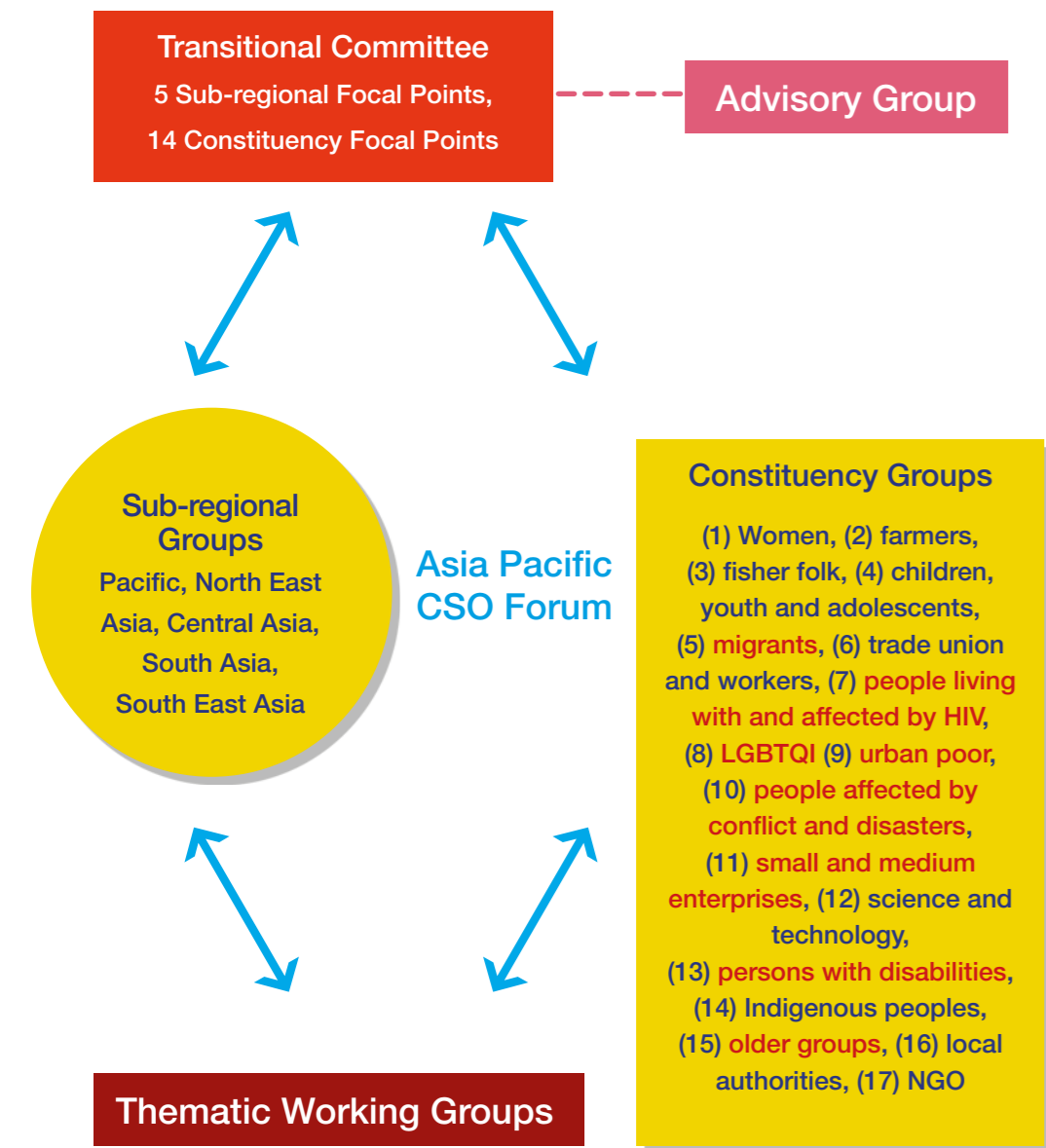


AP-RCEM Interim Structure 2014-2015



How to be a part of the RCEM and Why

Becoming a part of the RCEM is crucial in promoting democratic rights, advancing ownership over international agreements, advancing human rights and sustainable development. Your participation will ensure all constituencies and sub-regions voices of the Asia Pacific region are heard in intergovernmental processes. Engaging with the RCEM is very simple.

Join RCEM Constituency groups now by filling out the form on our website: www.asiapacificrcem.org/ to start engaging with Asia Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism (AP-RCEM). You will be added to the AP-RCEM list-serve: asiapacificrcem@googlegroups.com and will be directed to constituency focal point.

Bring your local and national issues to the intergovernmental processes in the regional and global levels!

Your voices matter.

Contact us

aprcem@asiapacificrcem.org

Visit RCEM website: www.asiapacificrcem.org



People-Centered Process and Promoting Accountability: Asia Pacific Regional Civil Society Engagement Mechanism (AP-RCEM)



AP-RCEM is a civil society platform aimed to enable stronger cross constituency coordination and ensure that voices of all sub-regions of Asia Pacific are heard in intergovernmental processes in regional and global level. The platform is initiated, owned and driven by the CSOs, and has been set up under the auspices of UN-ESCAP and seeks to engage with UN agencies and Member States on the Post-2015 as well as other development related issues/processes.

Why do we need a CSO engagement mechanism?

Civil society engagement with UN processes is critical in that it shapes normative standards, encourages people-centered processes and promotes accountability. Particularly it's critical in the inter-governmental processes which include claiming and promoting democratic rights, advancing ownership over international agreements, advancing human rights and sustainable development.

Since the very founding of the UN, the importance of civil society engagement was recognized and has been referenced in multiple UN documents.

"The Economic and Social Council may make suitable arrangements for consulting with non-governmental organizations which are concerned with matters within its competence. Such arrangements may be made with international organizations and, where appropriate, with national organizations after consultation with the member of the United Nations concerned."

United Nations Charter, Article 71

Thousands of civil society organizations have accreditation with the UN Economic and Social Council and engage in various processes including sustainable development processes. The Rio Earth Summit in 1992 produced 'Agenda 21' where **9 major groups** were identified that would play a significant role in driving sustainable development (Women, Children and Youth, Indigenous Peoples, Non Governmental Organizations, Local Authorities, Workers and Trade Unions, Business and Industry, Scientific and Technological Community, Farmers). Civil society was organized to input into the implementing Commission – the UN Commission on Sustainable Development.

While the major groups' engagement mechanism effectively manages diversity and formalizes civil society participation, it could reduce the scope and role of CSO engagement with the UN system and centralise it to Northern-based organisations. Critical messages could be diluted if we place business, industry in the same space. Civil society engagement in regional processes has been sporadic and primarily thematic. **"We need to be more strategic and more involved."**

With the growing appreciation towards the importance of the Asia Pacific region, it is imperative that we strengthen civil society engagement across all levels and also increase regional perspectives at international levels.



What makes AP-RCEM unique?



As result of a bottom-up and inclusive process, RCEM is initiated, designed and owned by CSOs in Asia and Pacific. It is an open, inclusive and flexible mechanism tailored to reach the broadest number of CSOs in the region, **harness the voices of grassroots and peoples' movements to advance a more just, equitable and sustainable model of development justice.** It provides platform to share information and build capacities of CSOs for better and more effective engagement.

Taking into account the diversity of the Asia and the Pacific region, and the limitation of existing institutional structures for civil society engagement, AP-RCEM goes beyond the existing **nine** major groups. We work within the structure of **five** sub-regional groupings (South East Asia, South Asia, East Asia, Central Asia and the Pacific) and 17 constituencies which includes the current **nine** major groups (1) women, (2) NGO, (3) science and technology, (4) indigenous peoples, (5) local authorities, (6) trade union and workers, (7) youth, children and adolescents, (8) farmers, (9) small medium enterprise (to replace business) and **eight** additional constituencies (10) fisher folks, (11) people with disabilities, (12) people

living and affected by HIV, (13) older groups, (14) LGBTIQ, (15) people displaced by conflicts and disasters, (16) migrants, and (17) urban poor.

The aim of the RCEM is to enable stronger cross constituency coordination and ensure that voices of all sub-regions of Asia Pacific are heard in intergovernmental processes. Thus, 60% of the world's population in the Asia Pacific region will be better represented by civil society and social movements in global negotiations due in part to the RCEM. It will result in having a stronger, coordinated and more effective voice in regional processes.

At the UNESCAP APFSD, the RCEM coordinates the interventions and engagement of CSOs in the various plenary and roundtable sessions as well as for side events and informal dialogues. The positive feedback from many UN bodies and member states that recognized the substantial contributions made by civil society at the APFSD was a very encouraging preview of the RCEM's role and contribution to the sustainable development agenda for the region and beyond.

Advancing the call for Development Justice

Since 2013, civil society in Asia and Pacific has called for a new development model, a model of **Development Justice.** Development justice is a transformative framework for development that aims to reduce inequalities of wealth, power, and resources between countries, between rich and poor, and between men and women and other social groups. It places people – that is the majority poor and the marginalized – at the heart of development. It is a paradigm that recognizes the importance of sustaining the Earth's planetary boundaries over sustaining profits. Development justice requires past injustices to be remedied and new, just, sustainable and democratic systems to be developed.



With the RCEM, civil society can better advance the collective call for **development justice** - an agenda that calls for five transformative shifts of **redistributive justice, economic justice, social and gender justice, environmental justice and accountability to peoples.**



How we came together at the global and regional levels



Asia Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism (AP-RCEM) grew from discussions and meetings in 2012 to 2014 among civil societies participating in regional and international UN processes around sustainable development. These meetings focused on creating a comprehensive and structured process to facilitate and coordinate Asia-Pacific CSO engagement on sustainable development with the entire United Nations system, be it in regional and global levels.

At the Asia Pacific Civil Society Forum on Sustainable Development held in May 2014 in Bangkok, Thailand, representatives of civil society agreed to formally establish AP-RCEM and form a transitional committee that would help set up the RCEM. The committees were appointed to represent constituencies and sub regions.

What have we gained so far? From 75 organisations in 2014, AP-RCEM now has more than 350- strong organisations coming from various constituencies and sub-regions. We have shown our presence and engaged in various forums on sustainable development, both regionally and globally. We've made real efforts to elevate the opportunities and amplify the voices of Asia Pacific CSOs - particularly grassroots organisations and peoples' movement to influence the ongoing policy development. We have also facilitated outreach as well as consolidate and articulate positions of CSOs in Asia Pacific regions.

We are hoping that these bottom-up initiatives of AP-RCEM could inspire the other regions to set up their own CSO engagement mechanism!



DEVELOPMENT JUSTICE

RE-DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE

ECONOMIC JUSTICE

SOCIAL AND GENDER JUSTICE

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

ACCOUNTABILITY TO PEOPLES

The world we want.



AP-RCEM
Asia-Pacific Regional CSO
Engagement Mechanism

Asia-Pacific Regional CSO
Engagement Mechanism

