

Governance Arrangements for the Adaptation Fund Civil Society Network

DRAFT

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1. Introduction

The Adaptation Fund (AF) Civil Society Network, formerly the ‘AF NGO Network’, initiated its work in 2010 as an informal coalition of a few civil society organisations (CSOs) engaging in discussions and debates on AF policies and closely following the planning and implementation of AF projects. This previously rather informal initiative of a few Southern CSOs became institutionalized over time, resulting in the formulation of the AF Civil Society Network’s governance structure outlined in the present document. This process has also resulted in the Network’s decision to change its name from the “AF NGO Network” to the “AF Civil Society Network” as this name better reflects the envisioned scope of the Network outlined in this governance document.

For several years the Network has been led by a small core group of about 11 CSOs mainly from the Global South that promoted the institutionalisation of the Network and tried to engage further CSOs in this process. The following core group of CSOs was actively engaged in developing the present governance arrangements for the AF Civil Society Network: Conservation Action Practitioners (Rwanda); Development Alternatives (India); ENDA Energie (Senegal); Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano (Ecuador); Fundación Vida (Honduras); Germanwatch (Germany); Green Alternative (Georgia); Indigo Development and Change (South Africa); ; and Jeunes Volontaires pour l'Environnement (Benin); and Panos Caribbean (Caribbean). Germanwatch and Fundacion Futuro Latinoamericano have jointly facilitated and coordinated this process with limited funding by the International Climate Initiative (IKI) from the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, and Nuclear Safety (BMU).

After evaluating the advantages and disadvantages of establishing a separate legal personality for the Network, it was decided to not register the Network as an organisation and thus not to establish an independent legal personality for the Network. This was mainly decided to avoid the concentration of power within the Network and other potential conflicts of interests that have been observed at other joint initiatives and networks that opted to establish a separate legal personality.

The governance structure in the present document has been jointly developed by this core group of CSOs mentioned above, in consultation with a broader group of CSOs active in the field of adaptation finance and other key stakeholders. The aim of this process and the present governance arrangements is to ensure that the AF Civil Society Network remains a legitimate, transparent, representative and participative platform to coordinate and facilitate CSO engagement in the AF.

2. Vision

An international climate finance architecture equipped with adequate, predictable and sustainable resources, in which the people and communities most vulnerable to climate change benefit from concrete adaptation policies and actions.

3. Mission

Ensure that policies, investments, and procedures of the AF effectively support those most vulnerable to the adverse impacts of the climate crisis. This is reached by providing a global transparent, representative, participative and enabling platform for CSOs to engage in AF processes in their countries and regions, as well as internationally.

4. Key Principles

1. Decentralization
2. Transparency and Accountability
3. Flexibility
4. Independence
5. Active Participation
6. Inclusiveness and Representativeness
7. Empowerment

5. Mandate

The AF Civil Society Network began as an informal initiative by a small group of CSOs, mainly from developing countries, who started engaging in AF processes in their countries and at AF Board level. In the successive years, this small group of CSOs has further formalized their engagement in the Fund's processes and has encouraged other CSOs, mainly from the global South, to do the same in their countries and regions.

In the course of this process the AF Civil Society Network has been, and continues to be, completely independent from the AF Board and its Secretariat. However, there are various AF policies and official documents that specifically acknowledge the important role of civil society and stakeholder engagement in the complete cycle of AF project planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and learning. The AF Medium-Term strategy 2018-2022 not only recognizes the various ways in which civil society is already actively contributing to the Fund, but also highlights that there is room for improving civil society engagement in the Fund and refers to the AF Board's intention to work with the Network to explore modalities for even greater collaboration.

Through the years, the AF Civil Society Network has become a recognized stakeholder not only by the AF Board, but also by various other organisations from global civil society.

6. Objectives

1. Promote meaningful and effective civil society engagement in AF processes and projects at national and regional levels.

2. Strengthen participative civil society advocacy in policy- and decision-making at AF Board level.
3. Facilitate collective learning and collaboration among CSOs engaged in AF programmes, projects and processes.

7. Activities

Obj. 1- Promote meaningful and effective civil society engagement in AF processes and projects at national and regional levels.

- a) Enhance the engagement of the Network's member CSOs in national and regional AF processes and projects with their respective decision-makers (e.g. Designated Authorities and focal points or implementing and executing entities) at country and regional levels;
- b) Mobilise feedback from the Network's CSO members on AF project proposals and concept notes under consideration by the AF Board;
- c) Follow up—through the Network's member CSOs—on the planning and implementation of AF projects and provide independent assessments and feedback on AF projects under implementation.

Obj. 2 - Strengthen participative civil society advocacy and engagement in policy- and decision-making at AF Board level

- a) Host the 'Civil Society Dialogue', a standing agenda item at the AF Board meetings during which civil society representatives share independent insights on their countries' AF processes and projects communicating on the ground challenges and best practices as well as respective recommendation on behalf of the Network;
- b) Facilitate and coordinate a participative process among the Network's CSOs for the joint development of recommendations to be considered by the AF Board;
- c) Promote an enabling environment within the Fund's policies and procedures that allows for meaningful and effective civil society engagement;
- d) Provide feedback to the AF Board through regular exchanges with the AF Secretariat and participate in stakeholder consultation processes.

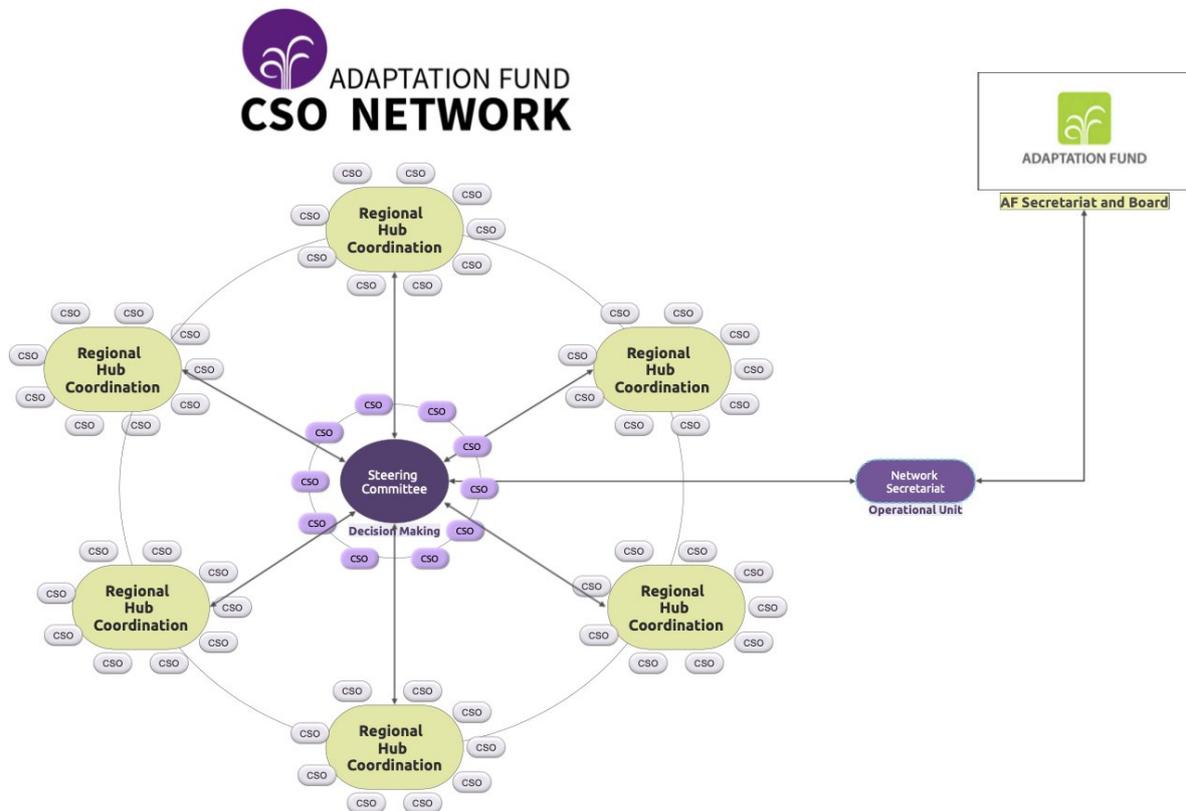
Obj. 3 - Facilitate collective learning and collaboration among CSOs engaged in AF programmes, projects and processes.

- a) Strengthen knowledge of the AF and of respective engagement opportunities for global civil society;
- b) Support Network members in the sharing of experiences and lessons learnt from the AF projects with other CSOs and decision-makers;
- c) Contribute to learning and exchanges among civil society networks involved in climate finance at global and regional levels.

8. Structure and Governance Arrangements of the AF Civil Society Network

This section sets out the structure and governance arrangements of the AF Civil Society Network. It covers the roles and responsibilities of the Network's members, Regional Hubs, Secretariat, and Steering Committee. Figure 1 illustrates and explains the structure and governance arrangements of the AF Civil Society Network, as a coalition of civil society organisations (CSOs) engaging in discussions and debates on AF policies and closely following the planning and implementation of the Fund's projects.

Figure 1 AF NGO Network organisational chart



8.1 Membership

Network membership is open to all interested stakeholders from global civil society. However, with the Fund implementing its adaptation actions in developing countries, the Network relies particularly on the input of its member CSOs from the global South. The AF Civil Society Network's members are thus mainly from countries in the Global South. Member CSOs engage in the Network's activities and act as the voice of the Network in their country and region. Any organisation from civil society that is interested in the AF and supports the vision and objectives of the AF Civil Society Network may become a member.

The Network's member CSOs may include non-governmental organisations (NGOs), foundations, indigenous people's organisations, women's organisations, youth organisations,

faith based organisations, community-based organisations, social enterprises and associations, trade unions, academic or research institutions, as well as other types of public benefit organisations from civil society that align with the principles and values of the Network. The geographic scope of member CSOs varies as well. While some organisations focus on the implementation of local adaptation activities, other organisations focus on national, regional, and in some cases global adaptation actions and policy processes. This large number and variety of CSOs ensures the global and bottom-up legitimacy of the Network's policy positions and recommendations. The Network only includes members from civil society, but recognises the need for complementarity and synergy with the private and government sectors, whenever possible.

Currently, membership is at no cost and in-kind contributions are voluntary. However, in the future, the AF Civil Society Network may explore the option of introducing a membership fee for certain kinds of organisations.

Member CSOs are invited to take an active part in the Network and can contribute to and benefit from the Network in various areas. Being part of the AF Civil Society Network, mingling with experts on adaptation and adaptation finance, and staying closely connected to the developments within the AF, both internationally as well as within their country and region, will benefit member organisations. Having an organisational background on climate change adaptation and climate finance topics does help an organisation to optimally benefit from and contribute to the Network's activities.

Members benefit from and participate in the Network in the following ways:

- Member CSOs receive regular updates and information on AF policies and processes;
- Member CSOs are informed of new project proposals in their country and region submitted to the Fund and encouraged to review such proposals, with a view to enhancing the design of project proposals and concept notes;
- Member CSOs benefit from regional platforms where they can exchange experiences and lessons learnt with regard to AF processes;
- Member CSOs implement or promote peer-to-peer learning;
- Member CSOs participate in the Network's online courses that aim to empower them to actively engage in AF projects and processes globally and locally;
- The Network serves as a platform to make the voices and experiences of local member CSOs heard at an international AF decision-making level.

The AF Civil Society Network operates through a decentralized structure. Member CSOs mainly engage in the Network through their respective Regional Hubs, through which most of the communication with the Network's members will take place.

8.2 Regional Hubs

Function of the Regional Hubs

The Regional Hubs serve as the main mechanism for member engagement in the Network and facilitate better coordination of communication and activities between members in a particular region that may have shared interests or language groups.

Formation of New Regional Hubs

The Network comprises the 9 Regional Hubs listed below, which are facilitated and coordinated by established CSO members (Regional Hub Coordinators) on a voluntary basis. The Network aims to have all regions covered by the hub structure, although this will rely on the voluntary contributions of CSO members of the Network with the necessary financial and human capacities to establish or maintain the required regional hubs, and therefore not all regions may be served by an existing Regional Hub at any given point in time.

If a CSO member's region is not covered by an existing hub, that member may either choose to join one of the other existing Regional Hubs, or, if it has the financial and human capacity to establish and coordinate a hub, it may volunteer to set up a new hub for its region. It should be noted that the formation of a new Regional Hub requires prior consent of the Network's Steering Committee and should aim to not duplicate any existing hub structures.

List of initial Regional Hubs (2021):

- Caribbean
- Eastern Africa
- Eastern Europe, Caucasus & Central Asia
- Global North
- Latin America
- Middle East and North Africa (MENA)
- South Asia
- Southern Africa
- Western and Francophone Africa

Regional Hub Coordinators

Regional Hubs are facilitated by up to two member CSOs from a given region that have the required capacity to take on this task on a voluntary basis. The AF Civil Society Network mainly relies on the voluntary work of member CSOs to fulfil this task, and financial support for member CSOs to host Regional Hubs cannot be guaranteed. The Network's Secretariat and Steering Committee will support efforts to mobilise funding from potential donors for this function. Tasks conducted by Regional Hub Coordinators include:

- Providing a regional platform for exchange on AF projects and processes;
- Facilitating and coordinating communication with and among the Regional Hub's member CSOs;

- Promoting the AF Civil Society Network among CSOs in the region and encouraging them to join the Network and the respective Regional Hub;
- Promoting the Network's capacity-building initiatives on engagement opportunities for CSOs in AF processes;
- Providing regular information and updates on AF projects and processes relevant to the region;
- Mobilising and coordinating feedback from the hub's member CSOs on AF project proposals and concept notes to be considered by the AF Board;
- Encouraging CSO members of the hub to engage with decision-makers on AF processes in their country;
- Encouraging CSO members of the hub to conduct independent assessments and feedback on AF projects under implementation in their countries;
- Promoting collective learning on experiences with AF projects and processes at national level among CSOs in the region.
- Mobilising funds for the Regional Hub coordination

Nomination and Selection of Regional Hub Coordinators

The Network's member CSOs from a respective Regional Hub can nominate representatives from within their hub to take on the task of Regional Hub Coordinator. Nominations should only be put forward with the nominee organisation's prior consent and should be accompanied by a motivation outlining the nominee's experience, expertise in relevant fields and resources. The Network's Steering Committee will review whether the nominees have the required experience, expertise, resources and legitimacy to take on the task of Regional Hub coordination and approve their nomination if satisfied. If there is more than one nominee for one position of Regional Hub coordination, the Hub may consider a voting procedure. A smooth transition of Regional Hub Coordinators should be ensured to avoid losing the institutional memory of the respective hub.

8.3 The AF Civil Society Network's Secretariat

Role and Responsibilities

The AF Civil Society Network's Secretariat coordinates and facilitates the overall operation of the Network and serves as the main point of contact for the Network. It is the main point of liaison between the Network and the AF Board and its Secretariat.

The tasks of the Network's Secretariat include:

- Coordinating general inquiries addressed to the Network or feedback requested from the Network;
- Coordinating the preparation of joint positions with regard to policy recommendations for the AF;
- Maintaining of the AF Civil Society Network website and coordination of related processes;

- Serving as the institutional memory of the Network and ensuring efficient and effective knowledge management within the Network;
- Engaging in regular exchanges with the AF Secretariat on behalf of the Network;
- Providing regular updates and information on relevant AF process to the Network's Steering Committee, Regional Hub Coordinators and the broader network membership;
- Stimulating the day-to-day network activities based on an annual planning exercise;
- Facilitating overall capacity-building, knowledge sharing and learning activities;
- Coordinating, preparing and following-up on meetings with Regional Hub Coordinators; the Steering Committee and other relevant meetings involving the Network;
- Initiating and facilitating task forces on specific topics;
- Engaging in fundraising activities with potential donors, together with representatives from the Network's Steering Committee, to mobilize financial resources needed to maintain the Network's activities.

Composition

The AF Network's Secretariat is composed of up to 3 member CSOs of the Network, out of which at least one organisation must be from the Global South. Ideally those organisations should also be accredited UNFCCC observer organisations, as this status allows them to register observers for AF Board meetings. Organisations serving as the Network's Secretariat do so on a voluntary basis and need to ensure they have the required financial and human capacity to take on this task. To ensure that smaller CSOs with less financial resources from developing countries can also take on this task, the Network's Secretariat and Steering Committee will make an effort to mobilise funding from potential donors to financially support smaller CSOs from developing countries to fulfil this function.

Nomination and Selection Process

Starting from 2022, member CSOs taking on the role of the Network's Secretariat serve for a term of up to 3 years and may be reselected for this role at the end of their term. To ensure continuity and that no institutional memory is lost, only one vacant position out of a joint Network Secretariat should ideally be elected at a time. Based on the existing roles and functions of the Secretariat, the Network's Steering Committee will develop terms of reference for this role. When a Secretariat post becomes available for re-election or if there is a vacant position in the Network's Secretariat, a call for expressions of interest and the terms of reference is shared with the Network's membership, ideally prior to the conclusion of the previous Secretariat's term. The Steering Committee reviews all applications received and, if there is more than one suitable organisation applying for a vacant position, elects a candidate based on the suitability of the applicants to fulfill the terms of reference of the Secretariat and fulfill the Network's objectives.

8.4 Steering Committee

Selected representatives in the Steering Committee serve as ambassadors for the Network in the international climate policy sphere and advocate for the AF Civil Society Network among peers. It is the task of the Steering Committee to pursue the Network's overall sustainability, including financial sustainability, and take correspondent measures.

The Steering Committee reviews the professional competence of representatives from member CSOs that apply to take over the coordination and facilitation of a Regional Hub or the function of the Network's Secretariat. Based on that review, the Steering Committee approves the final selection of Regional Hub Coordinators and organisations serving as the Network's Secretariat.

Composition

The Steering Committee aims to represent the voices and interests of those most vulnerable to climate change including especially marginalized groups in the global South such as women, indigenous peoples, disabled persons, youth and the elderly, etc. It is composed of 12 individuals, each one representing a member organisation of the Network. These individuals are chosen based on their professional competence and their expertise in relevant areas. The composition of the Steering Committee is representative and reflects criteria such as diversity and gender balance, regional balance, expertise in different areas relevant in the field of adaptation finance, representatives from different kind of CSOs, etc. As the AF implements its adaptation action in developing countries, the AF Civil Society Network specifically relies on the expertise and experiences of representatives from developing country CSOs. Thus, at least nine out of the twelve individuals in the Steering Committee are selected among CSO members from the Global South. Each Regional Hub is also represented in the Steering Committee through either a respective Regional Hub Coordinator or another CSO member actively engaged in the respective Regional Hub.

Nomination and Selection Process

The core group of CSOs that have been leading the process of further institutionalizing the AF Civil Society Network and that have been mentioned in the introduction, will form the first Steering Committee, serving a first term during a transition period from 2022-2024. Representatives in the AF Civil Society Network's Steering Committee serve for a term of three years, renewable for one further term. To ensure continuity, ideally only four positions in the Steering Committee are vacated and elected at a time. Thus, the Network annually elects successors for four respective vacant positions in the Steering Committee. If a representative in the Steering Committee steps down from their position before the end of their term, a successor will be selected immediately.

When a position on the Steering Committee becomes vacant, nominations for that position are accepted subject to the nominee's prior consent, accompanied by a motivation outlining the nominee's experience and expertise in relevant fields. Nominations are for individuals, who serve on behalf of an eligible member organisation of the Network. The Network's Secretariat, with assistance from the respective Regional Hub Coordinators, collects

nominations and confirms the eligibility of the nominees before forwarding nominations to the Steering Committee for approval. Regional Hub Coordinators or representatives from organisations serving as the Secretariat of the AF Civil Society Network may also be nominated. The Steering Committee then ideally by consensus, or if necessary by majority, approves the selection of its successors based on the nominees' experiences and expertise and the criteria for composition mentioned in the previous section. In case of a conflict of interest, Steering Committee members should not take part in the selection process.

9. Legal Personality

The AF Civil Society Network is a voluntary international association of civil society organisations guided by a Steering Committee and does not have its own registered legal personality. The day-to-day running of the Network is facilitated by the Network's Secretariat and the Regional Hub Coordinators. The Network's Steering Committee oversees those activities and takes decisions on the Network's direction.

In situations where a legal personality is needed for certain processes within the Network, the AF Civil Society Network selects a legal host among its member organisations that can assume this role, ideally from one of the organisations serving as the Network's Secretariat. This is exercised, for example, when the Network obtains institutional funding that an organisation with legal personality has to manage. In this case the Network's Steering Committee sets up an agreement with the organisation volunteering to assume the responsibility of legal host for the Network. This legal host is subject to annual financial audits.

10. Financing and Sustainability

The Steering Committee develops and annually reviews a **financial sustainability strategy** for the Network and accordingly adopts an **annual action plan**.

The long-term sustainability of the Network is strongly dependent on the **in-kind contributions** of its member CSOs, who offer their non-monetary contributions of time and mental effort. All member CSOs of the Network are encouraged to raise funds as part of their project portfolio that allow them to actively engage in the Network's activities, Regional Hubs and other task forces.

To ensure that many of the smaller CSOs from developing countries can actively engage in the Network's activities, the Network's Steering Committee and Secretariat actively engage in fund-raising activities for the Network. The Network has historically received some project funding from the International Climate Initiative (IKI) that has been channeled through Germanwatch and was mainly used for further institutional strengthening of the Network. However, this funding has been increasingly hard to source. The AF Civil Society Network seeks both **institutional funding** from donors to support general Network activities through a legal host as well as **project/programme grants** that the organisations serving in the

Network's Steering Committee, Secretariat and Regional Hub Coordinators obtain from donors to specifically support the Network's activities.

In the future the AF Civil Society Network will explore other funding options to contribute to financial sustainability and independence of the Network, such as requiring **membership fees** from certain groups of CSO members and generating resources from the **sale of services**, such as its online capacity building courses.

Moreover, the AF Civil Society Network continues to advocate that certain travel costs of developing country CSO representatives that contribute to the 'CSO Dialogues' or as potential 'active observers' during AF Board meetings are covered by the **administrative budget of the AF**.

11. The Network's Coordination, Communication and Articulation

Coordination, Communication and Articulation with member CSOs:

The Network's regular communication with its member CSOs mainly takes place virtually and in a decentralized manner through the Network's Regional Hubs. The Regional Hub Coordinators maintain **regional mailing lists** through which regional exchange is facilitated. Regional exchanges take place in the Regional Hub's working language. In addition to that exchange, Regional Hub Coordinators are encouraged to conduct **virtual meetings** of their Regional Hub at least twice a year.

In addition to the Network's regional exchange, the Network's Secretariat provides periodic **general communication** with all of the Network's members on relevant general updates and information related to the AF or the AF Civil Society Network.

The Network aims to organize **virtual General Meetings** at least every two years, which all of its members are invited to participate in. During those meetings, the Network's Steering Committee, Secretariat and Regional Hub Coordinators share insights with all members on past accomplishments and achievements of the Network as well as discuss future directions of the Network jointly with all members.

The Network's **Policy Task Force** develops policy recommendations for the AF Board. This task force is mainly coordinated through a mailing list and shared documents. All CSO members of the Network are encouraged to join the task force if they have the capacity and are interested in reviewing agenda items for AF Board meetings and other relevant policy issues related to the Fund's work and jointly develop positions and recommendations on behalf of the Network.

From time to time the Network may establish additional **issue working groups** to address particular concerns or take forward identified areas of work. Working groups are led by at least one member of the Network's Steering Committee, a member of the Secretariat and at least one Regional Hub Coordinator, but may include members of the wider Network who are interested in engaging on the respective issue.

Coordination, Communication and Articulation among the Network's Regional Hub Coordinators, Steering Committee and Secretariat:

The Network's Secretariat and all Regional Hub Coordinators have **monthly virtual coordination meetings**, which are joined by the Network's Steering Committee every second month. Regional Hub Coordinators or representatives of the Steering Committee who do not participate in two consecutive meetings, or two in a year, are asked by the Network's Secretariat if their time allows them to continue serving, and are automatically removed from the Steering Committee if they miss more than three meetings in a year.

The Network's Secretariat convenes an **annual strategy workshop** with members of the Network's Steering Committee, all Regional Hub Coordinators and the Network's Secretariat to undertake strategic planning for the Network. If the Network has sufficient financial resources, this annual strategy workshop takes place in person. From time to time the strategy workshops include input from external experts as required.

All meetings listed above must be minuted and minutes made available to the Network's members.

12. Network Representation

From time to time the AF Civil Society Network is invited or chooses to participate in official events such as side-event or other sessions organized by, for example, the AF Secretariat or the UNFCCC. While all the Network's member CSOs are encouraged to share their own experiences with the Network at those events, official representation of the AF Civil Society Network is coordinated by the Network's Secretariat. Whenever feasible, the Network is represented either by Regional Hub Coordinators, representatives of its Steering Committee or the Network's Secretariat. However, active members who have the ability and are well aware of the Network's agreed positions and processes may also be selected to speak on behalf of the Network after approval by the Network's Secretariat. All representatives speaking on behalf of the Network must adhere to the Network's agreed joint positions.

The Network will also from time to time select formal representation for some recurrent positions, such as the advisory groups of the AF Technical Evaluation Reference Group (AF TERG).

Moreover, the AF Civil Society Network hosts the 'CSO Dialogue' with AF Board members which is a standing agenda item during the Fund's Board meetings. The AF Civil Society Network is responsible for organizing the agenda of the 'CSO Dialogue' in consultation with the AF Secretariat. For the first part of the CSO Dialogue, one or two selected CSOs from developing countries usually share independent insights from ongoing AF processes and projects in their country or region. Those insights may be shared by member CSOs of the Network or other stakeholders from civil society that are not part of the Network. The Network's Secretariat collects proposals for insights to be shared on AF processes and projects in countries and regions before each AF Board meeting from the Network's CSO members as well as other external CSO stakeholders on request. After screening those

proposals, the Network's Steering Committee selects up to two relevant proposals based on a list of criteria to be developed, such as linkages to and relevance for other agenda items to be discussed by the AF Board at the respective meeting, etc.

During the second part of the CSO Dialogue, an AF Civil Society Network representative is selected to provide concrete recommendations and suggestions on behalf of civil society for ongoing policy discussions in the Fund's Board. Those concrete recommendations and suggestions on agenda items to be discussed at AF Board meetings reflect the joint position of the Network and are prepared by the Network's task force on policy recommendations for the AF Board (see Section 11 above). This representative should ideally be an active member of this task force, a Regional Hub Coordinator, or a representative of the Network's Secretariat or Steering Committee.

Based on prior experience in hosting the CSO Dialogue and coordinating the contributions for this agenda item on behalf of civil society, the AF Civil Society Network may also establish similar transparent and legitimate election processes for civil society representatives (from within and outside the Network) as required.

13. Regular Review of the Network's Governance

The AF Civil Society Network's Steering Committee and Secretariat will conduct regular reviews of the present governance document and, if necessary, suggest any amendments or additions needed which need to be consulted with the Network's broader membership before being approved. Those reviews should be formally conducted at least every five years or as needed.