

**Task Force on Amendments of the Terms of Reference  
of the  
High Level Political Forum Major Groups and Other stakeholders Coordination  
Mechanism**

**Report  
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**Participants:**

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2. **Aashish Khullar**, Children and Youth international, Major Group of Children and Youth
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**A. INTRODUCTION**

1. During the composition of the Steering Group, a task force had been assembled to facilitate the process and to promote clarification on some topics of the ToR. In its **report of 4 May 2016, that Task Force for the Formation of the Steering Group** proposed amendments to the ToR:

- a. to avoid over-representation of specific groups; and
- b. to take into account non-HLPF process working groups of MGoS as potential non-voting members of the Steering Group.

Link to the report:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1aR6unGDyQWET4xYCpQ9pxlCos7QW80fcr0DuTmbp3Zk/edit>

2. Based on that report, the Steering Group Co-Chairs **proposed two amendments** for the ToR, which are highlighted in this link:

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1R-Y5KAlYsaHTcGq\\_DVrIFO\\_Rw1XqXPiSLpClmgI0dgo/e/dit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1R-Y5KAlYsaHTcGq_DVrIFO_Rw1XqXPiSLpClmgI0dgo/e/dit?usp=sharing)

While the first was agreed and ratified by the Coordination Mechanism **at its meeting on 4 November 2016**, there was no consensus for the second one. It was therefore proposed that a new task force be established to discuss language and over-representation **through the establishment of “Observers”**.

3. Additionally, the task force was also requested to come up with **proposed language** to accommodate the decision of the Coordination Mechanism to extend **the term of office** of the Co-Chairs of the Steering Group.

**B. NEW CATEGORY OF “OBSERVERS – WORKING GROUPS OF EXISTING MAJOR GROUPS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS**

4. After a long discussion on the role and objectives of the Steering Group, as reflected in the ToR, the Task Force agreed that **an additional category of “Observers” who are non-voting members, should not be included.**

5. Participation of multiple groups and organizations, with their expertise and experience, in the work of the Steering Group can be through the **subcommittees, task forces and working groups for specific tasks, such as reporting on progress of SDG implementation, monitoring HLPF processes and procedures to ensure strengthened stakeholder participation, organization of meetings ahead of the HLPF, etc.**

6. Furthermore, it was recalled that the decision to include representatives from other UN frameworks already implied the recognition of the HLPF as the global follow-up platform or multiple processes, in addition to SDG implementation. In that light, **the Task Force suggests that Major Groups and Other Stakeholders of those UN global frameworks should be encouraged to contribute through existing HLPF MGOS categories (4 (a), (b), (c) and (d))** that have a similar constituency and are already represented in the Steering Group. In this regard, the Steering Committee also encourages existing constituencies in steering group to include those in their coordination, and if needed brief the larger group on it.

7. **At the same time, participation of those frameworks in the Steering Group as currently reflected in ToR Section V.4 (e), should be through representation of their respective coordination mechanisms.** To illustrate as an example, the stakeholders group of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Reduction would be represented by a focal point formally appointed on the basis of an internal decision by all constituent groups represented there. Additionally, it should be required that the focal point and alternate come from different organizations and constituency (e.g. focal point from Women Major Group and alternate for Children and Youth)..

8. **The Task Force therefore recommends deletion of the proposed paragraph Section V.4.(2) regarding observers.**

#### **C. PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO CURRENT SECTION V, PARAGRAPH 11**

9. On the basis of the above discussion, **the Task Force also recommends** that the following amendment of current section V, paragraph 11:

***“The STEERING GROUP, or upon suggestion of any member of the Coordination Mechanism submitted to it, may create subcommittees for specific collective tasks, and thematic groups for coordination of substantive ongoing thematic areas with members of the broader COORDINATION MECHANISM. These subcommittees will carry out their work and report back directly to the STEERING GROUP. Subcommittees will operate under the auspices of the STEERING GROUP, which will transmit results and recommendations, once approved, to the Coordination Mechanism. Subcommittees can be disbanded by the STEERING GROUP, as and when appropriate.”***

#### **D. PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO CURRENT SECTION V, PARAGRAPH 4(e).**

**10.** On the basis of the above discussion, **the Task Force also recommends that Section V, paragraph 4e be amended, with an additional explanation (*in italics*), to read:**

“e. Stakeholder mechanisms for frameworks/processes, not already included in the above listings and that have a mandate formally linked to the HLPF, **for example, but not limited to:**\*

- i. Financing for Development CSO Group
- ii. 10-year Framework for programmes for Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns;
- iii. Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction

*\*This is a category that wishes to give voice and include representatives of the organized major groups and stakeholders from other UN processes and agendas that are also expected to report through the HLPF. Participation in the Steering Group **would require submission of a letter from the stakeholder mechanism and/or the respective secretariat** confirming the nomination of focal point and alternate, **who have been through the necessary internal consultation and decision-making process.** Besides, it is required that focal point and alternate are from different organizations and constituency. Admittance under this category will be subject to a joint decision of the existing STEERING GROUP, including demonstrable governance requirements placed on existing members, particularly as outlined in V.6 below.”*

**11.** The application of this amendment would have direct implications in current processes included in the list of members to the Steering Group under this category, namely: (i) FFD CSO Group; (ii) Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction; (iii) Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals (STI Forum); (iv) General Assembly of Partners - Habitat III. Upon the adoption of this report by the Steering Group, each of these frameworks should have 6 weeks to confirm interest, present the due documentation and respective nominations. After this period, those who have not presented the required information will be removed from the Steering Group.

#### **E. STEERING GROUP CO-CHAIRS' TERM OF OFFICE AND ELECTION**

**12.** The Coordination Mechanism which met on 4 November 2016 agreed to **extend the Co-Chairs' term of office** in order to improve focus and efficiency in preparation for upcoming HLPF meetings. Therefore, it was suggested that the **term of office be extended to 1 year, and that election of new ones should take place right before or during the HLPF.**

**13.** **The Task Force therefore recommends** the following amendment to Section V, para. 9:

V.9: “The STEERING GROUP will have a rotating co-chair system. The CO-CHAIRS should be composed of 2 representatives, **1 from a Major Group and 1 from a Stakeholder Group, rotated on a yearly basis, from 1 August to 31 July of the following year, completing a full cycle of preparation until the next HLPF. The incoming Co-Chairs will be elected by members of the Steering Committee during the HLPF session.** The CO-CHAIRS will be responsible for, among other tasks:. . . .”

**F. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION**

14. The Task Force emphasized that the Steering Group was conceived to act as facilitators of the Coordination Mechanism, adopting quick and efficient procedural decisions, and promoting new activities for the broader group. **The Task Force noted that there was no disagreement about the eligibility of the 16 members falling under Section V.4 (a), (b) and (c) for membership on the Steering Group.**

15. Bearing in mind the recommended amendment to Section V.4 (e) of the ToR as presented above, for the time being, and taking into account the principle of inclusiveness, the **Task Force also recommends that the Coordination Mechanism revisit the criteria for inclusion of categories 4 (d) and (e), particularly in terms of the number of members from each category on the Steering Group, and whether their membership should be on a rotational basis and for how long. See options presented in annex I.**

16. **The Task Force further recommends consideration of clear criteria and procedures for the selection of funded participants and speakers.**

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## ANNEX

### Eligibility of members on the Steering Group

#### Option 1: 16 members on the Steering Group, with voting rights.

Bearing in mind that the Steering Group is required to play an effective coordination and facilitation role, its membership would need to comprise a **limited and manageable number of members for effectiveness**. In this context, the Steering Group would ONLY be composed of 16 organized constituencies, listed in the ToR as categories (a),(b), and (c) in Section V, para. 4. For the constituencies there listed, but not yet organized, their seats would remain open until confirmation of the required governance reports and documentation.

#### Option II: 20 members on the Steering Group, with voting rights

**Under this option, the Steering Group would also decide which other 4 groups, two from each category (d) and (e), can be represented for a one year term, with full voting rights, on a rotational basis.**

The four members would be selected among a list of candidates that fit within categories (d) and (e), upon the confirmation of demonstrable governance requirements placed on existing members, and a candidacy letter stating its reasons for application, and relevance to the next HLPF.

The mandate of these 4 rotational seats would last up to 1 year, connected to the preparations of the upcoming HLPF meeting.

The **inclusion** of these 4 members would be **subject to a vote** at a meeting of the Coordination Mechanism, every year on the occasion of HLPF.

Calls to replace these seats would be open throughout the year in the case a member is confirmed not to be active or upon request for replacement. Decision on this should be made by the Steering Group, after exhaustive discussion with the member to be replaced

***\*Disclaimer of divergence: this option was not consensus in the task force, since it was pointed out that it should limit only current category D, and the total number of seats should be flexible, as to accommodate category E.***

#### Option III: number of members of the Steering Group is not limited, with voting rights

The Steering Group would be composed of 16 organized constituencies, listed in the ToR as categories (a),(b), and (c) in Section V, para. 4. This option would also imply **no limit to the number of members on the Steering Group**, as it is works right now. New spontaneous

applications for membership in categories (d) and (e) would be assessed once every 6 months by the Steering Group, or when at least 3 groups submit their candidacies for review by the Steering Group.

Under this option, the current Steering Group should commit to developing and applying strict criteria for membership. It should particularly be confirmed that a new member does not represent a duplication of existing members and that its contribution is extremely relevant and necessary in the context of the Steering Group.

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