



AGNA Working Group on Legitimacy, Transparency, Accountability and impact assessment Terms of reference

Background

Affinity groups are groupings of CIVICUS members that exist to take forward CIVICUS' mission and values. The Affinity Group of National Associations (AGNA) brings together national associations and platforms of CSOs from around the world. National associations are those organisations which provide and give a collective voice to civil society in their countries, serve as interlocutors between civil society and other sectors and struggle for the creation of an enabling environment for civil society at the national level.

Launched at the 2004 CIVICUS World Assembly, the aim of AGNA is to engage these national associations to foster greater co-operation across national and regional boundaries and to increase their ability to pursue mutual interests. This aim is based on the following identified needs:

- The need for an international citizens' coalition;
- The need to reverse the current understanding of capacity building characterised by a North to South flow of knowledge, information and experience sharing;
- The need to improve the relations with governments and ensure their respect of civil society as a whole and promote effective spaces for dialogue and collaboration.
- The need to provide a support network for national network leaders; and
- The need to reduce the 're-invention of the wheel' and improvisation in the leadership of NGOs/NPOs.

Based on these core purposes and the assessment of our members needs and interests, the Network has established Working Groups (WGs) that focus on the following areas:

1. Enabling Environment (EE) and government relations.
2. Legitimacy, Transparency, Accountability (LTA) and impact assessment.
3. Advocacy.
4. Governance and membership.

5. Sustainability and resources.

Working Group on Legitimacy, Transparency, Accountability (LTA) and impact assessment

Purpose

AGNA believes that the accountability of non-governmental organizations is essential for the legitimacy, sustainability, effectiveness and protection of the sector and is more important now than ever. The Working Group on Legitimacy, Transparency, Accountability (LTA) and impact assessment seeks to address one of the major challenges members cite when considering internal accountability initiatives which is a lack of support and information to take principles into practice. This WG aims to supporting the capacity of members to respond to challenges to their roots, authority, and right to speak on behalf of broader constituencies.

The aim of this WG is to promote the experience sharing and learning between the network's members on how to improve public trust and the credibility of civil society organisations and their activities through the enhancement of their accountability systems and structures. It also intends to promote the role of national associations and platforms as legitimate watchdogs of governments accountability and transparency.

The working group is envisaged as a short term, voluntary group established to provide input to the larger AGNA network for further discussion. The working group will promote discussions, experience sharing and analysis of LTA practices at the national and regional levels. Based on these discussions and exchanges, the Working Group will identify research and training needs for the Network members.

The working group will consider how best to structure its activities in order to maximise its deliverables and outcomes, as well as the involvement of the network as whole.

Objectives

The main objectives of the WG are as follows:

- To facilitate communication and information exchange between members and other stakeholders.
- To give those members working on LTA and impact assessment a recognized forum to discuss practical program issues and share experiences and good practices.
- To collaborate and share technical expertise on LTA and improve the understanding of related issues.

- To identify ways of improving the impact of LTA and impact assessment activities at the national level.
- To increase the capacity of members of the network in this particular area of work.

Composition and participation roles

The Working Group is open to all types of members of the network, including full and associate members as well as allies and friends of AGNA.

All **Group's members** are expected to actively participate in and contribute to the agreed activities. This includes substantive participation in regular discussions, as well as making active contributions to the Group's work through sharing information and feedback, putting forward new ideas and initiatives, contributing resources (human and/or financial) as appropriate, contributing to the dissemination of the Group's activities and deliverables. Participating members will designate one or two persons to act as a focal point to participate in the group's work, providing continuity to discussions.

The group will count with at least one representative of the **Steering Committee**, that will serve as the Chair of the Working Group, facilitating the discussions and promoting activities. The Chair of the Working Group is responsible for the functioning of the group, coordinating with the Secretariat, preparing and distributing necessary documents and ensuring that the group achieves the planned deliverables.

The **AGNA Coordinator** will serve as focal point at the **AGNA Secretariat**, ensuring alignment with the network's priorities and deliverables, as well as synergies and coordination with CIVICUS areas of work whenever possible and agreed upon the members of the group. General responsibilities of the Secretariat are as follows:

- Share relevant information with the members of the Group.
- Identify linkages with CIVICUS areas of work.
- Ensure coordination between the core activities of the network and the WGs activities.
- Disseminate the WG deliverables.

Main activities

- To formulate and approve the goal and objectives of the WG.
- To participate in planning the WG events/activities.
- To propose joint events, activities, and speakers.
- To participate in meetings.
- To support joint events and activities according to their interest and capacity.
- To communicate their needs and interests to the Group and the Secretariat.
- To monitor and evaluate the work and impact of the Group.

Modes of operation

- Working language: English will serve as the common language unless otherwise agreed by the members of the WG.

- Members must ensure collaboration and sharing of relevant information regularly (at least once every 3 months).
- Meetings and presentations will take place virtually and/or face to face.
- Members must ensure participation, inclusion, transparency and accountability.