

TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)

Build media and information literacy skills for young leaders, with a focus on women, to facilitate their positive digital engagement in the Philippines

I. BACKGROUND

The Philippines is one of the democratic countries that bestow its citizens full rights to expressions and free speech. Through the years, the media has played an important role in delivering critical information and entertainment to the masses. Prior the rise of social media platforms, the most popular mass communication channels were television and radio. However, these technologies have limited feedback mechanisms between the messenger and the receiver.

The cyber space advanced significantly with the rise of digital technologies. In the early 2000, modernization of communications infrastructure was undertaken in the country with the leadership of telecommunications and media giants. Fast forward to a decade, the Philippines witnessed the shift of viewers patronage and preference from traditional mass media to social media platforms. The availability of accessible and almost free social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and the likes has shrunk geographic spaces and transcended political boundaries and social status.

The power to create and share content is no longer confined to those who have the professional background. Communications has also become multi-dimensional in a sense that receivers of messages can feedback real time and reshare these creations to an unlimited number of audience and viewers. Anyone can have this tool and technology at their disposal at any given time.

This social media revolution has had positive and negative impacts on the lives of Filipino women. The virtual space has become an additional avenue for some women to be heard and to raise their issues. The social media has become their tool to engage in discussions, whether it is about daily subjects or big political issues of the day. Social media has also become a huge market for entertainment and business. Some women have become successful vloggers, like the actresses Ivana Alawi and Alex Gonzaga. Previously unknown personalities have gained overnight fame with a cabal of followers.

Women in small and medium scale businesses and informal economies have also benefitted from these developments. At the height of the lockdowns brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, women have accessed and used this alternative online market to transact business. Even with a contracting economy, online marketplaces provided women with sources of income and livelihood. Engaging in online business has also become an alternative lifesaving refuge for women who lost their regular jobs, as well as for overseas Filipino workers who were repatriated.

There are also gaps, issues and recent developments that have illustrated the gendered realities of the virtual space. Recently, there were attacks on women who spoke on empowerment and key social issues. The space for democratic participation is shrinking, as evidenced by the political attacks on some media institutions and women media personalities.

Incidences of gender-based violence, particularly online sexual exploitation and abuse (OSEA) had spiked during the pandemic. Records show that cases of OSEA in children rose to a staggering 264.6% or 202,605 cases during the imposition of the enhanced community quarantine from March to May 2020.ⁱ In these grim realities are girl-children and young women exploited by family members, in most cases.

For some people, social media has also become a tool to sow division, spread hatred, misinformation and misogyny, which spiked at the height of the lockdowns. We saw spikes in relative search volumes for misogynistic profanity during the time period related to the initial lockdowns. In the Philippines, these searches peaked in the month of May. Misogynist twitter accounts are impacting the attitudes of their followers. We found that these “misogynist users” are causing other users in their Twitter network to become, on average, 21.9% more misogynistic. In addition, discrimination against those who contracted the virus and the health workers attending to them was evident. Tensions also rose during the distribution of relief aid – women, who comprise the majority of aid and humanitarian workers, were attacked while delivering much needed lifesaving packages.

In this context, UN Women in partnership with Mythos Labs, spearheaded a project on digital literacy which targeted young women beginning 2019. These young women were given tools and skills to develop positive messaging and counter online hate speech. To date, UN Women has trained 100 young women, men and gender minorities between the ages 16-25 from Manila and Mindanao.

In response to COVID-19 which increased use of technology, online misogyny and brought on the need for more online trainings, UN Women in collaboration with Ridgeway Information Ltd and Girl Security is working to develop an “e-Learning Module on digital literacy to counter hate speech and promote positive online engagement” to be completed at the end of May 2021. This module targets youth, particularly girls and LGBTI persons, in 6 countries in Asia (Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Thailand, Timor Leste, Indonesia and Philippines) with country specific content and translation into local languages.

Building on this work, UN Women developed a regional project on women, peace and cyber security funded by the Government of Korea and implemented in Southeast Asia with a focus on the Philippines and Viet Nam.

The overarching Theory of Change of this project is the following:

If:

- i. Civil society organizations, particularly women's organizations representing the most marginalized/vulnerable, are able to inform decision making platforms at the regional and international level
- ii. Evidence informed gender-responsive disaster risk reduction and response laws, regulations, policies, plans and budgets are in place and operationalized in line with commitments to gender equality and human rights under the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction and the SDGs under Agenda 2030.
- iii. Civil society organizations, particularly women's organizations representing the most marginalized/vulnerable, are able to inform decision making platforms at the regional and international level

- iv. National and regional platforms are strengthened to inform inclusive and gender-responsive measures to prevent the spread and the negative socio-economic impact of COVID-19 in line with the UN Secretary-General Socio-Economic Framework for COVID-19 Response
- v. Governments, civil society, academia, young bloggers, community leaders or cyber defenders have increased their knowledge and access to information related to gender-responsive cybersecurity as part of national and regional commitments to UNSCR1325

Then: Governments and civil society are able to assess and inform progress in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the SDGs, as well as other global and regional normative frameworks

Because: Strengthened knowledge and information on gender-responsive concerns will advance advocacy and implementation efforts from key actors, and accelerate normative progress.

In this context, it is expected that by March 2022:

- 30 representatives from national and regional non-governmental organizations/academia, and +50 young bloggers, community leaders or cyber defenders will have increased their knowledge of issues pertaining to gender-responsive cybersecurity in Southeast Asia;
- 50 young bloggers, community leaders or cyber defenders, including a minimum of 30 women, will have increased their digital literacy skills to facilitate positive digital engagement in Southeast Asia.
- 2000 women and men will have accesses to information related to digital security threats from a gender perspective in Southeast Asia.

The project is reflected in UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific Output 6.1.5: Governments, civil society (incl. community leaders), academia, young bloggers and cyber defenders have increased access to information and capacity building support to advance gender-responsive cybersecurity, informed by UN Security Council Resolution 1325 commitments; and, in UN Women Philippines 4.2.1: Women are empowered to promote peace, security and resilience in their communities.

UN Women would like to build on that accomplishment and upscale the reach in terms geographic coverage and intersectionalities. To this end, the organization seeks a service provider that can support implementation of key activities from June to December of 2021.

II. OBJECTIVES

Building on with the previous work, UN Women continues its mission to strengthen the capacities of young people, particularly young women and girls, to amplify their voices on critical issues affecting their lives and communities. UN Women also aims to create and provide a medium for them to be heard. Hence, it is crucial that these key population possess the skills, resources and right tools to formulate contents that can be shared with policy makers, practitioners in the field, and key actors who can influence systemic outcomes towards recognition of women's roles and contributions in the cyber space.

In this context, in the Philippines, UN Women will focus its attention on the following activity: Build media and information literacy skills for young leaders, with a focus on women, to facilitate their positive digital engagement”.

More specifically, the service provider is expected to:

- Build the capacity of at least 25 young bloggers, community leaders or cyber defenders to strengthen their knowledge on how to produce positive content online to combat and raise awareness on diverse security threats and to strengthen positive engagement in the digital space.
- The service provider will have access to the regional module on “e-Learning Module on digital literacy to counter hate speech and promote positive online engagement” and may want to adapt it to the needs of the targeted audience in the Philippines.
- Produce at least 5 videos/social media products by young bloggers, community leaders or cyber defenders to be posted on social media to combat and raise awareness on diverse security threats and to strengthen positive engagement in the digital space, viewed by at least 1,000 individuals in the Philippines.
- Identify at least 2 youth community leaders/bloggers/cyber defenders who participated in the above activities to share their experience during the Regional Symposium on gender responsive cyber security.
- Develop a collection of issues raised by young leaders, bloggers, cyber defenders on security threats prevailing in the Philippines.

It is expected that at the end of the engagement, additional 25 young men and women will be added to the 100 individuals which were trained on digital literacy from 2019-2020. They will form the core group of young women advocates who can be tapped to promote the agenda of women’s protection, participation and empowerment in mass and social media spaces. Furthermore, they can form part of a network of young people who will shape the future of cyberspace and digital technology work in the country.

There are contextual hurdles however that the service provider must be sensitive of. Paramount is the need for balance on expression and protection. While this work encourages young bloggers and influencers to have their voices on key issues, these must be within the limits of the domestic laws governing rights to self-expression and free speech. The supplier is expected to adopt a strategy that will encourage the target youth beneficiaries to freely express while upholding the ethics of responsible content creation and information sharing. Moreover, the supplier shall institute in its methodologies, measures that protects the individuals to be involved in this project from political attacks and backlash.

The supplier is expected to collaborate with diverse groups of stakeholders. While the immediate deliverable is the capacity building for young women and the development of a training module, this pioneering work in the space of gender and cybersecurity in the Philippines shall advance UN Women’s work on women’s leadership in peace and security – be this in physical or virtual communities.

III. SPECIFIC TASKS, EXPECTED DELIVERABLES, AND TIMELINE

To build the information and digital capacity of young women in the Philippines, the supplier is expected to lead these two key activities:

- Build the capacity of at least 25 young bloggers, community leaders or cyber defenders to strengthen their knowledge on how to produce positive content online to combat and raise awareness on diverse security threats and to strengthen positive engagement in the digital space.
- The service provider will have access to the regional module on “e-Learning Module on digital literacy to counter hate speech and promote positive online engagement” and may want to adapt it to the needs of the targeted audience in the Philippines.
- Produce at least 5 videos/social media products by young bloggers, community leaders or cyber defenders to be posted on social media to combat and raise awareness on diverse security threats and to strengthen positive engagement in the digital space, viewed by at least 1,000 individuals in the Philippines.
- Identify at least 2 youth community leaders/bloggers/cyber defenders who participated in the above activities to share their experience during the Regional Symposium on gender responsive cybersecurity.
- Develop a collection of issues raised by young leaders, bloggers, cyber defenders on security threats prevailing in the Philippines.

The following table illustrates the specific deliverables within a specific timeframe:

No.	Deliverables	Activities	Target date	Payment
1	Workplan	Develop a workplan with methodology and strategy for the project, aligned with the activities and timelines set forth in this TOR;	15 July 2021	20%
2	Training module	Localize the training e-module on gender and cybersecurity which was already produced by UN Women Regional Asia and the Pacific and ensure that this tool incorporates additional sessions on video production and that these adaptation are appropriate in the Philippine contexts and sensitivities.	5 September 2021	30%

3	Training report with documentation and list of participants with pre and post surveys to assess the increase in knowledge and skills and packaged 5 best videos/ social media products from the series of trainings	Conduct three trainings (one each for Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao). Identify one representative from each of these trainings to be mentored further as Philippine representatives in the planned Regional Symposium on Gender Responsive Cyber security.	15 October 2021	40%
4	Monitoring report and collection of issues	Support the dissemination of videos/social media products by young bloggers, community leaders or cyber defenders and monitor its reach and reaction online. Develop a collection of issues raised by young leaders, bloggers, cyber defenders on security threats prevailing in the Philippines	15 December 2021	10%

Timeline and Location:

The total duration of the engagement is for a period of 6 months, from July 2021 to December 2021. The selected service provider can be based anywhere in the Philippines.

IV. QUALIFICATIONS OF THE ORGANIZATION

- Must be a legally registered entity.
- Have at least three years of programming with strong background on promoting women and gender equality in the mass media, cyberspace, and other social media platforms. In addition, they should have prior experience in developing training materials focusing on digital literacy or delivering training on gender and cybersecurity and content creation.
- Have proven advocacy works promoting women’s protection, participation, and empowerment in digital technology, STEM, and ICT.
- Have its own website and/or other official social media platforms.

V. TEAM COMPOSITION/QUALIFICATIONS

The team composition is expected to have at least a team leader and a minimum of two support staff.

Desired qualifications of the team leader:

1. Completed Master’s degree in mass communications, social sciences, peace and security, gender studies, or information technology;
2. Possess at least 5 years of relevant experience in the areas of peace and security, information and communications technology or mass media;

3. Demonstrated knowledge and experience in developing tools such as training modules, policy and advocacy papers;
4. Experience in gender programming is a must; and
5. Fluent in Filipino and English and with excellent writing skills.

Desired qualifications of team members

1. Completed a secondary degree;
2. Minimum of 2 years of relevant experience working in the areas of peace and security, information technology or mass media;
3. Has proven experience in coordination, events organizing, training design and facilitation, and administrative and logistical preparations; and
4. Fluent in Filipino and English with excellent writing skills.

VI. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARTIES

UN Women will provide technical guidance as needed. The supplier is required to bear all the related costs e.g. travel-related costs, logistics and administrative costs incurred for operating hotlines, activities, etc. and work independently to successfully achieve the end results.

The service provider will be responsible for the following costs:

- Professional fees must be quoted in the lumpsum amount per deliverable. The lumpsum amount must be detailed on how the professional fee of each team member is calculated.
- Indirect costs such as printing, stationeries, communications in relation to the scope of work of services must be included in the financial proposal.
- Travel costs for technical team members of service providers: all envisaged travel costs such as most direct and most economic local travel, living allowance, terminal expenses, etc. must be included in the financial proposal. In the case of unforeseeable travel, payment of travel costs including tickets, lodging and terminal expenses shall be agreed upon, between UN Women and Service provider, prior to travel and will be reimbursed upon Contract Amendment.
- Logistics arrangement for operating hotlines, trainings for staff, volunteers and interpreters, etc.
- All costs related to the development of the report including logistics arrangements for data collection, field visits, interviews, etc.

VII. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTING OBLIGATIONS

The supplier will report to the Women Peace and Security Team whose main focal points are the Governance Peace and Security Programme Specialist in the Regional office for Asia and the Pacific, as well as the National Programme Officer. The said UN Women officers will be responsible in the quality assurance of the deliverables.

VIII. SUBMISSION PACKAGE

1. Organizational Profile.
2. CVs of the Team Leader and Team Members.
3. Technical Proposal showing the workplan, strategies and activities.
4. Financial proposal/ quotation with breakdown of budget lines as per required deliverables. The quotation shall specify a lump sum amount breaking down the professional fee for each deliverable, travel and other related cost.
5. Three names of references, including one from a non-profit, government, academe or UN agency from contracts performed within the last two years.

¹ Data from Save the Children Philippines. Accessed at <https://reliefweb.int/report/philippines/online-sexual-abuse-children-rising-amid-covid-19-pandemic-save-children>