

The NGOs and Humanitarian Reform Project II

A chance to influence
the humanitarian system

NGO PARTICIPATION IN POOLED FUNDS ADVISORY BOARDS IN ZIMBABWE: OVERVIEWS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



Report written by Gamuchirai Chituri

EUROPEAN COMMISSION



Humanitarian Aid

Disclaimer: The NGOs and Humanitarian Reform Project Phase II is funded by the European Commission's Department for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO). The views expressed in this document should not be taken, in any way, to reflect the official opinion of the European Commission.

Acknowledgements

This Guidance document has been developed with the generous support of ActionAid under the Humanitarian Reform Phase II project. It was produced by Gamuchirai Chituri, a consultant engaged on the project with technical oversight and input from Joram Chikwanya, The Technical Advisor on the project. The author interviewed fund managers and advisory board members in the process of developing this guide. It is aimed at strengthening NGO participation and representation in the pooled fund advisory boards and steering committees.

Many thanks go to all those who contributed towards the development of this guide. Special thanks go to Lilian Nduta, the Emergency Response Fund manager at UNOCHA Zimbabwe and Brian Hunter, The country director for Save the Children Zimbabwe who are actively involved in the Health Transition Fund steering committee and CCM Global Fund working groups.

This guide is intended to be a 'living document' and will be updated regularly as the situation and fund guidelines change.

Any errors or omissions remain with the author.

Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	3
ACRONYMS	5
I. ABOUT THIS GUIDE	6
1. INTRODUCTION	6
2. BACKGROUND	6
3. METHODOLOGY	8
II. OVERVIEW OF THE POOLED FUNDS IN ZIMBABWE	9
1. THE EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUND	9
The ERF Advisory Board	9
Functions of the advisory board	9
Representation in the advisory board	10
The ERF Review Board	10
ERF allocation Process	10
Representation of the Review Board	11
Accountability and monitoring of the ERF	11
2. COUNTRY COORDINATION MECHANISM (CCM) OF THE GLOBAL FUND	11
Functions of the CCM	11
Representation in the CCM	12
GF Grant allocation process	12
3. THE HEALTH AND EDUCATION TRANSITION FUND	13
The Steering Committee	14
Representation in the HTF steering committee	15
4. NGO JOINT INITIATIVES PROJECT FOR URBAN ZIMBABWE (JI PROJECT)	15
III. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS	17
IV. RECOMMENDATIONS	19

Acronyms

CCM	Country Coordinating Mechanisms
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
ERF	Emergency Response Fund
ETF	Education Transition Fund
GF	Global Fund
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator
HoA	Heads of Agencies
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
HTF	Health Transition Fund
INGO	International non-government organisations
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
NAC	National AIDS Council
NANGO	National Association for Non-Governmental Organisations
NGO	Non-government organisations
NHRP II	NGO Humanitarian Reform Project Phase II (NHRP II)
MOESAC	Ministry of Education Sports and Culture
MoHCW	Ministry of Health and Child Welfare
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nation Children's Fund
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation
ZACH	Zimbabwe Association of Church Related Hospitals

I. About this Manual

1. Introduction

One of the critical pillars of humanitarian reform is humanitarian financing. This is aimed at ensuring that humanitarian financing is adequate, timely and flexible. Pooled funds play a central role in supporting humanitarian assistance in Zimbabwe and they have proved to be an essential element of the humanitarian reform. Zimbabwe has benefited from a number of pooled funds including the Emergency Response Fund (ERF), and global Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) as well as multi-donor trust funds such as the Education and Health Transition funds.

The Non-governmental organisation (NGO) and Humanitarian Reform Project Phase II (NHRP II) is aimed at enhancing the leadership, participation and representation of NGOs in humanitarian structures. As such there is great interest to ensure that NGOs are represented in the advisory boards and steering committees that govern these different financing mechanisms. However there is little information available for NGOs, especially local NGOs to help them participate more effectively in these pooled funds.

The purpose of the consultancy was to analyze and document processes, policies and systems that exist in Zimbabwe to support transparency in the way NGO representatives are chosen to participate in pooled funds boards and steering committees. This was also intended to provide recommendations and guidance on how NGOs can participate more effectively and be better positioned as representatives or recipients of the funds.

The specific objectives of the consultancy include:

1. Review and provide NGOs and other stakeholders information on how NGOs can participate in pooled funds boards as representatives;
2. Provide realistic and actionable recommendations to improve NGO participation in pooled fund boards;
3. Assess the role of provincial sub clusters and inter cluster groups in pooled fund decision making and informing funding decision;
4. Review the terms of reference of pooled fund boards for their inclusiveness.

This report will provide a review of different pooled and multi-donor trust funds with a view of analyzing how they are governed and how NGOs can be represented in their boards. These include the:

- Emergency Response Fund;
- Country Coordination Mechanism of the Global Fund;
- Health and Education Transition Fund;
- NGO Joint Initiative Project for Urban Zimbabwe (JI Project).

2. Background

Pooled funds in this document refer to money that is contributed by different donors into a common pot. Pooled funds are not a new phenomenon. They have been used since 1998 in Angola and since then a further 19 pooled funds have been set up. They are not only restricted to humanitarian aid but across the emergency to development continuum. Several multi-donor trust funds have been set up to enable donors to pool funding for reconstruction and

recovery activities.¹ The purpose of pooled funds is to improve the speed and predictability of emergency funding, as well as to improve the funding of forgotten and unforeseen crises with a considerable degree of flexibility.

The humanitarian situation in Zimbabwe has continued to improve and remains largely stable. Despite these positive gains, humanitarian challenges remain. These include food insecurity mainly caused by drought—the impact of which is more visible in the south of the country—and sporadic outbreaks of waterborne diseases. According to ZIMVAC report (2012) 3.7 million (29% of the population) people are chronically food insecure. The worst affected provinces are Matabeleland South, Matabeleland North, Manicaland, Mashonaland Central, Masvingo and Midlands province. In addition, a wide range of highly vulnerable groups such as the chronically ill, returned migrants, asylum seekers and those in displacement-like situations continue to require humanitarian aid. Heavy rains in January caused extensive flooding affecting some 8,490 people as of 15 February 2013.² As at 4 April 2013, the Zimbabwe Humanitarian Gaps Appeal of \$131 million was 13.8 per cent funded at \$16 million. This reflects an improvement compared to the same time in 2012 when Zimbabwe’s consolidated appeal was 4 per cent funded at \$11,971,399.³

The humanitarian strategy in 2013 will continue to effectively address residual urgent humanitarian and early recovery needs through a more focused and evidence-based humanitarian appeal under the four remaining clusters. With the continued support of all stakeholders towards recovery programmes, the 2013 humanitarian appeal is potentially the last such appeal in Zimbabwe.

NGOs generally support the idea behind the pooled funding, and in some cases, the in-country pooled funds have indeed increased funding for NGOs. However, evaluation on pooled funding in other countries, have in some instances shown that the original objectives have yet to be achieved. Experience with pooled funding shows that the delivery has been slow in many cases (as witnessed in Pakistan), which compromises timely and adequate humanitarian response to rapid-onset emergencies. Moreover, it is argued that, the pooled funding mechanisms have led to a change in funding allocation where a greater percentage of countries’ humanitarian funding is now being channeled through the UN and the pooled fund mechanisms, which are not easy to access for NGOs.⁴

The global Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) was launched in 2006 with a grant element of US\$450 million. The CERF provides donor governments and the private sector with the opportunity to pool their financing on a global level to enable timely and reliable humanitarian assistance. Allocations are made directly to UN agencies and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). These can also further subcontract other NGOs as implementing partners. Based on the Financial Tracking Service on the UNOCHA website, Zimbabwe did not receive any funding from CERF in 2013.

As humanitarian funding and the mechanisms that are used to channel this money are only part of the total aid that enters a country, other pooled funds have been set up to support a wide range of reconstruction and recovery activities. These types of funds provide donors with

¹Global Humanitarian Assistance Pooled funding mechanisms and large scale disasters-Case studies of Haiti and Pakistan April 2011

²Global emergencies overview snapshot -UNOCHA

³Zimbabwe Humanitarian Bulletin 01-28Feb 2013 OCHA

⁴VOICE Position Paper on UN led Humanitarian Reform process October 2010

an opportunity to engage in complex situations and to support existing governance structures. The health and education transition funds are an example of such in-country pooled funds. They have supported actions that may not be explicitly humanitarian. However these have been proposed by clusters to address the greatest risks, and the programs have characteristics of both humanitarian and transition. These funds are channeled through UNICEF to support government ministries of health and education respectively. There is a danger though that a national government could become dependent on budget support from a fund over a period of time if proper sustainability mechanisms are not built into the projects.

3. Methodology

The development of this guidance document was informed by a number of sources. The main source of information was literature and desk review of the terms of reference for the pooled funds boards, fund guidance notes and other annual reports from the pooled funds. The different websites for the health and education transition funds, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) and the Global Fund were also reviewed. Interviews were also conducted with members of the different advisory and review boards, fund managers and NGOs. Unfortunately interviews with the focal persons with the Education Transition Funds were not possible due to the unavailability of the people and time constraints of the consultancy.

II. Overview of the Pooled Funds in Zimbabwe

1. The Emergency Response Fund

The aim of the Emergency Response Funds (ERFs) is to provide rapid and flexible funding to in-country actors (mainly NGOs) to address unforeseen humanitarian needs.⁵ ERF interventions complement planned activities in the Zimbabwe Humanitarian Gaps in 2013 as well as address any needs arising outside the four clusters that will be operational in 2013, namely- WASH, Health, Food Security and protection. The ERF will be used to provide initial funding so that humanitarian partners can respond to a crisis without delay.

In Zimbabwe the ERF is projected to end this year as the humanitarian crisis has stabilized. It has a pool of at least \$1,4million though its projected needs in the 2013 appeal are \$5million dollars. The ERF has recently allocated the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) \$250.000 for an Emergency Response to Flood affected communities in Zimbabwe⁶.

The ERF is governed by a global charter that is similar across all country programs. The charter provides guidelines on how the fund operates as well as the terms of reference for the advisory and review board. The review board is a technical body that is primarily responsible for reviewing the technical merit of proposals. The advisory board on the other hand includes the donors and oversees the functioning of the ERF. Both of these boards have representatives from the national and international non-governmental organisations (INGOs).

The ERF Advisory Board

A high-level Advisory Board chaired by the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) oversees the functioning of the ERF, and serve an advisory function to the HC on strategic and policy issues.

The Board provides periodic reviews of the ERF's operation and provides guidance to the HC and Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) to ensure that the Fund is effectively contributing towards its objective. The Board meets at least twice a year and/or as deemed necessary to review policy issues and evaluates the effectiveness of the Fund in meeting its objectives. The Board will also aim to ensure the ERF strengthens coordination through full engagement with the established coordination structures, involving all humanitarian partners, including government.⁷

Functions of the advisory board

The main functions and focus of the Advisory Board as detailed in the charter are to:

- Advise the HC on ways to improve linkages with other financing mechanisms;
- Ensure the most efficient and effective use of available resources for the Fund;
- Address issues that have major implications for emergency response and effectiveness of ERF funded activities;
- Ensure that all procedures and guidelines for the ERF are being adhered to, for accountability purposes;
- Review strategies to ensure the most effective use of the Fund;
- Review value added; scope and size of the Fund periodically;

⁵ Development Initiatives (2007), Review of OCHA emergency response funds

⁶ Zimbabwe ERF Funding and Allocations-Financial Tracking Service 4 April 2013

⁷ United Nations Emergency Response Fund for Zimbabwe Charter Jan 2013

- Advise the HC on the definition of a fundraising strategy in line with the intended size of the Fund, as well as anticipating the need for replenishment.

Representation in the advisory board

The Advisory Board is appointed by the HC and is comprised of representatives and alternates from different entities. These include the HC who chairs and convenes advisory committee meetings, OCHA as the secretariat, government representative, donors contributing to the ERF as well as other key humanitarian donors that do not contribute to the ERF but are invited by the HC, for example the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Other board members include two United Nations (UN) agencies, currently United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and the World Food Programme (WFP) and two civil society organisations, one international and one national organisation. The NGOs or civil society members are nominated by their consortium as representatives. In this case the international NGOs are nominated by the Heads of Agencies (HoA) and the current representative is the International Organisation for Migration. The national NGOs are nominated by the National Association for Non-governmental organisations (NANGO). The current representative of the national NGOs was not clear as they had recently nominated a member who had not yet been approved by the HC. Representatives rotate each year and are properly appointed each time. However in some cases, these representatives were reappointed in their role and could stay on.

The ERF Review Board

The Review Board is primarily a technical body to analyze and endorse proposals submitted by NGOs and UN Agencies for grants from the ERF. Their task is to analyze the feasibility and relevance of proposed projects within the context of relevant sector concerns and offer technical recommendations in accordance with the ERF Guidelines. Their role is not to fundraise but to provide technical feedback on project proposals depending on the emergent needs on the ground as third reviewers. The interest of NGOs is secondary to the beneficiaries and the needs on the ground. The Review Board members agree on a set of technical criteria to assess all proposals. The cluster leads are also responsible for the second technical review after the ERF manager.

ERF allocation Process

The ERF is publicized on the website and OCHA has relationships with the provinces and government offices across the country who also gives them details of NGOs in their locality when there is a crisis.

Initially, the fund manager at OCHA receives all project proposals from applicants and conducts a general screening to make sure they provide all the required information. Once this is completed, OCHA will distribute the proposals by e-mail to the Board members. In Zimbabwe, these are also sent to the relevant cluster lead for their technical review. The Board members will respond to OCHA within a suggested timeframe of three days, indicating whether or not they agree with the recommendations and often meets to deliberate the proposals. In instances where a representative from the UN Agency / NGO in question has submitted a proposal, they cannot participate in the review discussions and funding decisions.

The Review Board provides recommendations to the HC for funding or no funding. Final authority lies with the HC and he/she may decide to seek additional advice and may in special cases decide not to follow the recommendations of the Review Board. In such cases the rationale for the decision will be recorded for the file and communicated to the Review Board;

According to the ERF fund manager, in the last year, the HC had always concurred with the decision from the review board.

To be eligible for ERF funding, applicants must complete a capacity-assessment form, which highlights the following:

- Proven ability to implement proposed activities including physical presence in the area and audited past accounts;
- Appropriate accreditation and registration with the Government;
- Comparative advantage over other potential implementers, such as access, networks, capacities and resources.

A number of national NGOs in Zimbabwe have accessed the ERF directly including the DP Foundation and Africa 2000 in the last year. However, their access remains limited if they are compared with international NGOs and UN agencies.

Representation of the Review Board

Much like the advisory board, the Review Board is comprised of representatives and alternates from NGOs and UN Agencies nominated by the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC). The HC will chair Review Board meetings and OCHA will provide the secretariat support for the Board as well as administer the Fund. The HoA nominates one principal and alternate INGO into the board while NANGO nominates one principal and one alternate local/national NGO into the board.

Accountability and monitoring of the ERF

The ERF published annual reports that are publicly available on the website, which detail how the funds have been spent. The fund manager periodically sends out an ERF newsletter to a mailing of over 300 humanitarian actors in the country. Once in the lifetime of the project, a joint monitoring visit by the advisory board is conducted to visit sites and interact with project beneficiaries. However this is not a consistent process and is not always representative of the advisory board members. When it happens the available people at the time are involved led by UNOCHA. In the past they have also engaged journalists to write stories of projects being implemented.

2. Country Coordination Mechanism (CCM) of the Global Fund

Country Coordinating Mechanisms are central to the Global Fund's commitment to local ownership and participatory decision-making. It is the governing body for the use of Global Fund resources and effective grant implementation in recipient countries. These country-level multi-stakeholder partnerships develop and submit grant proposals to the Global Fund based on priority needs at the national level. After grant approval, they oversee progress during implementation.

Functions of the CCM

Based on the terms of reference, the CCM Secretariat is responsible for communication; scheduling meetings; administration, and coordination of the proposal writing process. The CCM Secretariat is the executive and administrative arm of the CCM to support the CCM in its roles and responsibilities.

The CCM mirrors the GF's own Board of Directors. Guiding principles found in the framework document such as transparency, accountability, civil society participation, multi-stakeholder partnerships, governance and national ownership inform the operations of the CCM.⁸

Among other duties, the CCM's roles and responsibilities include:

- Operationalise CCM governance policies / guideline;
- Facilitate intra and inter Communication;
- Planning and organising meetings;
- Support the role of oversight committees;
- Resource Mobilisation;
- Financial Administration – record keeping and tracking of GFATM related documentation;
- Coordination – liaising with key stakeholders and facilitating interaction and engagement between CCM and implementing partners.

Representation in the CCM

Country Coordinating Mechanisms include representatives from both the public and private sectors, including governments, multilateral or bilateral agencies, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, private businesses and people living with the diseases. The CCM Chair, Vice Chair and members are selected in accordance with the election procedures determined by its members. In Zimbabwe the CCM Chair is the Minister of Health in keeping, the Vice Chair is the Resident Representatives from WHO. According to their guidelines, the CCM Chairmanship term is up to a maximum of four years. The CCM usually meets monthly and in addition they can have other emergency and extraordinary meetings.

CCM representatives are invited through the Secretariat. An organisation automatically participates in CCMs if they are fund recipients as a representative but do not vote. Persons representing INGOs are nominated and voted for by the HoA as documented in the HoA meeting minutes, to serve 2 year terms as the Principle CCM representative and Alternate CCM representative. The current representatives are the heads of Population Services International and Catholic Relief Services. The national NGOs are represented by Tsungirirayi and Rural Unity for Development Organisation (RUDO) and the alternates are Zimbabwe Association of Doctors for Human Rights and Centre for Environment, Preventive Health and Counseling (CEPHAC), Zimbabwe AIDS Network, Public Personalities against AIDS Trust Zimbabwe and Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation.

However, in addition to the CCM, there exist technical working groups under the CCM in which civil society organizations may attend and contribute to specific tasks related to the Global Fund. A number of willing organisations can attend and participate in these groups.

GF Grant allocation process

Principal Recipients (PR) are usually identified at the proposal development stage by the relevant and appropriately appointed CCM proposal committees and subsequently endorsed by voting members during a CCM meeting held prior to the finalizing of the CCM proposal to the Global Fund. A call for proposal is published in the media from the GF first and in response the CCM through the secretariat issue a similar in country call. The notice usually states the selection criteria and the programme activities as per the country strategic disease programme

⁸ Mundawarara E 2007 CCM Case Study-Conflict of Interest

areas identified by the main stakeholders, CCM members and CCM appointed proposal-writing teams. The invitation format provides applicants with an opportunity to apply for positions of Principal Recipient or Sub Recipient. Sub Recipient selection is usually based upon national coverage, organizational capacity to deliver in one or more of the main components of the disease proposal, sound programme management, track record and comparative advantage.

District selection is based upon equitable provincial distribution, prevalence rates, level of risk of transmission, HIV and AIDS low service coverage (PMTCT, VCT, ART, Youth), and presence of grant recipients in target districts. While the processes and procedures seems clear and well documented, CCM members interviewed in 2005 expressed concern at the lack of adequate communication and participation of all members.

The Ministry of Health and Child Welfare (MoHCW), is the biggest programme implementer in the country, assisted by the Zimbabwe Association of Church Related Hospitals (ZACH) and other Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs). A case study by Mundawarara (2007) revealed various levels of conflict of interest in the way the CCM operated. This is largely because the MoHCW who are the principal recipients of the funds are also the chair and involved in the decision making on grant recipients as well as the monitoring of the programs. The opinion of the interviewed CCM members at the time was that the GF programme management should be arranged in a way that accommodates broader participation, resulting for example in the MoHCW, ZACH being appointed implementers and National AIDS Council (NAC) as the coordinator for monitoring and evaluation in association with better equipped managers and administrators. However, the requirement for the GF programming to be National in character is largely understood in – country, to mean that the ‘Government’ or its representatives take ownership and control. As a result the MoHCW plays a pivotal role in the form and function of the CCM. The strategic direction, implementation and oversight is determined directly or indirectly by the MoHCW and associated organizations This provides for definitive Conflict of Interest as there is no separation of duties throughout the entire process for the MoHCW and other similarly positioned organisations within the CCM.

3. The Health and Education Transition Fund

The health and education transition funds are both multi donor pooled funds aimed at supporting the education and health sector respectively. Among other reasons, these funds are mainly aimed at supporting the government structures and strengthening them to be able to perform their services during this transition period. For the purposes of this overview, the two transition funds have been put together because they have similar management and governance structures. The government departments are therefore the main recipients of the funds.

The Health Transition Fund (HTF) is a multi-donor pooled fund worth US\$436 million that is supporting the Government in the implementation of the key objectives and strategies as outlined in the Zimbabwe National Health Strategy (2009-2013) over five years. It was launched in 2011 and is led by the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare.⁹ It is aimed at strengthening the health system particularly in reducing maternal and child mortality by increasing access to health care for women and children. It is targeted at saving the lives of more than 30,000 children under five and pregnant women. Among the many key strategies identified to realize this goal is the elimination of user fees for medical services, and improved access to comprehensive emergency obstetric and newborn care.

⁹Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Zimbabwe website
http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/zimbabwe/press_corner/all_news/news/2013/20130214_en.htm

The Health Transition Fund supports the implementation of activities under four core areas, which are:

1. Support for improvements in quality of maternal, new born and child health and nutrition services;
2. Provision of medicines and basic equipment;
3. Human resources for health and health policy;
4. Planning and finance.

The Education Transition Funds was launched by the Ministry of Education Sports and Culture (MOESAC) in September 2009. ETF phase 2 started in 2011. This was a direct response to Zimbabwe's to the economic and social crisis in 2008 and deteriorating situation of children's learning identified by rapid assessments by the National Education Advisory Board and UNICEF¹⁰. The major donors contributing to ETF were Australia, Denmark, the European Commission, Germany, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States. The ETF is a pooled fund arrangement to support the transition from emergency and humanitarian aid towards regular development cooperation with a focus on donor coordination and strategic investments (a transitional funding arrangement). The ETF II aims to strengthen the MOESAC's institutional capacity and the education sector-wide programming by aligning its programme interventions to the MOESAC's Education Mid-Term Plan 2011-2015. The ETF's objective is to improve the quality of Zimbabwe's basic education through the provision of learning materials, textbooks, supplies and supporting reforms in schools and the Ministry of Education Sport Arts and Culture.

Both the HTF and ETF are funded by various development partners including Canada, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, the UK and the EU. The programmes are led by the Inclusive Government through the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare (MoHCW) and Ministry of Education Sports and Culture respectively and managed by UNICEF. According to the HTF guidance document, UNICEF has two distinct roles in the HTF- as fund holder and programme manager, and as a potential implementing partner in areas in which it has a comparative advantage as determined by the Steering Committee¹¹. The main recipient of the funds is the Ministry of Health and Child welfare. However there is provision for other implementing partners as determined by the steering committee. The Crown Agents, for example is contracted under the HTF to provide procurement and other financial logistical services.

The latest data shows significant impact of the HTF in re-establishing primary health care services and ensuring sufficient drug and vaccine supply in more than 90% of the 1400 facilities¹².

The Steering Committee

Both the HTF and ETF management structure has the MoHCW and MOESC at the top providing leadership in strategy, planning and policy. This is followed by a secretariat comprised of an

¹⁰ UNICEF Zimbabwe-Education in Emergencies and post crisis transition 2011 Programme report

¹¹ A Multi-donor Pooled Transition Fund for Health in Zimbabwe Supporting the National Health Strategy to improve access to quality health care in Zimbabwe December 2011

¹² United Nations in Zimbabwe Newsletter Issue 3 Feb- April 2012

<http://www.zw.one.un.org/sites/default/files/UN%20in%20Zimbabwe%20Newsletter%20-%20ISSUE%203.pdf>

appointed coordinator. The HTF coordinator is based in the Directorate for Policy and Planning. The Steering Committee is responsible for the oversight and decision making of the funds.

According to the terms of reference of the role of the HTF Steering Committee includes but is not limited to:

- Approving funding allocations to thematic areas and related activities in accordance with the framework of the agreed HTF objectives;
- Ensuring alignment of HTF allocations with the MoHCW Performance Contract/Annual Plan within the thematic areas agreed upon in the Programme Document;
- Approving terms of reference for implementing partners;
- Participating in tender review committees and approving selection of implementing partners in accordance with UNICEF rules and regulations;
- Reviewing and approving annual, mid-term and end-of-programme programmatic and financial progress reports submitted by UNICEF;
- Appointing an evaluation sub-committee consisting of three to five independent professionals who will have responsibility for managing all aspects of the impact evaluation conducted by the independent evaluation contractor.

Representation in the HTF steering committee

The HTF Steering Committee is composed of MoHCW, funding partners to the HTF, a representative organisation from Civil Society, UNICEF, WHO and UNFPA. The latter three agencies serve as technical advisors and UNICEF serves as the Secretariat. The civil society members are invited through their consortium. This means that the HoA is asked to nominate a representative for INGOs while NANGO has a standing invitation where it can nominate a national NGO representative to the committee. The current representative for the International NGOs is the Save the Children director and CAMFED for the ETF.

Decisions in the steering committee are reached through consensus. If agreement cannot be reached by consensus and a vote is required, only the MOHCW and the major financial stakeholders (donors to HTF and the fund manager) will be eligible to vote.

The Steering Committee is co-chaired by the Permanent Secretary of the MoHCW and a Funding Partner. Funding partners select, annually, a representative who will serve as Co-Chair of the HTF Steering Committee. The HTF Steering Committee meets monthly (this could be changed to every other month or quarterly as implementation progresses).

Despite the fact that NGOs are not benefiting directly from the transition funds, they have an interest in the way these resources are allocated. They are therefore represented to provide input on where the identification funding gaps.

4. NGO Joint Initiatives Project for Urban Zimbabwe (JI Project)

The NGO Joint Initiative for Urban Zimbabwe is a coordinated humanitarian response by seven INGOs to address the short and medium-term needs of highly vulnerable communities in urban Zimbabwe through integrated development programmes. It was initiated in late 2005 as a response to the political and economic developments including the “operation restore order”. During this operation, in which squatter areas and informal settlements and businesses were destroyed, at least 700,000 people in urban areas countrywide lost their homes, livelihoods and access to food, education and healthcare. Part of the impetus for the formation

of the Joint Initiative (JI) was the widespread perception among the NGO and donor communities that the UN had failed to demonstrate sufficient leadership in speaking out and mobilising a response.¹³

Seven INGOs decided to strategically combine their capacities and resources in order to address the acute needs of vulnerable groups in urban areas of Zimbabwe. These agencies collectively referred to as the Joint Initiative Group ("JIG"), are Africare, CARE, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Oxfam GB, Practical Action Southern Africa, Save the Children UK and Mercy Corps. In some instances, these INGOs were supported by their local partners. Mercy Corps was the lead agency. The members of the JIG agreed to work together in a unique collaboration, utilising their respective organisational strengths and in-country networks to provide needed assistance in a variety of sectors including livelihood support, food security, social and child protection, HIV/AIDS, shelter and education.

The donors provide their pooled funding directly to the NGOs instead of the traditional approach through the UN. Donors were immediately enthusiastic, committing USD 35,000 to support the development of the idea. Management and governance of the JI has been led by Mercy Corps as the lead agency and the JI management team consisting of all the directors of the INGOs as well as those directly working on the project. Decision-making is as consultative as possible and a consensual approach is taken as far as practical. This has delayed processed in some instances. However this has also enhanced implementation on the ground as well as the JI's advocacy efforts.

NGOs participating and represented in the JI were either part of the initial consortium members or are implementing partners of the INGOs.

¹³ Treading a Delicate Path: NGOs in fragile states – Zimbabwe Case Study, August 2007, Save the Children UK

III. Discussion of Findings

As noted in overview of the different pooled funds, NGO representatives are nominated and selected through their consortium groups, which are recognized as representative bodies by these funds. International NGOs are nominated through the Head of Agencies group (HoA) while the national NGOs are nominated and selected through NANGO. There are no formal documented processes or guidance notes for these nomination processes, which can compromise the extent of its inclusiveness of all interested humanitarian actors. In the HoA, for example, the last ERF representative selection was done in a meeting and documented in the minutes without much formality. This lack of formalities is a cause for concern for analysts as it is the source of legitimacy and provides impetus for accountability. NGOs do not have clear terms of reference for their representatives, which make their contributions unguided. In addition to the limited number of representatives, NGOs' representatives have not been able to make significant changes owing to the adhoc manner in which the representation process takes place. There is a general lack of strategic focus on the representation process, as discussion does not focus on what NGOs what to see coming out of the meetings now and in the future. NGOs' participation should be at two levels; the level of discussing issue on the table and the level of pursuing the interest of those who are represented. However, from the interviews, it's clear that the current focus on representation is based on issues on the table.

This lack of formality also leaves room for the consortium leaders to appoint NGOs that they are familiar and more friendly with leaving other less vocal NGOs with no opportunities for representation NGOs can also be directly invited to the meetings by the fund managers, HC, MoHCW, MOESC, MOH or UNICEF depending on their level of engagement in the relevant field. This has been the case with transition fund steering committees where the representation was initially done to make up for the required numbers.

In addition NGOs have no clear criteria for choosing representatives even where there is an opportunity to select their own representatives. This means they may select representatives just for the sake of it and not necessarily select a representative that is effective and strategic. In the CCM, for example, some NGO are selected based on geographical location even though they might not be other better positioned organisations in other locations. While it is commendable to have geographical representation across the country, more emphasis should be placed on the capacity of the selected representatives to effectively represent, fulfill their roles and contribute to the discussion at hand.

Generally speaking, however, NGOs seem not to be adequately represented numerically as they are eclipsed by UN agencies. For example, the ERF review board is predominantly UN agencies. Even the access to the EFR funding remains limited for national NGOs as compared with international NGOs and UN agencies. Most national NGOs fail to meet the criteria set up to access the fund. This is an area that needs lobbying by national NGOs and the starting point is to have an increased voice in the board that makes the policies. One representative from the national NGOs cannot make the required impact. From the interviews conducted it was found out that the quality of representation especially by national NGOs leaves a lot to be desired. It appeared as if those who represent national NGOs attend meetings to present their own views and not the views of other NGOs. Furthermore they do not have full understanding of their role and are often unprepared to make an effective representation.

There is also need for NGOs to explore alternative ways of representation in the various advisory boards. There was a shared concern that NGOs in Zimbabwe did not seem to have any real interest in issues that did not seem to directly affect them or have possibilities of funding.

This is seen by the lack of feedback by NGOs to the representatives before and after they attend meetings. NGOs need to be able to air their views through the different representative organisations. They need to ensure that they are on the different mailing lists for the ERF, HoA and NANGO so as to receive timely information and updates. Likewise NGO representatives need to be able to disseminate the reports from the consultations and meetings so that other non-representatives NGOs can also share and participate in the processes.

NGOs also require capacity building to be able to participate as representatives in the different boards and steering committees. This can be in different forms depending on their roles and responsibilities in the boards. In the ERF review board, NGOs will need capacity building in reviewing proposals. This has been noted as a challenge where some NGO leaders are unable to provide the necessary technical critique and feedback on proposals. In the CCM steering committee, NGOs have to be well capacitated in the proposal review and writing as well as financial administration. The UN agencies such as UNOCHA and UNICEF leading on some of these funds might need to provide the necessary capacity building in those areas.

IV. Recommendations

- NGOs, through their consortia should understand the ToRs of the pooled fund board before sending a representative. This will enable them to design strategies and clear outcomes and expectations.
- They should develop a ToR for the representatives, which will guide their representatives and give the legitimacy.
- Organisations should send representatives who are able to communicate at a high level and can be involved in strategic thinking. Attending cluster meetings and other consortium meetings prepares one for the high level meetings
- While representation can depend on the relationship with the consortium groups, there are a number of ways that NGOs can utilize as alternative representatives such as getting involved in the working groups such as the GF working groups on different thematic areas, participation in the clusters that provide feedback to the different funds including, for example, the ERF where cluster leads provide technical feedback to the submitted proposals, providing feedback to the principal representative NGOs before they attend meeting.
- Local NGOs need to develop mentorship relationships with INGOs for learning and capacity building. This can be in the various areas where they will be called upon to provide support in the advisory boards such as proposal and budget review.