



Terms of Reference for Gender and Child Focal Points

National Commission for Women and Children
Royal Government of Bhutan
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Royal Government of Bhutan
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National Commission for Women and Children



Foreword

The National Commission for Women and Children (NCWC) as the apex body mandated to promote gender equality and safeguard the rights and wellbeing of women and children, recognises that institutional mechanisms within the civil service play an important role in translating national commitments into tangible outcomes. Effective mainstreaming of gender equality and children's wellbeing cannot be achieved in isolation, but must be embedded within planning, policy formulation, budgeting, implementation, and monitoring processes across all sectors and levels of governance.

The designation of Planning Officers as Gender and Child Focal Points (GCFPs) represents a strategic shift toward institutionalizing these priorities within the core functions of government. By anchoring the GCFP role within the planning cadre, the Royal Government of Bhutan seeks to strengthen accountability, coherence, and coordination, while ensuring that development initiatives remain inclusive, responsive and aligned with national legal and policy frameworks.

Accordingly, the Terms of Reference (ToR) serve as a comprehensive framework to guide GCFPs in their duties. By clearly articulating roles and institutional expectations, this document provides the necessary tools to foster gender-responsive and child-sensitive governance, ultimately reinforcing the pillars of Good Governance and the pursuit of Gross National Happiness.

Kesang Deki

(Chairperson)

21 January 2026

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

In line with the national commitment to gender equality and child protection, as enshrined in the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan (2008), and reinforced by key legislation such as the Child Care and Protection Act of Bhutan (2011), the Child Adoption Act of Bhutan (2012), and the Domestic Violence Prevention Act of Bhutan (2013), the National Commission for Women and Children serves as the central coordinating authority for promoting and safeguarding the rights of women and children.

To effectively operationalize its role as a mainstreaming, coordinating regulatory and monitoring body, the National Commission for Women and Children formally assigns the Chief Planning Officer of the Ministries the role of Gender and Child Focal Points (GCFPs) across all levels of governance. This strategic shift aims to institutionalize gender mainstreaming and integrate the promotion and safeguarding of children's wellbeing across planning, policy development, budgeting, and monitoring in all sectors. In this regard, the Royal Civil Service Commission vide letter No.*RCSC/HRMD/7/2018/5087* dated 1 May 2018 has allocated five percent of their time with respect to their primary responsibility to carry forward the GCFP roles and responsibilities.

The Chief Planning Officers will serve as vital links to ensure that gender equality and children's wellbeing are embedded in the framework of national and local development planning and implementation.

This Terms of Reference (ToR) outlines the roles, responsibilities, and strategic importance of GCFPs in institutionalizing inclusive and responsive development practices across government, private, and civil society actors.

1.2 Rationale

The designation of Chief Planning Officers as Gender and Child Focal Points is intended to firmly anchor gender equality and children's wellbeing within institutional planning and decision-making systems. By positioning the GCFP function at the senior planning level, the NCWC seeks to strengthen institutional accountability, enhance coherence with national gender

equality and child protection priorities, and ensure sustained and systematic integration of inclusive and responsive development practices across sectors.

1.3 Purpose

To lead, coordinate and advocate for the integration of gender equality and children's wellbeing in the organizational policies, programmes and processes, ensuring that development efforts are inclusive and aligned with the mandates of the NCWC.

2. Role of Gender and Child Focal Point

2.1 Definition

The Gender and Child Focal Point (GCFP) is a designated senior institutional representative, specifically the Chief Planning Officer, responsible for leading, coordinating and facilitating the integration of gender equality and children's wellbeing considerations into organizational policies, plans, programmes, budgets, and monitoring systems.

The GCFP serves as the primary liaison between the institution and the Secretariat to the NCWC on matters related to gender equality and children's wellbeing, while supporting institutional compliance with national legal, policy, and reporting frameworks.

2.2 Designation

- Chief Planning Officer (CPO)
- In the absence of a Chief Planning Officer, the Head of the Agency shall designate a Planning Officer, Programme Officer, or another suitably qualified official to perform the functions of the GCFP.

2.3 Responsibilities

1. Mainstream gender equality and children's wellbeing across policies, plans, programs, and budgets within their respective institutions.
2. Coordinate with the Women and Children Division, Secretariat to the NCWC and relevant stakeholders to ensure that gender and child perspectives are aligned with national legal frameworks, policy mandates, and strategic priorities. Liaise with internal

and external partners including CSOs, private sectors, development partners and government agencies to strengthen collaborative efforts.

3. Facilitate capacity-building initiatives to promote gender equality and children's wellbeing approaches within their organizations.
4. Promote inclusive participation by advocating for the needs of women and children to be reflected in decision-making processes.
5. Conduct monitoring, evaluation, and accountability activities to ensure that gender equality and children's wellbeing concerns are systematically integrated into institutional programmes, plans, and processes.
6. Maintain gender/sex-disaggregated data on the Gender Equality Monitoring System (GEMS) and provide annual updates to the Secretariat to the NCWC, to facilitate continuous oversight of gender and child-related initiatives across all organizational levels.
7. Participate in technical and facilitation support and targeted capacity-building training provided by the NCWC to enhance the effective execution of their roles and responsibilities.

3. Other Provisions

3.1 Reporting Line

1. The GCFP shall maintain functional coordination with, and report to the Secretariat to the NCWC on tasks related to gender and children's wellbeing.

3.2 Adjournment

1. The outgoing GCFP, whether due to transfer, retirement, or any other reason, shall conduct a formal and complete handing-taking process with the incoming GCFP including all data records and documentation. The outgoing GCFP shall formally communicate with the Secretariat to the NCWC.
2. The outgoing GCFP shall hand over proceedings related to GEMS, ensuring that all data and information within the system are updated.

3.3 Revision Clause

The ToR shall be subject to periodic review to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness. It shall be reviewed at least once every 3 years, or earlier as required to reflect changes in policy, legal frameworks, institutional mandates or operational requirements. Any proposed revisions shall be reviewed and endorsed by the NCWC to reflect evolving mandates, priorities, and operational needs.