

# How to work with the United Nations?



This set of 'How To...' leaflets is a tool produced by WAGGGS which can be used by National Organizations wishing to form or to develop relations with the United Nations and its specialized agencies. The information in the leaflets is basic. If you want to find out more detailed information, please contact the relevant UN agency either in your country, or via the international headquarters.

This toolkit should be read in conjunction with **WAGGGS Policy and Guidelines on Relationship to Society**.

Further assistance is available from the Communications Team at the World Bureau, and the WAGGGS Representatives at the UN.

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## **World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts**

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# 1 Why work with the United Nations?



The United Nations has maintained relations with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) representing the concerns of civil society throughout the world ever since it was founded in 1945. In many aspects of civil society, NGOs are playing an increasingly important role in forming policies that are changing the world today.

## What can the United Nations do for Member Organizations?

- The United Nations and its programmes, agencies and funds may be able to provide Member Organizations with money, expertise, resources and status.
- The past few years have witnessed a change in attitude, approaches and policies of the UN system with regard to relations with NGOs and their participation in the work of the UN. Measures to strengthen cooperation with NGOs are being taken across the entire UN system and in many areas of its activity. Member Organizations should make the most of this change in attitudes and ensure that they are the partner of choice for UN agencies that have initiatives for girls and young women.
- UN partners can make a project or a programme more successful by giving it a higher profile.
- A UN partner may bring a different perspective to a project or programme.
- A UN agency, fund or programme may have structures or resources already in place which can help to deliver a programme more effectively and efficiently.
- The NGO world is under-resourced and under-funded. Where there are limited funds and resources it can be more efficient to combine efforts with other partners to ensure that Girl Guides and Girl Scouts get the best service. A UN fund may be able to fund a joint project.

- An organization working with the UN has more credibility and status. Therefore you may find it easier to establish other partnerships or funding sources.
- UN agencies, programmes and funds often have great technical knowledge and experience of programme delivery .
- Working with the UN may even help a Member Organization to recruit and retain members. Potential members may join an organization that can give them international opportunities with the UN.

## What can Member Organizations do for the United Nations?

- Member Organizations are a valuable resource to the UN because they have access to girls and young women at a very local level.
- NGOs influence decisions made by governments and diplomats and provide a voice for causes that would otherwise go unheard.
- The UN maintains close relations with thousands of NGOs around the world because NGOs play an important role in interactions between civil society and government.
- Member Organizations can give credibility and status to UN projects
- By working with the UN, Member Organizations can help the international community to achieve agreed goals which advance the status of girls and young women.

## 2 What is the United Nations?



The UN is an organization of independent countries, or Member States. These countries have joined together to work for world peace and to eradicate poverty and injustice. The UN was formed on 24 October 1945 with 51 Member countries. The UN has 190 Member States (2002 figures).

The UN has four main purposes:

- To keep peace throughout the world
- To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for human rights and self-determination
- To help improve living conditions of poor people and encourage respect for each other's rights and freedoms
- To be a centre for helping nations achieve these goals

The UN headquarters is located in New York. The United Nations has major offices in Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi.

The United Nations also consists of a variety of **funds, programmes and other units** that are financed either through the UN's regular budget, from voluntary contributions from Member States, or from a combination of both.

These include: Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), United Nations Centre for Human Settlement (Habitat), UN Development Programme (UNDP), UN International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), UN Environment Programme (UNEP), UN Population Fund (UNFPA), Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), and the World Food Programme (WFP).

The UN system also comprises a number of **specialized agencies**, which include the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) based in Rome, International Labour Organization (ILO) based in Geneva, UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) based in Paris, and the World Health Organization (WHO) based in Geneva.

# Major Components of the United Nations

## Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

The Economic and Social Council was established to promote

- higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development
- international cultural and educational cooperation
- universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion.

WAGGGS has General Consultative Status with ECOSOC (see section 4).

The Economic and Social Council coordinates the work of the 14 UN specialized agencies, 10 functional Commissions and 5 regional Commissions.

WAGGGS works closely with some of the Regional Commissions through its own regional structures.

## Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

The FAO aims to raise levels of nutrition and standards of living for people; the production of all food and agricultural products; bettering the condition of rural populations; and thus contributing towards an expanding world economy and ensuring humanity's freedom from hunger.

**WAGGGS' Representatives at the UN in Rome work closely with FAO.**

**WAGGGS and FAO launched the FAO/WAGGGS Nutrition Award in 1995.**

Office for External Relations

**FAO**

Viale delle Terme di Caracalla

00100 Rome

Italy

Tel: +39 06 5225 57051

Fax: +39 06 5705 3152

Website: [www.fao.org](http://www.fao.org)

## International Labour Organization (ILO)

The ILO's goals are to improve working and living conditions, promote and realize human rights at work, and enhance employment opportunities.

### **WAGGGS Representatives at the UN in Geneva attend meetings and consultations held by the ILO.**

Director, Bureau for External Relations and Partnerships

**ILO**

4 Route des Morillons

CH 1211 Geneva 22

Switzerland

Tel +41 22 799 6111

Fax +41 22 798 8685

## United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (ODCCP)

At present, the ODCCP consists of the UN International Drug Control Programme and the Centre for International Crime Prevention. ODCCP was established to enable the organization to focus on and enhance its capacity to address the interrelated issues of drug control, crime prevention and international terrorism.

The active involvement of civil society in finding effective solutions to the drug problem, particularly in demand reduction, is of paramount importance. Young people are often involved as partners in the development of prevention activities.

### **The WAGGGS Representatives at the UN in Vienna attend ODCCP meetings.**

Chief, External Relations Unit

**ODCCP**

Vienna International Centre

PO Box 500

A 1400 Vienna

Austria

Tel +43 1 26060 4266

Fax +43 1 26060 5866

Website: [www.undcp.org](http://www.undcp.org)

## Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

The OHCHR acts as the focal point for all human rights activities of the UN. The High Commissioner is charged with promoting and protecting the enjoyment by all of their civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights.

Most of the OHCHR's relations with NGOs are channelled through the NGO Unit of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, or through the NGO Section of the Department of Public Information. NGOs that have consultative status with ECOSOC sit as observers at public meetings of the Commission on Human Rights. OHCHR's approach is to be as inclusive as possible. It also works with NGOs that do not have consultative status.

**Former High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, received a WAGGGS World Citizenship Award in 1997. WAGGGS Representatives at the UN in Geneva closely follow and intervene in OHCHR activities.**

### OHCHR

Palais des Nations  
CH 1211 Geneva 10  
Switzerland  
Tel +41 22 917 9000  
Fax +41 22 917 9012  
Website: [www.unhchr.ch](http://www.unhchr.ch)

## Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)

Addressing the challenge of HIV/AIDS head on, the United Nations took an innovative approach in 1996 by drawing six organizations together in a joint programme. The six original cosponsors of UNAIDS – UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank – were joined later by UNDCP and ILO. UNAIDS leads, and supports the prevention of the transmission of HIV, providing care and support, reducing the vulnerability of individuals and communities to HIV/AIDS, and alleviating the impact of the epidemic.

In developing countries UNAIDS operates mainly through the country based staff of its eight cosponsors. The UNAIDS secretariat makes funding available for selected AIDS initiatives in developing countries

The UNAIDS cosponsors have established 132 UN Theme Groups on HIV/AIDS covering 155 countries. Most theme groups have set up working groups that involve donors, NGOs and groups of people living with HIV/AIDS.

The secretariat keeps NGOs informed of new developments and important information that they can pass on to their own constituencies and networks around the world. The UNAIDS secretariat also provides direct technical assistance to NGOs. The secretariat also promotes the involvement of global and regional NGOs that do not yet work on AIDS but have the potential to do so.

**WAGGGS works with UNAIDS on its WAGGGS/UNAIDS/ICASO Badge Curriculum. WAGGGS Representatives at the UN are very involved with UNAIDS in Geneva.**

Senior NGO Liaison Officer

**UNAIDS**

20 avenue Appia

CH 1211 Geneva 27

Switzerland

Tel: +41 22 791 3666

Fax: +41 22 791 4179

[www.unaids.org](http://www.unaids.org)

### **UN Centre for Human Settlements (HABITAT/UNCHS)**

Habitat provides sustainable human settlements development through capacity building, knowledge creation and the strengthening of partnerships between governments and civil society.

The centre has three regional offices: Rio de Janeiro, covering Latin America and the Caribbean; Fukuoka (Japan), covering Asia and the Pacific; and Nairobi, covering Africa and the Arab states.

**WAGGGS Representatives at the UN in Nairobi work with HABITAT when appropriate.**

### **UN Office at Nairobi**

PO Box 30030

Nairobi

Kenya

Tel: +254 2 621 234

Fax: +254 2 624 266

[www.unchs.org](http://www.unchs.org)

### **UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service (NGLS)**

NGLS was established to promote greater mutual understanding, dialogue and cooperation between the UN system and NGOs in the fields of development, education, information and policy advocacy on global development issues.

NGLS is not a membership organization, but works with the NGO community on an informal basis. NGLS produces excellent publications which provide essential information on UN events and NGO activities.

**All WAGGGS Representatives at the UN work closely with NGLS.**

### **NGLS**

Palais des Nations

CH 1211 Geneva 10

Switzerland

Tel +41 22 917 2076

Fax +41 22 917 0049

Email: [npls@unctad.org](mailto:npls@unctad.org)

### **UN Development Programme (UNDP)**

The UNDP is the world's largest and most broadly based multilateral organization for grant-based technical cooperation. It works to build developing countries' capacities by promoting and supporting efforts to alleviate poverty, manage natural resources, improve governance and create opportunities for people to improve their lives. Since 1990 UNDP has encouraged discussion on how to put people at the centre of development efforts through its Human Development Report. This report gives statistics and information about the state of the world's people.

UNDP is committed to enhancing women's ability to realize their full potential and take their rightful place in society. UNDP is the leading agency in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, which were adopted by the General Assembly in 2000. These goals include specific targets for the education and literacy for girls.

UNDP's collaboration with civil society organizations (CSOs) has expanded and diversified significantly. UNDP has promoted global small-grants programmes to create dialogue between CSOs, government and UNDP as well as to build the capacity of community-based initiatives to reduce poverty.

### **WAGGGS Representatives at the UN in New York work with UNDP.**

Civil Society and Participation Programme

Bureau for Development

**UNDP**

Room DC1-2458

1 UN Plaza

New York NY 10017

USA

Tel: +1 212 906 5000

Fax: +1 212 906 5001

[www.undp.org](http://www.undp.org)

### **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)**

The mission of UNEP is to provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment so that people can improve their quality of life without harming the lives of future generations.

### **WAGGGS and UNEP launched the joint Water of Life project. The WAGGGS Representatives at the UN in Nairobi work closely with UNEP.**

Civil Society Relations Officer

Division of Environmental Policy Development and Law

**UNEP**

PO Box 30552

Nairobi, Kenya

Tel: +254 2 621 234

Fax: +254 2 226 886

[www.unep.org](http://www.unep.org)

## United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

UNESCO was created to build lasting world peace founded on the intellectual and moral solidarity of humankind. UNESCO's activities are divided into four major programme areas: education; science; culture; and communications, as well as covering a number of cross-disciplinary areas such as environment, population and development, culture of peace, and action in favour of women, youth, Africa and least developed countries.

UNESCO promotes not only formal educational systems, but also informal and non-formal education. It also emphasizes that any approach to education should be geared to full development of the individual throughout life.

Research on the situation of today's young people is encouraged.

In its medium-term strategy for 1996 to 2001, UNESCO has renewed its commitment to contribute to peace, democracy and development.

UNESCO's Education for All focuses on girls' education.

The Paris team of WAGGGS' Representatives at the UN are very involved with UNESCO and are looking at possible project partnerships with WAGGGS.

**A UNESCO Collective Consultation with NGOs working on women, girls and gender equality was created in 1997. The WAGGGS Representatives at UNESCO in Paris work very closely with this consultation group.**

Chief, Section of International Non-governmental  
Organizations and Foundations

**UNESCO**

7 Place de Fontenoy

F 75700 Paris

France

Tel: +33 1 45 68 1000

Fax: +33 1 45 67 1690

[www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org)

## United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

The United Nations Population Fund is the largest internationally funded source that helps developing countries to address their reproductive health needs and population issues, and raises awareness of these issues in all countries.

Following the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994, UNFPA enhanced NGO/civil society participation at all levels. Proposals for NGO projects at the national level must be submitted to the UNFPA representative in that country.

UNFPA identifies and fosters new and innovative partnerships with NGOs worldwide. UNFPA has actively supported participation of NGOs, particularly women's NGOs and youth groups, during the preparations for and at UN conferences and summits.

UNFPA believes that NGOs can play a critical role in the area of advocacy.

**WAGGGS worked with UNFPA on its Health of Adolescent Refugees Project. The New York team of WAGGGS Representatives at the UN work closely with UNFPA.**

Director, Information and External Relations Division

**UNFPA**

220 East 42nd Street

New York NY 10017

USA

Tel: +1 212 297 5000

Fax: +1 212 370 0201

[www.unfpa.org](http://www.unfpa.org)

## Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

UNHCR provides international protection to refugees and promotes permanent solutions for their problems. UNHCR's primary purpose is to safeguard the rights and well-being of refugees.

UNHCR works with NGOs in the implementation of its assistance programmes and in the promotion of refugee rights. NGOs that provide support and services to refugees are encouraged to coordinate with UNHCR to ensure efficient allocation of resources. UNHCR gives priority to working with national and international

NGOs with local affiliates, since they are generally better acquainted with the local situation.

**WAGGGS worked with UNHCR on the 1993 Peace Packs project. WAGGGS Representatives at the UN in Geneva follow UNHCR's activities closely.**

NGO Coordinator  
Division of Communication and Information  
**UNHCR**  
CP 2500  
CH 1211 Geneva 2  
Switzerland  
Tel: +41 22 739 8111  
Fax: +41 22 739 7377  
[www.unhcr.ch](http://www.unhcr.ch)

### **United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)**

UNICEF is a leading global advocate for protecting and promoting the human rights of children. The organization works with many partners to meet children's basic needs, protect children from abuse and exploitation, and to expand their opportunities. It is the only UN organization dedicated exclusively to children.

UNICEF's rights-based approach to programming and the new Global Movement for Children includes global, regional and national partners.

**WAGGGS is closely involved in the UNICEF-led Global Movement for Children and is a member of the NGO Committee on UNICEF. The New York team of WAGGGS Representatives at the UN works very closely with UNICEF.**

Senior Advisor  
Programme Partnerships, Gender, Partnership and Participation Section  
Programme Division  
**UNICEF**  
3 UN Plaza  
New York NY 10017  
USA  
Tel: +1 212 326 7000  
Fax: +1 212 888 7454  
[www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org)

## United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

UNIFEM is dedicated to supporting women's political and economic empowerment in developing countries. It works with the UN, government and NGO partners to mainstream gender issues in all levels of development planning and practice.

UNIFEM funds women's projects in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Commonwealth of Independent States and Central and Eastern Europe. UNIFEM provides leadership and support to advance the status of women worldwide and to eliminate violence against women.

### **WAGGGS Representatives at the UN in New York attend UNIFEM events and are part of the NGO Committee on UNIFEM**

Public Affairs Specialist

**UNIFEM**

304 E 45th Street

15th Floor

New York

NY 10017

USA

Tel: +1 212 906 6400

Fax: +1 212 906 6705

[www.unifem.undp.org](http://www.unifem.undp.org)

## United Nations Volunteers (UNV)

UNV is a volunteer-based programme, placing mid-career women and men into community based development projects; humanitarian aid; and the promotion of human rights and democracy.

To promote its programmes and recruitment, UNV relies on the major volunteer agencies, particularly in industrialized countries. Development NGOs and the UNV have as a common goal the eradication of poverty.

**WAGGGS was very involved in the International Year of Volunteers 2001, dedicating World Thinking Day and other activities to the year.**

Public Information Officer

**UNV**

Postfach 260111

D 53153 Bonn

Germany

Tel: +49 228 815 2000

Fax: +49 228 815 2001

[www.unv.org](http://www.unv.org)

### **World Food Programme (WFP)**

The World Food Programme is the United Nation's food aid agency and is the largest multilateral food aid organization in the world. Hunger afflicts one out of every seven people on earth.

Partnerships with NGOs are essential to help the most needy people in the poorest countries, as flexibility and innovative approaches are needed where local administrative structures are weak. NGOs are largely involved in the distribution and monitoring of food in large-scale emergencies.

In addition to emergency, rehabilitation and development projects supported at the field level, WFP sometimes supports NGO development education, awareness and advocacy activities in developed countries that deal with the programme's concerns.

**WAGGGS Representatives at the UN in Rome work closely with WFP. Former Executive Director of the World Food Programme, Catherine Bertini, received the World Citizenship Award in March 2002.**

### **World Food Programme**

Via Cesare Giulio Viola 68

Parco dei Medici

00148 Rome

Italy

Tel: +39 06 6513-1

Fax: +39 06 6590 – 632

[www.wfp.org](http://www.wfp.org)

## World Health Organization (WHO)

WHO's objective is that all people should be healthy. Health is defined as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity. WHO gives worldwide guidance in the field of health; helps Governments to strengthen the planning, management and evaluation of national health programmes; and develops health technology, information and standards. For WHO, health is a fundamental human right and a worldwide social goal.

The World Health Organization has provided support for WAGGGS Initiative on the Prevention of Adolescent Pregnancy.

### **The Geneva team of WAGGGS Representatives at the UN attend WHO meetings and consultations.**

Director, Department of External Cooperation and Partnerships

**WHO**

Avenue Appia

CH 1211

Geneva 27

Switzerland

Tel: +41 22 791 2111

Fax: +41 22 791 3111

[www.who.ch](http://www.who.ch)

## Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations (CONGO)

The mission of CONGO is to "ensure that NGOs in consultative status enjoy the fullest opportunities and all appropriate facilities for performing their consultative functions". CONGO ensures that NGOs have access to the UN and encourages the UN to have improved NGO participation.

CONGO assists a variety of NGOs to promote their common aim of supporting the UN Charter; it works on behalf of NGOs in consultative status to improve their relationship and cooperation with the UN; and it provides a forum for NGOs to come together to study, plan, support and act in relation to the principles of the UN.

Full membership of CONGO is open to all NGOs which have consultative status with the Economic and Social Council. Associate membership is open to NGOs that have a formal relationship with the other entities of the UN.

**WAGGGS is currently on the Board of CONGO. WAGGGS Representatives at the UN in Geneva, New York and Vienna all contribute to CONGO's work.**

#### **CONGO Offices**

CONGO

777 UN Plaza

8th Floor

New York

NY 10017

USA

Tel: +1 212 986 8557

Fax: +1 212 986 0821

CONGO

Case Postale 50

CH 1211

Geneva 20

Switzerland

Tel: +41 22 917 1881

Fax: +41 22 917 0373

[www.congo.org](http://www.congo.org)

# 3 How does WAGGGS work with the United Nations?



## WAGGGS Representatives at the United Nations

Over 30 volunteers represent WAGGGS at the UN in six major UN cities – Geneva, Nairobi, Paris, New York, Vienna and Rome.

The role of the UN Teams is to represent WAGGGS and its interests at UN meetings and during UN activities. Members of each team attend relevant UN meetings and events, and speak on behalf of girls and young women. Representatives to the UN are also members of NGO Committees ensuring that items of concern are added to the UN's agenda.

A team coordinator leads each team of WAGGGS Representatives at the UN. There is at least one young woman in each of the teams.

If you would like to find out more about the teams or if you are interested in joining a team and you are based in one of the UN cities, please contact the Communications team, World Bureau.

## General Consultative Status

### ECOSOC

WAGGGS has General Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council at the United Nations. (see section 2)

### Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations

WAGGGS is a member of the Board of the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations (CONGO) in Consultative Relationship with ECOSOC. (see section 2)

## Awards

### FAO/WAGGGS Nutrition Award

In 1995 the Food and Agriculture Organization presented WAGGGS with the FAO/WAGGGS' Nutrition Award. Member Organizations can win a medal by demonstrating that they have implemented an outstanding project in the field of

food and nutrition improvement and education. The awarding of the Medal highlights the nutrition-related work undertaken by Girl Guides and Girl Scouts and promotes activities to end hunger and malnutrition.

## Projects

### Health of Adolescent Refugees Project (HARP)

In 1997 WAGGGS and Family Health International (FHI) launched HARP with funding from UNFPA. The project was originally set up in Egypt, Uganda and Zambia. The project aims to improve the health, particularly the reproductive health, of adolescent girls and young women refugees by using Girl Guiding/Girl Scouting methods and health education activities. The project continues in Zambia and Uganda with funding from other sources.

### AIDS Badge Curriculum

WAGGGS has joined with UNAIDS and the International Council of AIDS Service Organizations (ICASO) to launch the AIDS Badge Curriculum. Girl Guides and Girl Scouts can earn a badge when they have completed activities on AIDS prevention; education to fight discrimination; and/or on care and support for those living with HIV/AIDS in the community and in Girl Guide/Girl Scout units.

### Global Movement for Children

WAGGGS works with UNICEF on the Global Movement for Children and many of its members have signed up to the Global Movement for Children "Say Yes" campaign. ([www.gmfc.org](http://www.gmfc.org))

WAGGGS has been very involved in the UN Special Session on Children which took place in May 2002.

The Special Session is an important follow-up to the 1990 World Summit for Children. WAGGGS has played a lead role in the preparatory meetings leading up to the Special Session on Children. Young members have spoken on panels, in seminars and workshops, and at press conferences. Some young members have even attended the Special Session as part of their government delegations.

# 4 How can Member Organizations work with the United Nations?



Here are some examples of ways in which Member Organizations can work with the UN.

## Formal Relations

Member Organizations may be able to gain consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) which will give them certain privileges, outlined below. Read more about ECOSOC in section 2.

Status Specific Privileges		
General	Special	Roster
<p><b>Able</b> to consult with officers from the Secretariat on matters of interest to the NGO.</p> <p><b>Allowed</b> to make oral statements based on recommendations by the Committee.</p> <p><b>Allowed</b> to submit brief written statements.</p> <p><b>May</b> designate representatives to sit at meetings of ECOSOC and its subsidiaries.</p> <p><b>Have</b> the right to place items on the agendas of ECOSOC and its subsidiaries.</p>	<p><b>Able</b> to consult with officers from the Secretariat on matters of interest to the NGO.</p> <p><b>Allowed</b> to make oral statements based on recommendations by the Committee.</p> <p><b>Allowed</b> to submit brief written statements.</p> <p><b>May</b> designate representatives to sit at meetings of ECOSOC and its subsidiaries.</p>	<p><b>Able</b> to consult with officers from the Secretariat on matters of interest to the NGO.</p> <p><b>May</b> designate representatives to attend meetings in the NGOs field of competence.</p>

It is very useful to have consultative status with ECOSOC because not only does it give access to UN meetings and documentation, but it also gives Member Organizations status when approaching external organizations or individuals. The procedure for obtaining consultative status can be time-consuming but it does give excellent access to the United Nations and to its affiliates.

## Application Process

To begin the process of applying for consultative status, an organization must address a letter of intent to the NGO Section of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA). The letter should be on letterhead and signed by the Chief Commissioner or equivalent.

DESA NGO Section  
1 UN Plaza, Room DC1-1480  
New York NY10017, USA  
Tel +1 212 963 8652  
Fax +1 212 963 9248

Once the NGO Section receives the letter of intent, it will mail the application package to the organization. Completed applications must be received by June 1 of the year preceding the year the NGO wants to be considered for recommendation by the Committee. When the Committee has made its recommendation, ECOSOC will consider the application at its annual meeting each July.

Among other requirements for obtaining consultative status with the UN,

- (i) the applying organization's activities must be relevant to the work of ECOSOC;
- (ii) the NGO must have a democratic decision-making mechanism;
- (iii) the NGO must have been in existence for at least 2 years.

## Department of Public Information (DPI)

Association with DPI gives Member Organizations access to information about UN activities.

NGOs associated with DPI are expected to devote a portion of their information programmes to promoting knowledge of the UN principles and activities. They are expected to keep the DPI/NGO Section informed of their activities by regularly providing samples of their information materials relating to the work of the UN.

Some of the criteria for association with DPI:

- NGO must be of recognized national or international standing
- NGO should have an established continuous record of work for a minimum of three years
- NGO must be able to conduct effective information programmes with its members by publishing newsletter, organizing conferences, seminars etc

An NGO that meets the established criteria should send an official letter from its headquarters to the Chief of the NGO Section, DPI, expressing interest in association with DPI and stating reasons why the organization seeks such association. The letter should be accompanied by at least six samples of recent information material relevant to the UN.

WAGGGS Representatives in New York work closely with DPI and with the NGO/DPI Executive Committee which sponsors important NGO briefings, NGO training sessions and an annual Conference.

Chief, DPI/NGO Section  
**Department of Public Information**  
Room S-1070 L, UN  
New York, NY 10017  
Tel: (001) 212 963 6842  
Fax: (001) 212 963 6914

## Working Relations

UN specialized agencies, programmes and funds work closely with NGOs and civil society.

UN agencies, programmes and funds which operate at country level can provide expertise, funding and staffing for projects and programmes run by Member Organizations. They can also be a source of travel grants to attend important UN meetings. In return Member Organizations can help to raise money for UN funds and therefore help the UN's projects. UN funds which may be particularly relevant are UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), UN Population Fund (UNFPA), and United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

Many Member Organizations already work closely with the UN, particularly with UNICEF and with UNHCR.

Member Organizations can adapt a global WAGGGS project and work with a UN agency on it at a national level. For example, a national UNAIDS office may wish to work with a Member Organization on the AIDS Badge Curriculum.

## CASE STUDY

The **Girl Scouts of Japan** started working with the national office for UNHCR to promote the Peace Pack Project, back in 1993.

The partnership with UNHCR has become stronger each year. When they first started working in partnership with UNHCR, the **Girl Scouts of Japan** tried to visit the national office as often as possible to maintain good contact. They also arranged for Mrs Sadako Ogata (UN High Commissioner for Refugees) to give a lecture to their Association. UNHCR even produced a film about the project.

**Girl Scouts of Japan** are now sending Peace Packs to Afghan children in Pakistan through a contact with UNHCR in Pakistan, made through the Japan UNHCR Office. The UNHCR Pakistan office makes sure that the contents of the peace packs are appropriate for the Afghan refugees. UNHCR and **Girl Scouts of Japan** have built up relations over the years by sending invitations to each other to attend events. UNHCR officers have attended several **Girl Scouts of Japan** events.

**Girl Scouts of Japan** representatives who went to Pakistan to deliver peace packs in 2001 reported back to say that the refugees are starting Girl Scouting in their camps. The refugee community saw what benefits Girl Guiding/Girl Scouting could bring to refugee young women.

The Peace Pack project has generated much media interest.

## Girlguiding UK

This is an example of how Member Organizations can help the UN – and be rewarded themselves in the process

The Sri Lanka Primary Healthcare project came about in 1984 when the then International Commissioner saw a television programme which inspired her to contact UNICEF in London.

The project began as a fundraising activity which was based on educational activities that appeared in *Guiding Magazine*. £125,000 was raised.

In 1986 a small group of Guides went out to Sri Lanka to see how their money was being used. The UNICEF team in Sri Lanka took the Guides to homes, schools, clinics and hospitals. The Guides even ran a three-day training! By the end of the trip, the group decided that this was an experience that they would like many more young women in the Association to enjoy. The Sri Lanka project was developed further. The Guides continue to work with the Girl Guides of Sri Lanka.

## Conferences and Meetings

Recent UN conferences and meetings have been relevant to the work of WAGGGS:

- The World Summit on Sustainable Development, UN Special Session on Children, the UN Special Session on HIV/AIDS, Beijing +5 (Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the 21st Century), the World Food Summit, the World Summit on Social Development, and the UNESCO Symposium on Peace are just a few examples of UN meetings which reflect and endorse WAGGGS Mission and Goals.
- WAGGGS has had an influential presence in each of these conferences.
- Young women have attended meetings; WAGGGS representatives have given presentations, led workshops, made statements and lobbied governments.

The WAGGGS' Representatives at the UN usually attend events that take place in Vienna, Geneva, Nairobi, New York, Paris and Rome. If a major UN event is taking place in one of these cities, WAGGGS will try to ensure that young members from different countries attend. The Member Organization based in that city is also invited to attend.

WAGGGS sends information about events taking place in different countries to the relevant Member Organization. The Member Organization is encouraged to send a young person to the event on behalf of WAGGGS.

A representative selected by the appropriate WAGGGS Region usually attends regional UN meetings.

Member Organizations can find out about events taking place at the UN by looking at the UN website ([www.un.org](http://www.un.org)), the WAGGGS website ([www.wagggsworld.org](http://www.wagggsworld.org)), the CONGO website ([www.congo.org](http://www.congo.org)) or by reading Our World News.

The Member Organization should be registered with the relevant secretariat for the UN event, or it should contact its national government...

Member Organizations can find out about UN events which are taking place by:

- Obtaining Consultative Status with ECOSOC
- Looking out for information sent by WAGGGS on relevant UN events taking place in its country
- Checking the UN website
- Subscribing to UN publications (see section 8)

The more visible WAGGGS representatives are at UN meetings, the more likely the needs and rights of girls and young women will be addressed. The WAGGGS' Mission will be fulfilled.

## Disseminate/provide information

The United Nations is a great source of statistics and research-based information, which may be useful for Member Organizations. The centre used to lobby governments, raise funds, or encourage support. For example, the national UNICEF office may have national statistics about girls' education. If girls are not receiving the same levels of education as boys a Member Organization has a good case for raising funds.

## CASE STUDY

Representatives from the [Association Nationale des Guides d'Haiti](#) were included on the government delegation at the Special Session on HIV/AIDS meeting.

The [Girl Scouts Section of Nepal Scouts](#) represented WAGGGS at a major millennial global youth meeting, held in Kathmandu.

[Guides Australia](#), the [Kenya Girl Guides Association](#) and the [Federation du Scoutisme Feminin de Madagascar](#) have all had representatives on the government delegation for the Special Session on Children.

A Member Organization can find out what publications the national offices of UN agencies and programmes have by contacting the publications department or the Public Information Officer.

National offices of the UN may also benefit from the information that Member Organizations can provide them. Often NGOs are consulted on country reports to the UN, for instance on the implementation of the Convention of the Rights of the Child. Member Organizations should join an NGO Committee so that it can provide input for such reports. If a Member Organization knows of an issue that affects girls and young women and isn't on the national agenda, it should contact the relevant UN agency/programme. Member Organizations should send representatives to attend an event and speak on behalf of girls and young women or it can lobby its government delegation attending an international UN event.

## Memorandum of Understanding

A Memorandum of Understanding is a written agreement between two organizations, agreeing to fulfil certain objectives and outlining areas of responsibility. WAGGGS has signed Memoranda of Understanding with the UN agencies with which it has specific projects or partnerships. A Memorandum of Understanding is particularly useful if a joint project is to run over a long period of time, so that new staff members or volunteers can find out what the terms of agreement were at the start of the partnership. Whilst binding the two organizations in an informal agreement, a memorandum of understanding is not a contract or a legal document.

A Member Organization might want to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with a UN agency agreeing to simply promote the work of the UN agency in its own programmes; or it might want to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with a UN agency which is funding a specific project.

## Awards

### **FAO/WAGGGS Nutrition Award**

In 1996 WAGGGS and the Food and Agriculture Organization joined together to launch the FAO/WAGGGS Nutrition Award to support the triennial theme, Building World Citizenship – the WAGGGS Perspective.

A special FAO/WAGGGS Nutrition Award medal is available for all Member Organizations who submit an application form for an outstanding project in the field of food and nutrition improvement and education. The medal and a certificate should be presented to the winning project on World Food Day (16 October each year).

To qualify for a Medal, the Girl Guide/Girl Scout group should have completed or be working on a project on food and nutrition education or improvement.

To apply, please contact the World Bureau.

### **Other Awards**

UN agencies and programmes have their own awards schemes, for which many Member Organizations could be eligible. Member Organizations should contact the UN agency or programme which relates most closely to a particular project or activity that they are involved in and find out if they have any awards for which they can apply.

For example, the UN Environment Programme runs a Global 500 Youth Environment Award each year to recognize the contribution made by young people who have distinguished themselves in the field of environmental protection.

# 5 How to contact the United Nations in your country?



Section 2 provides the contact details for many of the major UN agencies, programmes and funds which are of special interest to WAGGGS.

## 9 steps to contacting the UN

1. Contact the NGO Liaison Officer at the international headquarters if you do not have any national contacts
2. Ask for a directory or contact details of national country offices for the UN agency/fund/programme which you are interested in.
3. Decide what you want out of the UN body. You need to think of a concrete proposal for a partnership – for instance, a project for which you would like funding; a conference/seminar for which you would like a speaker/facilitator; a UN project for which you would like to raise funds.
4. Write an introductory letter, explaining who you are and outlining why you are contacting the UN body. Ask the World Bureau if you need a letter of support from WAGGGS (see model letter in Section 8)
5. Mention in your letter that you are a member of WAGGGS, which has General Consultative Status with ECOSOC and which has many major projects with UN agencies
6. If WAGGGS is already involved with the UN body at international level, inform the national office of this fact. Find out what projects WAGGGS is involved in by reading Our World News, monthly mailings and by looking at the WAGGGS' website
7. Send some supporting information about your National Organization and about WAGGGS, e.g. leaflets, annual reports
8. In your letter suggest that you visit the UN body's national office, or invite them to visit you. Tell them that you will call them in the near future to fix a date
9. When successful let the World Bureau know which UN agency you are working with.

**Read WAGGGS Policy and Guidelines on Relationship to Society for further information about making contact with external organizations. If you wish to apply for Consultative Status with ECOSOC follow the processes outlined in Section 3.**

### **Making contact with the UN is made easier by:**

- Knowing what you want and how you intend to achieve it
- Having a strong and recognized image and working a number of community projects
- Aiming for partnerships which don't always involve money
- Promoting a project/idea supported by WAGGGS

### **Difficulties faced when working with the UN:**

- Bureaucracy and long timelines
- Establishing what is required by each different UN agency when proposing a partnership

## CASE STUDY

### Advice from the Kenya Girl Guides Association

Ask for a UN directory. Look at the subjects that interest you. Then make an appointment with the liaison officer. They will usually give you an appointment quickly. Present your Member Organization at the meeting, and talk about what WAGGGS does with the UN. UN agencies are very grateful for grassroots projects. Kenya Girl Guides Association made this kind of contact with UNICEF. UNICEF then came to visit the Kenya Girl Guides Association headquarters and gave a training of trainers, talking to Girl Guides and facilitating their working groups.

Kenya Girl Guides Association used this way of approaching the UN when it worked on the peace packs with UNHCR. The Kenya Girl Guides Association is now very well known among the UN agencies based in Nairobi so that UNIFEM and FAO invite representatives from KGGG to their workshops and events.

KGGG also runs a Peace Festival once a year to which all national and international headquarters of UN agencies and programmes are invited. This is a great way of finding out more about the UN and also enabling the UN to find out more about us.

### Federação de Bandeirantes do Brasil

Through hard work, the Federação de Bandeirantes do Brasil has managed to formalize partnerships with many NGOs and Governmental Organizations.

In the last year, as part of our Action Plan, we have been trying to strengthen our image as an organization focusing on themes related to children and youth, such as food and nutrition, AIDS, citizenship and adolescence etc.

We have received several prizes and recognition which reinforce our image and make it easier to access the media and governmental and non-governmental organizations.

It was because of our improved image that we were able to contact the Brazilian offices of UNESCO, UNICEF and UNAIDS.

The Association has established some partnership policies:

- Our first step is to analyse the possible partner's goals and purpose which must be similar to the same goals, values and principles as the Guiding Movement
- Secondly, the UN body must have similar ways of work so that something concrete can be carried out jointly
- Thirdly, the Association develops concrete projects with objectives and common interests
- Finally, the Association takes the development of the partnership very seriously, with clear goals, aims and a good reporting mechanism in place.

# 6 How to make partnership proposals to the United Nations?



1. Prepare well.
2. Make sure that your proposal matches the strategic plan and the mandate of the relevant UN agency/programme.
3. Make sure that the UN body that you are approaching is relevant to your partnership needs
4. Find out about the UN agency/programme/fund that you are thinking of approaching.
5. Come up with a good and original partnership proposal
6. Consider your partnership proposal carefully and document the outline of the proposal
7. Write an introductory letter to the Chief Executive of the UN body
8. Sell your Member Organization!
9. Promote all the projects and programmes that you already do
10. Explain WAGGGS and its involvement with the UN
11. You may need to provide budgets for the proposed partnership – make sure that your requirements are realistic and that you won't find that you run out of money half way through
12. Regularly update your UN partner on progress made, and invite UN staff to your events

Remember your unique selling points (USP):

- Your Member Organization belongs to the largest international voluntary organization for girls and young women in the world
- Many UN agencies focus on the needs of girls and young women. Your Member Organization has a membership of girls and young women who can benefit from partnership with the UN

- The World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts is already working in partnership with many UN agencies at world level.
- WAGGGS and your Member Organization are credible and established NGOs.

## Making formal proposals

- Many proposals, particularly funding proposals require a formal application form. These forms are available from the relevant UN office. If you're not sure what grants/partnerships a UN agency/programme offers, contact the national office and ask for a list of funding and partnership opportunities available to NGOs.
- Formal proposal applications usually require evidence that you are a legitimate charity, and that your finances are in order. Even if you are writing an informal proposal, it is recommended that you include an annual report (if you have produced one) and a financial report for the previous year.

# 7 Useful Documents



**Guidelines – Association between United Nations and Non-Governmental Organizations** Contact the NGO Section of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)

**Go Between** (NGLS bimonthly newsletter on UN/NGO news)

**NGLS Roundup** (an overview of UN world conferences, meetings and other major events)  
(Contact NGLS to receive copies of its publications)

**The United Nations System Directory** (Contact Department of Public Information, New York for copies)

**The NGLS Handbook** (Contact NGLS for copies)

**Basic Facts about the UN** (Contact the Department of Public Information, New York for copies)

**Directory of the National Commissions for UNESCO** (Contact Division of National Commissions for UNESCO for copies)

**A Guide to Information at the United Nations** (Contact the Department of Public Information, New York for copies)

**FAO Policy and Strategy for Cooperation with Non-Governmental and Civil Society Organizations** (Contact FAO for copies)

**WAGGGS Policy and Guidelines on Relationship to Society** (Contact World Bureau for copies)

**Our World News** (Contact World Bureau for copies)

WAGGGS Website [www.wagggsworld.org](http://www.wagggsworld.org)

UN Website [www.un.org](http://www.un.org)

# 8 Letter of Introduction



## Sample letter of introduction

If you would like a letter of introduction to be sent by WAGGGS to your UN contacts, please contact the Communications Department at the World Bureau.

### To whom it may concern

**[Name of National Association]** is one of 144 Member Organizations which belongs to the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts. The World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS) has over 10 million members around the world. WAGGGS has been associated with the UN for over 50 years and in 2000, it gained General Consultative Status with ECOSOC.

In order to achieve its Mission which is to enable girls and young women to develop their fullest potential as responsible citizens of the world, WAGGGS works closely with a number of UN agencies. In 1993 WAGGGS launched a Peace Pack Project with UNHCR. In 1999, WAGGGS launched its AIDS Badge Curriculum with UNAIDS. UNFPA funded the WAGGGS and Family Health International Health of Adolescent Refugees Project in Zambia, Uganda and Egypt. WAGGGS works closely with UNICEF on the follow up to the Special Session on Children works with WHO on its initiative on the prevention of adolescent pregnancy.

WAGGGS awards have been presented to several individual leaders of UN agencies – including Dr Nafis Sadik, Mary Robinson and Catherine Bertini. WAGGGS volunteers work with the UN on a daily basis in New York, Geneva, Rome, Vienna, Paris and Nairobi.

**[Name of National Association]** would like to work with [name of UN agency] on a mutually beneficial project. **[Name of National Association]** provides essential non-formal education programmes and opportunities for decision-making and leadership development to girls and young women throughout the country.

Yours faithfully

LESLEY BULMAN  
Director