NET4U Asia Charter

1. Background & Context

Despite global efforts, transnational organized crime (TOC) persists and continues to grow. According to the Global Organized Crime Index 2023, Asia ranks highest among all continents in terms of criminality, with a score of 5.47 out of 10. The growth of TOC across Asia is increasingly disrupting communities and disproportionately affecting vulnerable groups, including migrants, women, children, and marginalized populations.

Across the region, TOC poses an evolving threat to peace, development, security, and human rights. From trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants to cybercrime, crimes affecting the environment, and corruption; organized criminal networks increasingly exploit borders, vulnerable communities, and weak institutions. These crimes not only harm individuals but also erode trust in governance, undermine the rule of law, and weaken collective progress toward sustainable development.

The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and its Protocols provide a comprehensive international framework to address these challenges. However, effective implementation demands more than just government action. Civil society, academia, youth, and the private sector all have vital roles to play in shaping responses, holding institutions accountable, supporting victims, and fostering innovative, rights-based solutions.

Recognizing this, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) launched the Stakeholder Engagement initiative for the UNTOC and its Review Mechanism (SE4U) initiative to facilitate greater inclusion of non-governmental actors in UNTOC processes. As part of this effort, NET4U Asia, the Asia Civil Society Regional Network for UNTOC Implementation, was formed in during a regional SE4U workshop held in Putrajaya, Malaysia between 15-17 January, 2025. .

2. Who We Are

NET4U Asia is a member-driven, regional platform that brings together civil society organizations, academic institutions, youth, private sector actors, and experts across Asia to connect, coordinate, and amplify their efforts in countering transnational organized crime.

The Network builds on a shared belief: “It takes a network to defeat a network.” Through collaboration, learning, and strategic advocacy, NET4U Asia adopts whole-of-society approaches to combat organized crime and strengthens regional solidarity to ensure inclusive and effective implementation of the UNTOC and its Protocols.

3. Vision

NET4U Asia envisions an inclusive, participatory, and people-centered Asia where non-governmental stakeholders are empowered to prevent and respond to TOC. Through solidarity and shared knowledge, we work toward a region where communities are resilient, justice is accessible, and civil society is a central actor in shaping anti-crime strategies.

4. Mission

NET4U Asia exists to:

- Coordinate and support civil society and non-governmental contributions to the implementation of the UNTOC and related instruments.
- Facilitate meaningful engagement of members in regional and global UNTOC processes, including the Review Mechanism, Constructive Dialogues, and Conferences of the Parties (COPs).
- Strengthen the voice and visibility of non-governmental stakeholders in shaping anti-crime responses.
- Promote peer learning and shared solutions across borders and sectors.
- Collaborate with governments and international organizations in transparent, rights-based, and constructive ways.

5. Our Goals

NET4U Asia works to:

- Enhance coordination and connectivity among civil society working on UNTOC-related issues.
- Build capacity through shared knowledge and peer-to-peer learning.
- Promote joint advocacy on urgent issues like trafficking, corruption, cybercrime, and environmental crimes.
- Bridge national and regional priorities through dialogue with National Civil Society Alliances.
- Support inclusive and evidence-based responses to organized crime.

6. Our Core Values

NET4U Asia is built upon the following shared principles:

- Inclusivity: Embracing diversity and ensuring representation from all communities.
- Participation: Fostering leadership and ownership by all members.
- People-Centered Approaches: Upholding dignity, human rights, and well-being.
- Solidarity: Strengthening trust and unity across borders.
- Transparency: Operating with openness and mutual respect.

- Gender Equality: Ensuring representation of women and gender-diverse people.
- Youth Engagement: Supporting youth leadership and innovation.
- Collaborative Learning: Sharing tools, knowledge, and experiences.
- Independence: Acting autonomously while engaging constructively.

7. Advancing Youth and Gender Leadership

NET4U Asia recognizes the critical role of youth and gender-diverse individuals in innovating and transforming responses to organized crime. The Network creates space for their voices by:

- Encouraging leadership in working groups and governance bodies;
- Promoting mentorship and intergenerational exchange;
- Facilitating participation in national, regional, and global UNTOC processes.

8. Governance & Coordination

The operational structure, membership processes, decision-making systems, and coordination mechanisms of NET4U Asia are outlined in a separate foundational document, the 'NET4U Asia Operational Framework'