Memorandum of Understanding:  
Framework for Cooperation between UNDP and the Advisory Committee

Article 1. Nature
The UNDP Civil Society Advisory Committee (hereinafter the Committee) is an advisory body of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Institutionally, the Committee will interface with all UNDP Bureaus and the Office of the Administrator.

Article 2. Purpose
(1) The purpose of the Committee is to serve as an institutional mechanism for dialogue and consultation between UNDP and civil society representatives on issues critical to development. The Committee will provide UNDP senior management with advice on policies, strategies and programmes, mainly through interactions with the Administrator and senior management.
(2) Civil society is a critical constituency and partner for UNDP. UNDP will seek to systematize its process of consultation with civil society to benefit from the strategic, policy and operational advice that this constituency can offer.

Article 3. Objectives
(1) Strengthen partnerships between UNDP and civil society organizations (CSOs);
(2) Propose practical measures that would enhance the engagement of CSOs with UNDP.
(3) Serve as a sounding board and early warning system, providing UNDP with strategic, political and substantive guidance on policies and programmes to improve development effectiveness.

Article 4. Establishment and duration
(1) The Committee shall be convened by the Administrator of UNDP.
(2) The current Agreement is established among the Members of the Committee as reconfigured 2008-2009.
(3) The Committee shall remain in operation indefinitely. The Committee can be dissolved only by the Administrator of UNDP.

Article 5. Composition
(1) The Committee shall be composed of 12 members.
(2) The selection of members shall be guided by the following considerations:
(i) Members should have expertise to advise UNDP in its substantive policy areas (democratic governance, poverty reduction and the MDGs, conflict prevention and crisis recovery, environment and energy, HIV/AIDS, human rights and women’s empowerment); as well as emerging priorities such as climate change, the post-2015 agenda, participatory democracy, social accountability, development effectiveness, food security, social entrepreneurship, and new forms of philanthropy.

(ii) Members should either represent or work in association with different types of civil society organizations, at various levels (local, national, regional and global), with geographic spread, with which UNDP engages, including but not limited to: policy groups, advocacy and rights-based organizations, indigenous peoples’ organizations, peoples’ movements, faith-based organizations, women’s organizations, community-based organizations, and trade unions;

(iii) Membership should represent an even balance of men and women;

(iv) Candidates who have ECOSOC status would be an asset but not a requirement for Committee membership.

(3) The majority of Committee members shall be from the Global South, reflecting UNDP programme country focus.

(4) Committee members, with inputs from the Secretariat for their consideration, shall determine from time to time the specific criteria and profiles for selection of new members in line with the Principles above and with current needs of the Committee.

Article 6. Membership

(1) Committee members shall provide advice on a personal capacity and shall not formally represent any specific organization, network or platform.

(2) Committee members will serve in a purely advisory role and not be employed by UNDP in any of its projects or programmes in their capacity as Committee members.

(3) There shall be no remuneration for serving in the Committee. Travel and other costs related to participation in the Annual Meetings shall be covered by UNDP.

Article 7. Selection of Committee members and length of term

(1) Committee members are appointed by the UNDP Administrator, based on nominations from the Committee and the Secretariat as described in Art. 7.

(2) Given that the last rotation of Committee membership took place in 2008-2009, and that most Committee members will have served a term of three years by the end of 2012, a two year length of term is now officially introduced. In 2012, all Committee members will step down. Some members of the 2012 committee will be nominated for a subsequent two year term based on joint nomination by UNDP and the committee, while additional new members will be inducted from civil society.

(3) On the completion of the first term, a member of the Committee may be eligible for a second term (two + one years), if both parties agree. The final decision and justification will be made by UNDP based on Art. 9.
Article 8. Nomination of Committee members
(1) The following persons and bodies are eligible to nominate Committee members:
   (i) Administrator of UNDP;
   (ii) Serving Committee members;
   (iii) Relevant UNDP Bureaus;
   (iv) Secretariat of the Committee.

(2) Nominations are to be made:
   (i) Every year at the time of the Annual Meeting;
   (ii) When the membership of a Committee Member terminates prior to its term;
   (iii) When there are vacancies in the Committee as determined by the Committee, the Secretariat or the Administrator.

(3) Nominations can be made for one month following the announcement of the nomination procedure by the Secretariat.

(4) Within two weeks of the end of the nominations, the Secretariat conducts a vetting process of all candidates based on the principles and specific criteria under Art. 4. Within two weeks of the end of the nominations, the Secretariat proposes the pre-selected candidates for consideration to the Committee.

(5) Within two weeks of the proposal of candidates by the Secretariat, the Committee and the Secretariat agree on the final candidates and together propose them for approval to the Administrator.

Article 9. Expiration or termination of membership
(1) At the completion of the first two-year term, members and UNDP will together evaluate the quality of engagement to decide on continued membership in the committee for a second term.

(2) Membership can be terminated for one or more of the following reasons:
   (i) Absence in two consecutive meetings;
   (ii) Inactivity and lack of responsiveness in between two meetings;
   (iii) Resignation;
   (iv) Conduct deemed incompatible with the values and principles of UNDP.

(3) Vacancies that arise from such termination shall be filled in the same manner in which the original holder of that position was selected and appointed. Individuals appointed to fill vacant positions shall hold membership for a new period of two years.

Article 10. Functions and responsibilities of UNDP
The primary responsibilities of UNDP are to:
(1) Ensure that the recommendations from the Committee are taken into consideration and reflected in the work of UNDP to the extent possible;

(2) Raise the profile and awareness of the Committee by improving internal messaging, including communicating key recommendations from the Annual Meeting to all senior staff;
(3) Take steps to promote stronger links between advisory committees to UNDP at national, regional and global levels;
(4) Facilitate dialogue and exchange between the Committee and the UNDP Executive Board.
(5) Organize regular Annual Meetings of the Committee with the Administrator of UNDP and with the active participation of senior staff members, through consultation with all parties;
(6) Ensure that the Secretariat in UNDP has the capacity and the resources to effectively support, manage and coordinate the work of the Committee;
(7) Ensure that the Secretariat facilitates information and follow-up between meetings, and explore issues for joint research and advocacy on issues of priority and joint interest on a continuing basis;
(8) Take responsibility for ensuring rotation of Committee members, in consultation with them. The Secretariat will coordinate the nomination process described in Art.7.

**Article 11. Functions and responsibilities of the Committee**

The primary functions of the Committee are to:

(1) Provide advice and strategic guidance to the Administrator of UNDP and senior management on issues critical to development;
(2) Exchange information and strategies to improve advocacy for desired outcomes;
(3) Provide UNDP with strategic, political and substantive insights on policies and programmes to improve development effectiveness;
(4) Support and monitor the implementation of key information policy and advocacy efforts;
(5) Propose practical measures that would enhance civic engagement in UNDP;
(6) Pilot strategic civil society-UNDP initiatives and activities;

**Responsibilities of the Committee**

The Committee shall take decisions to ensure that it operates effectively and fulfills its functions as stated above. Such decisions include:

(i) Internal operations, including the adoption of MoU and election of Co-Chairs;
(ii) Coordinated policy positions;
(iii) Timely recommendations to the Administrator after each Annual Meeting;
(iv) Communications with UNDP between meetings.

**Responsibilities of Committee members**

Responsibilities of individual Committee members include:

(1) Participating in Annual Meetings;
(2) Taking part in the preparations for the Annual Meetings, such as but not limited to determining the agenda;
(3) Following up on the tasks decided at Annual Meetings;
(4) Participating in Committee decision-making outside the Annual Meetings (see Art. 13);
(5) Responsiveness to requests and coordination efforts by the Secretariat, co-chairs and committee members.
Responsibilities of Committee Co-Chairs

(1) The Committee will elect two Co-Chairs, each serving two-year terms.

(2) Responsibilities of Co-Chairs include:

   (i) Co-chair the Annual Meetings with the Administrator of UNDP;

   (ii) Ensure that recommendations from the annual meeting are formulated and sent to the Administrator within two weeks of the Annual Meeting;

   (iii) Chair and propose as deemed necessary any virtual meetings that take place in-between two Annual Meetings;

   (iv) Ensure that the Committee makes all decisions necessary for its effective functioning (e.g., adopt and amend bylaws, propose nomination and termination of members, maintain regular internal communications, etc.);

   (v) Make decisions according to Art. 13 (4);

   (vi) Facilitate the development of collective policy positions of the Committee;

   (vii) Represent the Committee to the Administrator.

Article 12. Decision-making process

(1) The Committee takes its decisions at the Annual Meetings.

   (i) The Committee may also take decisions outside the Annual Meetings through virtual means (i.e., teleconference and/or email exchange) in regard to issues indispensable to its effective functioning; or in situations when an immediate reaction is necessary to address an emerging issue or circumstance.

   (ii) The recommendations to the Administrator may be decided upon only at the Annual Meetings.

(2) In order to make decisions, a quorum of 50 percent plus one of the Committee Members is needed.

(3) While any Committee member may propose certain decisions, the Committee will strive to achieve consensus. However, in the event that complete consensus is not possible, substantial consensus of two-thirds majority will suffice.

(4) Between Annual Meetings, the Co-Chairs, acting together, may take action on behalf of the Committee on issues they deem requiring urgent attention, without recourse to other procedures as provided in these Articles of Agreement. Any decision taken by either the Committee or UNDP between Annual Meetings shall be notified to the entire Committee immediately, with an explanation of why such a decision was deemed urgent.

Article 13. Administrative arrangements

(1) UNDP will establish a task team, coordinated by the Secretariat and chaired by the Director of the Bureau of External Relations and Advocacy, to follow up on the Committee recommendations and to authorize appropriate institutional interface between UNDP and the Committee.
(2) The Civil Society Division in the UNDP Bureau of External Relations and Advocacy will serve as Secretariat for the Committee. The Secretariat will be responsible for the coordination of activities including:

(i) Designing and organizing the Annual Meetings;
(ii) Disseminating and following up on Committee recommendations;
(iii) Organizing the mid-term review;
(iv) Monitoring funds;
(v) Organizing teleconferences with Committee members;
(vi) Facilitating contributions to and presence at UNDP events, publications and knowledge networks, and disseminating information;
(vii) Facilitating dialogue with the UNDP Executive Board.

Article 14. Committee meetings

(1) The Committee shall meet once a year (Annual Meeting);
(2) In addition to the Annual Meeting, sub-groups of the Committee may meet as needed. UNDP and the Committee will participate in regular teleconferences requested by either side as needed.
(3) Annual Meetings shall be convened by written notice from or on behalf of the UNDP Administrator three to six months prior to the proposed date of the meeting;
(4) The Administrator of UNDP and the Co-Chairs of the Committee will chair Annual Meetings. Agendas for the meetings will be prepared by the Secretariat with the approval agreed upon by both sides.

Article 15. Conduct and conflicts of interest

(1) The Committee members are expected to be open and candid in discussing items within their agenda. For this reason both UNDP and the Committee are committed to maintaining confidentiality in the discussions. Both parties will respect the privacy of participants and agree not to disclose any personal information or views expressed by individuals during meetings. Chatham House rules will be adopted for all meetings of the Committee.

(2) The Committee members understand the importance of serving the Committee to the best of their ability and with the highest degree of dedication and care. The Committee members agree to disclose any interest they have in a matter being considered by the Committee where that interest could reasonably be viewed by others as affecting their objectivity or independence. If a Committee member has a specific or individualized interest which may impact his/her contributions as a member of the Committee, it is their responsibility to inform the two Co-Chairs and the Secretariat of the Committee.

Article 16. Entry into force

This Memorandum of Understanding shall enter into force after approval by the Committee and the Administrator of UNDP.