



## TAP Network Steering Committee 2026-2027 Terms of Reference

### Executive Summary:

- ❖ The TAP Network Steering Committee serves as the primary leadership function of the TAP Network overall, on behalf of its membership. The Steering Committee is expected to fulfill the following roles, *inter alia*:
  - Lead the network on behalf of the membership and provide strategic guidance for the network's work, including developing regular work plans, budgets and oversight of delivery of deliverables towards the TAP Network's grants and funding
  - Represent the TAP Network externally at various opportunities, including events, speaking engagements and other meetings that arise
  - Oversee the work of the TAP Secretariat to ensure that the Secretariat delivers on TAP's overall strategy, and serves as the focal point for overall management of all TAP staff
  - Oversee and liaise with TAP's Fiscal Sponsor to ensure smooth delivery of TAP's work related to relevant grants or budgets taken up by the fiscal sponsor, as well as any other administrative responsibilities
  - Help ensure robust engagement and ownership of all TAP Members and Partners throughout all of TAP's work
  - Ensure transparency of its work with the membership, including through regular touch-points and consultations as TAP's work develops
  
- ❖ While engagement may vary throughout the year, Steering Committee Members should ideally be able to dedicate adequate staff time from their organization to respond to the needs of the TAP Network, and support the TAP Secretariat where needed
- ❖ A total of six organizations will serve on the 2026-2027 Steering Committee, including three from the classification of "global" organizations, and three from the classification of "regional and national" organizations
- ❖ Nominations for the 2026-2027 TAP Network Steering Committee is open to TAP Network "Partners" only. Voting is similarly only open to TAP Network Partners.

For any inquiries about the 2026-2027 TAP Network Steering Committee, please contact the TAP Network Secretariat at [secretariat@tapnetwork2030.org](mailto:secretariat@tapnetwork2030.org)

## **1. Title of the Group**

The group shall be called the “TAP Network Steering Committee”.

## **2. Terms of Reference and Mandate**

### **a. Role of the Steering Committee**

The core functions of the Steering Committee are to:

- Lead the network on behalf of the membership and provide strategic guidance for the network’s work
- Be accountable to the membership, and transparent in its leadership and oversight of the network’s affairs
- Represent the TAP Network externally at various opportunities, including events, speaking engagements and other meetings that arise
- Consult and represent the membership to ensure that the TAP Network
  - Has a strategy and operational plans that reflect the priorities of the members
  - Pursues policy and advocacy positions that reflect the collective views of members
  - Engages and encourages the members in a way that develops a sense of ownership, belonging, responsibility and activism amongst all members
- Oversee and liaise with TAP’s Fiscal Sponsor to ensure that
  - The TAP Network operates within boundaries set by donors and regulatory authorities
  - The Steering Committee and members are aware of, and able to monitor and adjust accordingly, the budgets and management accounts of the network
  - Terms and conditions of employment are appropriate for the level of responsibility, skills and experience required in Secretariat posts
  - Quarterly budgets are approved and ensuring sufficient forecast of upcoming expenditures
- Oversee the work of the TAP Secretariat to
  - Ensure that priorities, strategies and plans are pursued responsibly and effectively
  - Ensure efficient use of the time and resources of the network, including those of staff
  - Support the fiscal sponsor and the TAP Secretariat in taking decisions regarding staffing, including hiring and performance reviews and termination of staff, as needed
  - Review and approve all applications from TAP Network Members, as needed

To deliver these core functions, the Steering Committee will:

### Leadership

- Listen to the membership, to ensure a good understanding by the SC and Secretariat of their priorities;
- Propose and implement policy and advocacy positions reflecting the members' priorities;
- Ensure members have a good understanding of the context for the work of TAP, helping them to contextualize their positions and priorities;
- Build a sense of ownership and belonging amongst the members, by engaging them in decision-making as appropriate, and displaying transparency and accountability in the governance and operational management of the TAP Network's affairs;
- Retain responsibility for political decision making for the network, while developing the policies, processes, criteria and procedures that enable the Director to make operational decisions within these political decisions.<sup>1</sup>

#### Strategies, Plans and Budgets

- Develop, or oversee development of, multi-year strategies for the TAP Network, ensuring member consultation and engagement in the process;
- Develop annual priorities within the strategy, and consider and approve annual plans developed by the Secretariat within them;
- Consider and approve annual budgets associated with the annual plans;
- Periodically review implementation of plans, and management accounts provided by the Fiscal Sponsor, to ensure plans are fulfilled, adapted and achieved within budget;
- Lead in evaluating, or commission evaluations of, the strategy.

#### Member Engagement

- Be responsible, collectively and individually amongst members in their regions, for enabling and encouraging members to join and engage in the operational work of the network;
- Encourage and support the formation of thematic or processed-related Working Groups or Task Forces for specific areas of work of the network, to enable member-leadership of, and/or member-contribution to, the activities of the network;
- Communicate with members in a way that celebrates collective achievements and attributes them to member energy and initiative.

#### Representation

- Ensure the effective and diverse representation, including consideration of gender balance, of the network in events to which it is invited, or chooses to attend;
- Set policies, processes and criteria through which decisions can be made efficiently and effectively about which events or meetings to attend, and who is best placed to represent the network at them, retaining SC responsibility for decisions about high level political events.
- Strengthen the capacity of TAP Members to be able to adequately represent the TAP Network at various opportunities, including speaking opportunities, attendance at

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<sup>1</sup>Eg for decision making about who should attend which events on behalf of the network, SC takes decisions on major political events such as HLPF, and develops criteria and processes that enable the Director to decide on others (and then hold the Director accountable for remaining within them)

meetings and conferences as appropriate.

#### Donor relations and Fundraising

- Develop, approve, and/or amend resourcing strategies for the network;
- Contribute to formulation, and oversee editing, of proposals to donors, to ensure that the network's priorities are reflected in their composition;
- Engage with donors on a strategic level, enabling the Fiscal Sponsor and Director to engage with them on operational and practical levels;
- Lead, and/or support, the development of strategic relations with potential new donors;
- Lead consultations and conversations with members about membership contributions, or membership fees, that enable the network to demonstrate ownership and responsibility to other donors.

#### Liaison with Fiscal Sponsor

- Ensure up-to-date and appropriate contracts are in place for the relationship between the TAP Network and a Fiscal Sponsor;
- Assure itself that the Fiscal Sponsor is taking appropriate responsibility and actions for the legal, contractual, regulatory and financial affairs of the network;
- Liaise with the Fiscal Sponsor to ensure the SC's ability to oversee and make budget choices and expenditures responsibly and within the boundaries set by donors or regulators;
- Liaise with the Fiscal Sponsor to ensure oversight of employees is compliant with contractual agreements between the Fiscal Sponsor and employees; in particular,
  - ☐ In processes for the recruitment and performance appraisal of the Director;
  - ☐ In processes for any disciplinary, grievance or performance measures.

#### Oversight of TAP Secretariat and Director

- As outlined in section 5b of these Terms of Reference, the Steering Committee should identify co-chairs that will help in leading the work of the Steering Committee.
- The Co-Chairs will be accountable to the SC for oversight and line management of the Director, who in turn will be responsible for line management of any other employees in the Secretariat;
- The SC will set policies, processes and procedures within which day-to-day decisions can be taken, enabling the SC to have confidence in its oversight of the Secretariat while ensuring efficiency and effectiveness in day-to-day decision making;
- The Co-Chairs will
  - ☐ Conduct an annual performance appraisal of the Director, setting and reviewing clear objectives for his/her work over the year;
  - ☐ Conduct at least a monthly support and supervision session with the Director, to review progress on the work plan, be supportive in areas of strong achievement and performance, discuss and resolve any constraints including any areas for professional development, clarify any areas of

over or under-consultation and referral of decisions between the Director and Co-Chairs, and plan for appropriate adjustments in communication;

- ☐ Engage with the Director on a day-to-day basis on areas of decision making that require consultation, referral or joint decision-making.
- ☐ Work with the Director or any TAP Secretariat staff to ensure adequate balance of time dedicated to TAP's work, including by promoting full and timely usage of any allocated annual leave days.

### **3. Steering Committee Composition and Selection**

#### **a. Steering Committee Membership**

- Membership of the Steering Committee is open to any organization that is a TAP Network Partner

#### **b. Size and Composition of the Steering Committee**

- A maximum of six organizations can serve on the Steering Committee at one time.
- For the 2026-2027 Steering Committee, there shall be a total of three organizations classified as "Global" organizations, and three organizations classified as "National and Regional" organizations.

#### **c. Anticipated time commitment for Steering Committee Members**

- While engagement may vary throughout the year, Steering Committee Members should ideally be able to dedicate a maximum of 5 hours per week working as part of the TAP Steering Committee.
- Each Steering Committee Member must avail themselves to regular calls, meetings and email communications between the Steering Committee and the Secretariat. The Steering Committee is responsible for outlining a schedule of regular calls, for the TAP Secretariat to subsequently follow and plan on behalf of the Steering Committee and its co-chairs.

#### **d. Steering Committee Selection**

- The selection of the Steering Committee will be decided by a voting process, facilitated by the TAP Network Director and scrutinized by one or more current members of the Steering Committee who are not eligible for re-election. If there is no Steering Committee member in this position, the Steering Committee will appoint a person with no direct interest in the outcome of the election to serve as the Steering Committee scrutinizer.
- The TAP Director will make a call for self-nominations for organizations to serve on the TAP Steering Committee. All candidate organizations will be required to provide detailed descriptions of the nature of their work, why they are applying to be part of the steering committee and their advocacy priorities in the coming year, as well as

- identify an organization's primary focal point and alternate representative. The SC scrutinizer will check that all necessary paperwork has been submitted.
- Once the nomination process has concluded, the TAP Director will provide information about all of the potential candidates to all voting members, with all information submitted by nominating organizations available on the TAP Network website. TAP Partners will then vote on the new members of the Steering Committee.
  - Each voter must be a TAP member, and each voter will get 6 total votes. These votes will be cast based on the number of Steering Committee seats available from the "Global" organizations and "National and Regional" organizations respectively, in order to reach the desired balance and composition of organizations on the Steering Committee, as outlined in section 3b above.
  - Votes will be counted by the Secretariat, and then scrutinized by the SC Scrutinizer to ensure probity.
  - The organizations with the highest total votes in each category, after the voting round concludes, will be the 6 elected members of the new TAP steering committee.
  - When launching ballots for voting to all TAP Partners, the Secretariat should encourage organizations to consider gender equal representation, as well as thematic and geographic balance in their votes.
  - Nominating organizations for the TAP Network Steering Committee shall not engage in any campaigning for supporting their own organization, or any other organizations standing for election via any of the TAP Network platforms. This includes posting such campaigning emails to the TAP Network listserv, any other related listservs.
  - All information submitted by nominated organizations to describe their work and rationale for serving on the Steering Committee will be posted on a dedicated web page on the TAP Network website, to provide an equitable platform for sharing of nominees' information.
  - To help ensure "institutional memory" in transitioning between Steering Committees, all eligible incumbent Steering Committee Members may nominate their organization to serve a second term on the Steering Committee as part of the standard nomination process.
  - If no incumbent Steering Committee members receive the top 3 highest vote totals in each organizational category, the outgoing Steering Committee will identify the highest vote tally from these incumbent organizations, and put this organization forward as the "carryover" organization to the next Steering Committee.

#### **e. Term of Office**

- The term of office for elected Steering Committee members shall be 2 years.
- At the end of their two-year term of office, a Steering Committee member may stand for re-election; after completion of two full terms, totaling 4 years, they must stand down, and may not stand for re-election.
- After an absence from the Steering Committee of at least 2 years, the organization is eligible for election once again.
- Steering Committee Members must inform the group in writing in advance if he/she will miss a meeting or call, at least 24 hours in advance of each occurrence.

- A Steering Committee Member shall be considered to not be actively carrying out their duties if they miss a total of three consecutive calls or meetings, without notifying the rest of the TAP Steering Committee, the co-chairs or the Secretariat of their absence.
- In order to avoid a Steering Committee Member's extended absence from such meetings or calls, each organization on the Steering Committee shall identify a primary and a secondary representative. In the case that the primary representative is unable to attend a meeting or call, the secondary representatives should have the capacity to attend calls on behalf of that organization.
- If a member of the Steering Committee is not actively carrying out his/her duties and responsibilities, their seat shall be opened to another organization. It will be up to other members of the Steering Committee to unanimously decide to replace an existing member on the Steering Committee. In these circumstances, they may set forth a transparent process for replacing this Steering Committee member, and must inform TAP Network Partners of this process in writing.

#### **4. Inaugural Meeting**

- The inaugural meeting of the new Steering Committee shall take place no later than one month after the beginning of its mandate.

#### **5. Rules and Procedure**

##### **a. Methods of Work**

- The Steering Committee shall elect two Co-Chairs to help facilitate the work of the group, with one member from the "Global" organizations and one from the "National and Regional" Organizations categories. These co-chairs will take on an amplified role with the Steering Committee, which may require more time allocated to this role compared to other Steering Committee Members.
- The Co-Chairs, in consultation with the Director, shall be responsible for determining the agenda of each meeting.
- The Steering Committee will have conference calls every two weeks. The Steering Committee or the TAP Director can convene conference calls on an ad hoc basis, as they are required, in between these bi-weekly calls. Steering Committee Members will strive to attend all bi-weekly meetings, but should be expected to attend calls at least once per month.
- The Steering Committee will have at least one face-to-face meeting each year, and more than this if meeting opportunities arise.
- The Steering Committee will strive to reach consensus in its decision-making processes, but if needed, members of the Steering Committee will conduct an open voting process to reach a decision on items if a quorum is reached on a given call or correspondence. A quorum shall be secured if 3 or more organizations are present for a vote, with voting on these issues to be decided with a majority vote of 4 or more of all organizations registering votes on a given topic.
- The Director will take and circulate minutes of meetings, with in particular a clear

record of decisions and actions.

- The Steering Committee may establish sub-committees or working groups if needed.
- Each member of the TAP Network Steering Committee shall select a substitute representative to represent their organization if the focal point cannot attend Steering Committee meetings.

#### **b. Channels of Communication**

- For the sake of transparency, the steering committee will distribute meeting minutes to the entire TAP Network and upload the minutes on the TAP Network website. Members of the TAP Network will have easy access to the contact details of Steering Committee members, and will be periodically reminded of their right to raise issues with the Director or Steering Committee members.

#### **c. Consultation Process**

- The Steering Committee will serve as a main focus for consultations from the TAP Director. The TAP Director may wish to consult with the entire TAP Network on certain issues; however, the Director may also engage the Steering Committee particularly in cases where decisions must be taken, or responses or actions are required in a timely and efficient manner.

### **6. Review of Terms of Reference and Mandate**

- The TAP Network shall review the terms of reference and mandate of the Steering Committee periodically, and at least once every 3 years, taking into account any recommendations from the Steering Committee for modifications.
- The Steering Committee may at any time ask the TAP Network to consider a recommendation for changes to its terms of reference and mandate.