.
- Facilitate or co-facilitate workshops, peer learning sessions and experience-sharing exchanges on international standards, national policy processes, evidence use, monitoring, advocacy and other agreed topics.
- Provide tailored technical follow-up to help organizations apply learning, develop organizational commitments and monitoring approaches, and exchange effective practices across networks.
- Document lessons, capacity gaps and recommendations for continued learning, including organizational approaches to care and resilience where requested; specialist clinical or psychosocial services are outside this role.

- **Collective advocacy and communication**

- Help CSOs gather and synthesize evidence, ground experience and recommendations into joint positions, policy briefs, submissions, key messages and inputs to consultations or reporting processes.
- Provide technical advice on advocacy strategies, campaign plans and accessible communication products that connect international commitments with national and local priorities.
- Support the substantive preparation, facilitation and documentation of policy dialogues, public events, campaigns and exchanges with decision makers and other stakeholders.
- Advise on dissemination and follow-up so that collective messages inform policy and programme discussions; apply rights-based, survivor-centred and do-no-harm principles to all public communication.

All work must follow UN Women guidance on safeguarding, confidentiality, informed consent, accessibility and do no harm. The consultant must not collect or disclose identifiable survivor information unless expressly authorized under an approved protocol. UN Women and partners retain responsibility for invitations, institutional approvals, event logistics and official representation unless a work request expressly assigns a defined task to the consultant.

3. Consultant's Workplace and Official Travel

The consultancy is due to start on 1 November 2026 and end on 31 October 2029.

This is a home-based consultancy with minimal requirement to present in person at the UN Women Office in Viet Nam (VCO) for meetings (schedule to be agreed later with supervisor) and international travel. The consultant is required to undertake regular update meetings with the Programme Management Specialist and Coordination Officer.

Work related travel of UN Women's consultants are considered as official mission and will be arranged by UN Women, in line with UN Women's Consultant Contract Policy, UN Women Duty Travel Policy and UN-EU cost norm.

The total number of working days allocated under this retainer contract shall not exceed 300 working days during the three-year contract period. UN Women does not guarantee that the full 300 working days will be utilized. Services will be requested and purchased as needed during the term of the Agreement.

The consultant will be engaged under a retainer contract, which facilitates direct engagement depending on organizational needs and consultant availability during the contract period. Services will be requested on an as-needed basis and paid at the pre-agreed daily rate.

The expected number of working days for each assignment/deliverable will be agreed between UN Women and the consultant on a case-by-case basis.

UN Women will not be committed to purchasing any minimum quantity of services, and purchases will only be made where there is an actual requirement and upon issuance of a Purchase Order under this contract. UN Women shall not be liable for any cost in the event that no purchases are made under this retainer contract.

Payment will be made upon satisfactory completion of a deliverable or as agreed between the consultant and UN Women.

4. Deliverables

Reports and other documents and materials that reflect high quality, result- based standard and format established by UN Women

This is an as-needed retainer, not a continuous full-time assignment. For each request, UN Women and the consultant will agree in writing on tasks, outputs, format and language, deadlines, estimated working days, travel and applicable purchase order before work begins.

UN Women does not guarantee any minimum number of days or purchase of services. Payment at the agreed daily rate will follow acceptance of satisfactory outputs under the relevant purchase order.

Illustrative deliverables, commissioned individually or in combination, may include:

- CSO stakeholder mapping, network coordination plan, consultation methodology, meeting synthesis and follow-up action tracker.
- Capacity needs assessment, training or peer learning package, facilitation, workshop report, practical checklist and synthesis of organizational action plans.
- Joint advocacy strategy, position paper, policy submission, briefing note, campaign messages, communication package or public dialogue documentation.

III. Competencies

Core Values:

- Respect for Diversity
- Integrity
- Professionalism

Core Competencies:

- Awareness and Sensitivity Regarding Gender Issues
- Accountability
- Creative Problem Solving
- Effective Communication
- Inclusive Collaboration
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Leading by Example

Please visit this link for more information on UN Women's Core Values and Competencies:

https://www.unwomen.org/en/about-us/employment/application-process#_Values

Functional Competencies:

- Strong knowledge of gender equality, women's rights and the role of civil society in policy development, implementation and accountability, including relevant national and international frameworks.
- Demonstrated ability to support coordination and collaboration within and across CSO networks while ensuring inclusive participation and respecting organizations' independence.
- Ability to design and facilitate participatory capacity-building, consultations and experience-sharing activities for diverse CSOs.
- Strong analytical skills and ability to turn evidence and community perspectives into practical advocacy messages, policy recommendations and communication materials.
- Excellent drafting, editing, presentation and facilitation skills in Vietnamese and English.
- Strong planning, coordination and stakeholder-engagement skills, with the ability to work independently and deliver high-quality outputs within agreed deadlines.

IV. Required Qualifications

Education and Certification:

- Master's degree or equivalent in gender studies, social sciences, human rights, law, public policy or a related field.

Experience:

- At least 15 years of relevant professional experience in gender equality or women’s rights, including substantive engagement with CSOs and women-led networks in Viet Nam. - Demonstrated experience of participation into CEDAW, CSW and national gender equality and violence prevention policy processes; experience translating normative commitments into practical CSO advocacy or monitoring tools. - Proven experience designing and facilitating participatory consultations or training, synthesizing diverse viewpoints, and preparing strong analytical or advocacy products. - Experience applying intersectional, survivor-centred, safeguarding and do-no-harm approaches; ability to work respectfully with organizations representing marginalized women and girls. - Experience with UN agencies, national policy dialogues or regional and global civil society processes is an asset. Languages: - Fluency in English and Vietnamese is required.

V. Criteria for Evaluation

1. Technical Evaluation Criteria

The total number of points allocated for the technical qualification component is 100. The technical qualification of the individual is evaluated based on following technical qualification evaluation criteria:

Technical qualification	Obtainable Score
Master’s degree or equivalent in gender studies, social sciences, human rights, law, public policy or a related field.	10
At least 15 years of relevant professional experience in gender equality or women’s rights, including substantive engagement with CSOs and women-led networks in Viet Nam.	30
Demonstrated experience of participation into CEDAW, CSW and national gender equality and violence prevention policy processes; experience translating normative commitments into practical CSO advocacy or monitoring tools.	20
Proven experience designing and facilitating participatory consultations or training, synthesizing diverse viewpoints, and preparing strong analytical or advocacy products.	20
Experience with UN agencies, national policy dialogues or regional and global civil society processes is an asset.	10
Excellent analytical and writing skills in English. (proved by example of reports on related topic)	10
Total Obtainable Score	100

VI. How to Apply

Interested candidates are requested to submit electronic applications no later than **13 Oct 2026**, Hanoi time. Submission package includes the following documents:

- Updated CV.
- Letter of interest explaining why you are the most suitable for work
- Reports on related topics (only required for shortlisted candidates)

*NOTE:

* Documents required before contract signing:

- The medical statement from the physician certifying good health to work and travel. (This is not a requirement for RLA contracts).
- Copy of Health Insurance Card
- Completed UNDSS BSAFE online training course.

EN: <https://agora.unicef.org/course/info.php?id=17891>

- Release letter in case the selected consultant is government official.

*** Regarding application submission:**

- Applications received incomplete or after the closing date will not be considered.
- Only successful applicants will be contacted to be advised of the next phase of the recruitment process.
- All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence.

UN Women is committed to achieving workplace diversity in terms of gender, nationality, and culture. People from minority groups, indigenous groups and people with disabilities are equally encouraged to apply.

At UN Women, we are committed to creating a diverse and inclusive environment of mutual respect. UN Women recruits, employs, trains, compensates, and promotes regardless of race, religion, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, ability, national origin, or any other basis covered by appropriate law. All employment is decided on the basis of qualifications, competence, integrity and organizational need.

If you need any reasonable accommodation to support your participation in the recruitment and selection process, please include this information in your application.

UN Women has a zero-tolerance policy on conduct that is incompatible with the aims and objectives of the United Nations and UN Women, including sexual exploitation and abuse, sexual harassment, abuse of authority and discrimination. All selected candidates will be expected to adhere to UN Women's policies and procedures and the standards of conduct expected of UN Women personnel and will therefore undergo rigorous reference and background checks. (Background checks will include the verification of academic credential(s) and employment history. Selected candidates may be required to provide additional information to conduct a background check.)