AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK GROUP
GROUPE DE LA BANQUE AFRICAINE DE DÉVELOPPEMENT

CSO
Civil Society
Société Civile

Terms of Reference
Bank-Civil Society Committee 2023-2025

1. Context

The Bank-Civil Society Committee was first established in 2000 in accordance with the Policy on Cooperation with Civil Society of 1999. In 2012, the Framework for Enhanced Engagement with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) was adopted, following which the Bank-Civil Society Committee was revitalized, and the Terms of Reference for the Committee agreed upon in 2015. In 2016, the TORs of the Committee were further revised through a consultative process and a new Bank-Civil Society Committee was put in place in 2018 under the new format and renewed in 2020.

After four years, it was important to take stock of the Committee's performance and achievements and ascertain its representativity. Furthermore, considering the COVID-19 pandemic, the "new normal", and the perspective of a new CSE Action Plan 2024-2028, there is a need to revamp the Committee again to make it a key player in the ongoing institutionalization of CSE.

It is against this background that an evaluation was undertaken at the end of the mandate of the current Committee to assess its added value; analyze its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats; draw lessons from previous committees, as well as propose a renewal process for the 2023-2025 Committee.

The evaluation revealed the importance of this body as a key partner with Community-based organizations and a means of showcasing the impact of the Bank's operations. Despite these positive aspects, the Committee's influence in strategic decisions, the perceived lack of representativity and accountability are concerns that need to be addressed.

2. Mandate and roles of the Committee

The mandate of the Bank-Civil Society Committee covers three major areas: 1) Awareness and communication, 2) Dialogue and consultation, and 3) Partnership. As a result, the AfDB-CSO Committee is responsible for advising the Bank on strengthening relations and partnerships with the CSO community and assisting the Bank in carrying out its action plan for engagement with CSOs. The contribution of the Committee and grassroots CSOs is expected at the level of the Bank's five priorities.

3. Composition of the New Committee

Based on the findings and taking into consideration the advantages and shortcomings of the different options, the renewal of the committee shall be based on the following criteria:

- The Committee shall comprise 11 CSO members.
- Relevant Bank Departments shall be invited to collaborate on strategic, thematic or project-based initiatives
- The 5 CSO Regional Representatives shall have the capacity and ability to ensure adequate regional coverage
- There shall be 1 international NGO covering all 5 regions.
- The 6 thematic areas to be represented are Agriculture, Climate and Energy, Youth, Gender, Governance and Fragility.

Other Bank members that were previously part of the committee shall be co-opted on an ad-hoc basis depending on the themes to be discussed (Disclosure and Access to Information, Economic and Financial Governance, Anti-corruption)

Two members of the outgoing committee shall be retained to ensure continuity, based on their contributions during different consultations and their performance regarding the committee's workplan

Members of the Committee representing Bank Departments shall fulfill the following specific roles and responsibilities:

a) **Vice-Presidency of the Bank, in charge of the Agriculture, Human and Social Development Complex (AHVP)** chairs the Committee to demonstrate the Bank's commitment at highest level to civil society engagement
b) **Department of Gender, Women and Civil Society (AHGC)** is accountable for the achievements of the committee in relation to the Bank's engagement with civil society.
c) **Civil Society and Community Engagement Division (AHGC2)** is the secretariat of the Committee and owns and manages the civil society engagement process

d) **Three to five members from other Bank Departments** shall be considered based on expectations regarding civil society engagement. Departments working on themes such as Climate Change, Resilience/Fragility, Governance, and Capacity Development shall also be co-opted depending on the cross-cutting nature of themes of Bank events such as COP and CSO forums.

CSO members will elect a Spokesperson to work closely with the Bank and CSOs in the committee.

4. Renewal process

The renewal process shall comprise the following key steps:

a) Presentation of options and Terms of reference to current Committee members and to AHGC Management
b) Dissemination of findings to relevant Bank Departments and CSOs
c) Call for proposals and selection of new members
d) Handing over
e) Adoption of work plan of new committee

5. Selection Panel

The final selection shall be done by a panel comprising of 8 members with 3 representing the Bank and 5 representing civil society. Bank representatives in the selection committee shall come from AHGC, PIAC and FIRM[1] while representatives of Civil Society shall include members from the four previous committees between 2012 and 2022.

Following shortlisting by the Bank based on those who meet the basic criteria, the final selection shall be done by the selection panel

6. Duration of mandate

The committee's term of office is 2 years, renewable once.

Pending the completion of the renewal process, members of the current committee shall continue to represent their respective constituencies until the official handover

7. Criteria for Selecting CSO members of the Committee

Committee members must meet the following criteria:

- Be a CSO that is already visible and has the capacity, experience and interest to serve as a representative of a wide range of CSOs.

[1] AHGC is the Department in charge of Gender, Women and Civil Society and responsible for overseeing the renewal process as well as the secretariat of the Bank-CSO committee. PIAC is the Bank's Anti-corruption department that promotes transparency and accountability, and FIRM is in charge of Partnerships and Resources Mobilization

- An officially recognized and duly registered CSO in at least one regional member country with operations and representation in more than one country. CSOs covering entire regions and regional umbrella associations are preferred
- A CSO, which can show evidence of achievements, good governance and accountability in its operations.
- A CSO that has a proven track record of gender equality and youth engagement in its operational work.

8. Meetings

The Committee shall meet twice a year in ordinary sessions in person or virtually. Extraordinary meetings may be held upon request of the Bank and in consultation with members of the committee. The Committee may make use of resource persons with relevant experience and expertise in a domain or thematic area that shall be the focus of discussions

9. Deliverables

The deliverables of the committee are:

1- Work plan for the region/thematic area.
2- Activity report shall include recommendations on improving the Bank's engagement with CSOs in the region/thematic area.

10. Workplan

The work plan shall be based on the Bank's priorities and the CSE action plan and shall be proposed by the Bank for validation by members of the committee. The committee's first meeting shall be dedicated to handover and induction, and the second meeting to the adoption of the work plan.

11. Funding

Committee membership is unpaid. Expenses related to participation to the Committee meetings, CSO forums and relevant consultations, are covered by the Bank.