CRVPF CLUSTER PARTNERSHIP GUIDELINES

Guideline for Cluster Partnership and Objectives of the Planning and Learning Grant
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I. Background Information:

Children's Rights and Violence Prevention Fund (CRVPF), vision for Chang is children and adolescents are safe and empowered where they live, play and learn. We believe safe and secure, families, communities and societies developed when Community Organizations and local NGO's are able to interact with accountability, inclusive participation for change. These actors are our partners. CRVPF increasingly collaborate with wide and diverse range of community organizations, local NGO's, media organizations, training, and research institutions interested working at community levels to prevent violence and advance adolescent girls rights. We believe, partners reflects our values, through local ownership of change, using fund responsibly and working with long-term sustainability in mind.

Our aim is to help, create secure and safe families, communities and schools for children and adolescents. For each intervention, we must assess how to achieve this in most effective and sustainable manner. Our principles of partnership rotate around cluster approach to ensure clear and transparent working relationships that are inclusive and mutually beneficial, based on equity, respect and passion.

Clustering is a philosophy based on the core principles of integration (of activities) and collaboration (of members) for mutual benefit. Cluster approach have two levels:

1) Geographic level: where porters are interested to work in one geographic area dividing the target community and groups.

2) Sector levels were partners working on health, skill training and income generating activities targeting specific groups in one geographic area. While there is no one right way to do partnership, the cluster approach that work well are intentional and based on guiding principles.

II. Why Work in Cluster Partnership?

The theory behind cluster partnership approach is summed up by the Kashmiri saying: “one plus one is equals to eleven.” In other words, the sum is greater than the individual parts. Such collaboration can ensure the development of initiatives and capture the creative potential of diverse actors for deeper impact. The relationship will foster local ownership for sustainability, and address complex problems or new opportunities. We believe cluster approach takes full advantage of the knowledge, skills, reach, and experience that partners offer each other and together, can have greater impact than working separately. For example, local groups, CBO’s and local NGO's partners can better understand, represent, and address the rights, needs, and aspirations of children, adolescents girls, families, and communities. The program and other work we do together can encourage and enable the real participation of people living the in community to have greater impact.
III. Principles of Cluster Partnership:

There are three overarching principles important for cluster partnership to be able to work together. Practicing these principles provides a firm foundation upon which to build effective cluster partnerships. CRVPF support cluster partnership in helping to create violence free families, communities and schools for children and adolescents. The principles are:

1. Equity – all partners have valuable resources and expertise, as well as risks and benefits that lead to a complementary purpose and respect.
2. Transparency – A crucial factor to developing trust, a positive environment to collaborate and ensuring decisions are made in a socially responsible manner.
3. Mutual benefit – including commitment to other partners as well shared partnership, leading to deeper engagement.

Furthermore, the cluster partnership have the following guidelines:

1. The cluster partner’s directors in principle have to agree to work together and plan their joint activities.
2. The cluster partners have to agree to work in one geographic/project area concentrating the human and financial resources for broader impact, service coordination and better reach.
3. The cluster partner’s 2-5 organizations have to agree to conduct joint situational analysis and baseline assessment in the selected geographic/project area.
4. The partners required to develop one proposal indicating the roles, activities and budgets.
5. The partners have to select one contact organization from the group to sign the contract, to manage the grant and liaise with CRVPF staff.
6. The selected organization director will be the first coordinator of the cluster partnership and will sign the contract with CRVPF representing the members.
7. Cluster partner members can rotate the chairpersonship every two years, in order to share the responsibilities.
8. The cluster partner’s member’s required to open joint account and at least the three directors become signatories of the account.
9. The cluster partners should meet every month to review the project activities and share the monthly meeting report to CRVPF.
10. The cluster partners will employ a project coordinator to manage the project. CRVPF will cover the salary.
11. A financial officer from one of the cluster membership preferably from the cluster chairperson organization can allocate 50% of her/his time managing the cluster budget. CRVPF will pay the financial officer time.
12. The members will employ community facilitators from the project area (preferably trained female and male young people) to manage the parenting, village saving, and lending association credit, in and out of school children and adolescent girls programs.
13. The cluster partner’s project will submit quarterly activity and financial report to CRVPF.
IV. Roles and Responsibilities of Cluster members:

We are proposing the cluster members to have the following roles and responsibilities to improve the partnership:

1. **Chairperson:** The cluster member that sign the contract with CRVPF automatically become the cluster focal organization. We are therefore encouraging the same approach and cluster chairperson should be representative that sign the grant agreement.

   The role of the chairperson is:
   - to sign grant agreement/contract on behalf of the cluster members
   - communicate with donors, media and government institutions on behalf of the cluster members
   - To ensure grant disbursement among the members based on agreed protocol.
   - To ensure activity and financial report are submitted on timely manner
   - Convene cluster member’s meeting and ensure members attend the meetings,
   - Encourage member’s to document and share their experiences,
   - Supervise the project coordinator work
   - Sign cheque jointly with other cluster members
   - Ensure transparent and accountable activity and financial reports developed and submitted to CRVPF

2. **Secretary:** The cluster partner’s secretary will be the project coordinator employed to manage the day-to-day activities.

   - The coordinator closely work with the cluster member’s specially with the chairperson,
   - facilitate information and experience sharing,
   - Closely supervise the works of community facilitators involved in project activities.
   - Organize cluster member’s meeting and take minutes and share to the members,
   - Contact local community and government structures to share the project activities and if the need arises, organize meeting between the cluster leadership and local leaders.
   - Ensure timely consolidate report submitted to the cluster leadership.

3. **The cluster members:** Should participate on membership meeting and share their project activities. Co-sign project cheque with the chairperson. During the initial project period members should meet once a month to support the project implementation, shape and supervise project activities. This can continue for one-year period. Depending
on member’s cohesiveness and trust levels, cluster members can organize meeting on quarterly basis.

4. All decision-making related to project activities, strategies, grant disbursement project interventions, external communications and reporting will be managed through member's agreement and joint decisions.

V. Planning and Learning Grant:

In the past three years, the cluster partnership formation was supported by direct grant making with limited time for cluster partners to know each other. CRVPF consulted partners and identified concerns on the cluster partnership development. As a result, CRVPF developed a Planning and Learning Grant for new cluster partners for six month period to give the members time and space to conduct the following activities,

- To give time and space for cluster partners to know each other work, identify project area, discuss interventions strategies and agreed on the project financial management. The cluster partners encouraged to sign Memorandum of Association (MOU) to clarify member's roles and responsibilities.
- To actively engage in listening to children, adolescents, families, community formal and informal leaders and teachers in the identified project areas. CRVPF will developed tools to facilitate the listening process.
- Cluster partners encourage to conduct a situational analysis to know the power holders in the communities that affects the life of children and adolescents.
- The partners encouraged to develop long term proposal to support children and adolescent girls in the identified communities.
- CRVPF will conduct organizational and financial assessment on the led-cluster partners.

VI. Planning and Learning Grant Excepted Outcome:

- MOU signed by cluster partners that indicates the roles and responsibilities and commitment of the members to cluster partnership.
- Rich and important information gathered from children, adolescent, families, formal and informal community members collected. The information will help the future program development.
- A situational analysis report produced the shows the situation of children, adolescent's girls, families and communities.
- Partners developed a long term proposal for CRVPF financial support to prevent violence against children and facilitate adolescent's girl's choice and decision.
- CRVPF provide capacity building support to improve led-cluster partner financial management system.

Finally, CRVPF encourage cluster partners collaboration towards common goals- CBO’s, local NGO’s and others actors working in cluster partnership to improve their collective competitiveness. We believe active and effective cluster partnership with the aim of achieving major results will go a long way in changing the lives of vulnerable children, adolescent's girls, families and communities.
VII. Conflict Mediation:

- If disagreement arises among cluster member in relation to grant disbursement, project activities, implementation, external communication and reporting. The cluster members and CRVPF staff jointly try to resolves the problem.

- Member/s violating the cluster guidelines will be informed the situation and request to improve, if there is no improvement, warning letter will be given and if there is no improvement then the member/s will be expelled from the cluster partnership. CRVPF staff should be involved in the mediation and on the final decision making process.