

Caribbean Telecommunications Union Network of Women (CTU-NoW) Terms of Reference

BACKGROUND

The Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU) recognises the pivotal role of women in the development of the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector. Despite progress, women remain underrepresented in ICT decision-making and leadership roles across the region.

At its 47th Executive Council meeting (March 2023), the CTU approved the proposal **“Advancing Gender Mainstreaming: Integrating Parity, Equality and Equity into the National ICT Agendas of CTU Member States”**. This was subsequently endorsed at the 28th and 30th General Conferences of Ministers (2023 and 2024).

As a result, Member States resolved to appoint National Focal Points (NFPs) to guide gender mainstreaming in ICT agendas. To support this process, the CTU established the **Network of Women (CTU-NoW)**, a regional mechanism that will also serve as a platform for engagement with global initiatives, including the ITU Network of Women (NoW), the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (CITEL/OAS) and the EU-LAC Network of Women Leaders in Digital Policy.

OBJECTIVES

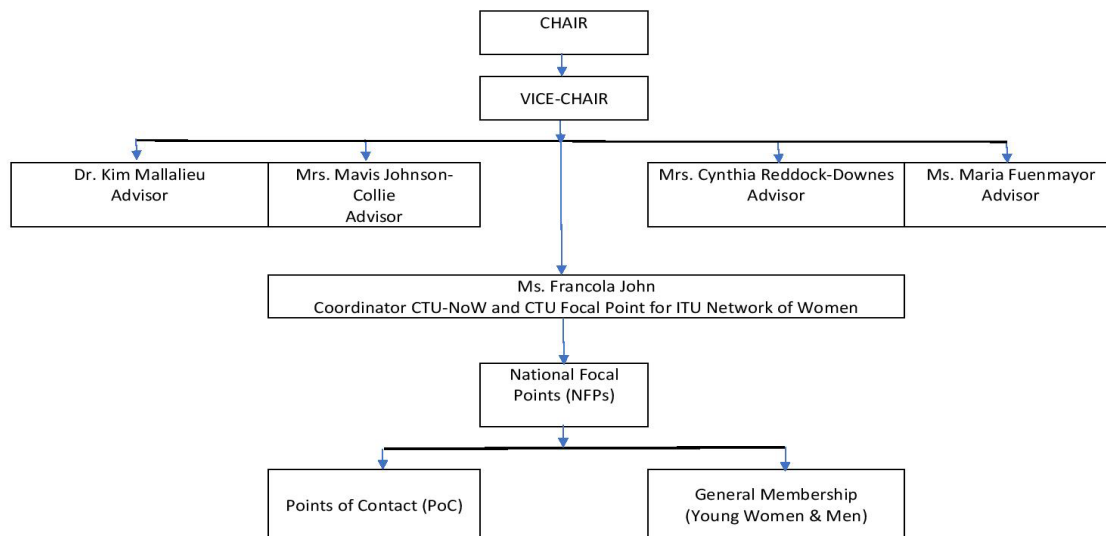
The CTU-NoW seeks to:

- Promote gender mainstreaming in ICT policies and programmes to achieve parity, equity and inclusion across Member States.
- Strengthen women’s leadership in the design, governance and implementation of digital policy.
- Facilitate mentorship, knowledge-exchange and networking opportunities for women and girls in ICT.
- Advocate for regional and international policies that advance women’s participation in digital transformation.
- Provide inputs to CTU decision-making processes and international negotiations (e.g. ITU, CITEL), ensuring gender perspectives are integrated.
- Collaborate on projects and initiatives that expand women’s roles in the ICT ecosystem, from skills development to senior leadership.

COMPOSITION AND GOVERNANCE



Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU) Network of Women Structure



The CTU-NoW will comprise representatives from CTU Member States and affiliated stakeholders. Leadership roles will be held by a Chairman and Vice-Chairman who would provide strategic leadership, represent the Network in international fora and oversees the implementation of its Work Plan.

Process for the selection of Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the CTU-NoW:

1. Appointment by Rotation

- A communique will be sent as an Expression of Interest for self-nomination and to request nomination from members of CTU-NoW
- The 1st Chair and Vice Chair can be recommended by the CTU Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary-General
- The Chairmanship will rotate biennially (every 2 years) among CTU Member States, following an agreed order.
- This ensures that each Member State has the opportunity to assume leadership within a predictable cycle.

2. Consensus-Based Confirmation

- Two months before the end of each term, the CTU Secretariat will notify the next Member State due to assume the Chairmanship.
- That Member State will then nominate its National Focal Point (NFP) to serve as Chairman.
- The nomination will be circulated to all Governmental Members for **confirmation by consensus** at the Annual Meeting of the CTU-NoW at CTU's ICT Week.

3. Appointment of Vice-Chairman

- The Vice-Chairmanship will be assigned to the **next Member State in line** for rotation.
- The nominated Vice-Chairman will work closely with the Chairman to ensure continuity and will normally assume the Chairmanship in the following term.

4. Duration

- Both Chairman and Vice-Chairman serve for **two (2) years**
- In cases where a nominated Member State cannot assume the role, the rotation will pass to the next State in sequence.

5. Roles

- **Chairman:** Provides strategic leadership, chairs meetings and represents CTU-NoW in CTU and international fora.
- **Vice-Chairman:** Supports the Chairman, presides in his/her absence and ensures continuity of initiatives.

6. Accountability

- At the end of the term, the Chairman submits a **Report of Activities and Lessons Learned**.
- This will form part of the Annual Report of CTU-NoW.

TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT

This role will be assumed by the CTU Secretariat through the CTU-NoW Coordinator.

Functions:

- Provide administrative and technical support to the Chairmanship.
- Coordinate activities, meetings and communications.
- Support nomination and confirmation of National Focal Points.
- Serve as focal point for partnerships with ITU, CITELE, EU-LAC and other bodies.

GOVERNMENTAL MEMBERS (NATIONAL FOCAL POINTS)

Each Member State may nominate 1–2 women from ministries, ICT regulatory authorities, or other relevant institutions.

Functions:

- Participate actively in CTU-NoW activities and decision-making.
- Lead initiatives in their areas of expertise.
- Contribute to drafting regional positions and policies including DIAPs/IAPs, from a gender perspective.
- Mentor emerging leaders within the Network.
- Exercise nominating rights in the Network's decisions in international treaty based events (e.g WTSA, WRC, WTDC and PP).

POINTS OF CONTACTS (POC)

Affiliate Members may include:

- Regional and international organisations.
- Civil society and NGOs focused on gender and ICT.
- Academia and research institutions.
- Private sector partners (technology firms, telecom operators).

Functions:

- Support the National Focal Points
- Contribute expertise and perspectives to enrich CTU-NoW's work.
- Participate in knowledge-exchange forums.
- Share good practices and success stories from across the region.

ACTIVITIES AND WORK PLANNING

CTU-NoW activities will include:

- An **annual meeting** during CTU ICT Week followed by quarterly virtual sessions (March, June, September, December).

- Ad hoc meetings in preparation for global policy events (WTDC-25, PP-26, etc.).
- Mentorship and capacity-building programmes for women and girls in ICT.
- Research and surveys on gender gaps in the regional digital sector.
- Policy advocacy at national, regional and international levels.
- Collaborative inputs to CTU, ITU, CITELE and EU-LAC processes.
- Annual Work Plans with clearly defined objectives, timelines and deliverables.

FUNDING

CTU-NoW will mobilise resources through:

- Grants and sponsorships from international organisations, NGOs and the private sector.
- Fundraising activities coordinated by the Network.
- In-kind support from Member States and partners
- Advertising from In the k-NoW quarterly publication

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

A Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework will be developed, including Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure progress. Annual reports will assess outcomes and be circulated to Member States and partners.

COMMUNICATION

Communication channels will include:

- A CTU-NoW WhatsApp group for real-time updates.
- LinkedIn and Facebook social media platforms
- Quarterly newsletter “In the k-NoW”.
- Annual reports to highlight achievements and challenges.
- A digital platform for resources, mentoring and networking.

ADOPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

This revised Terms of Reference will be approved by the Secretary-General and take effect following adoption at the annual meeting of CTU-NoW. Member States commit to immediate implementation of the objectives and activities herein.

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