

Criteria for Cluster Based Working Relationships

(Working document)

**United Mission to Nepal (UMN)
PO Box 126, Thapathali
Kathmandu
Nepal
Tel: 977-1-4228118 Fax: 4225559
Website: www.umn.org.np**

1. Introduction

Responsibilities;

- Cluster Teams will have autonomy in using these guidelines for the process of identifying and selecting organisations with which UMN will have working relationships.
- The Programme Management Committee will endorse final Cluster based Partnership Agreements.

Process Outline at Cluster Level (see also related documents on Process of Endorsement);

- a. Association / observation by residential Cluster Team of the area with support from Organisation Capacity Building Team and Technical Advisory Team representatives
 - b. Initial screening and relationship / rapport building (see section 3)
 - c. Time of cooperation and observation
 - d. Selection of organisations for signing agreements (see section 4)
 - e. Secondary agreements including Activity Agreements, Resourcing, Secondments and specific programmes.
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2. Definitions

Working Relationships. There will be two types of working relationship;

Potential Partnership: comprises of relationship building and organisational assessment. This will also include technical assessments by Technical Advisory Team and limited programme activities. The time frame of potential partnership is unlimited with annual review. The objective is to build relationship and trust with a view to developing a Partnership.

Partnership: A long-term relationship resulting from joint planning and clear, mutually agreed expectations regarding ownership, responsibilities, monitoring & evaluation and final termination of partnership.

Human resources will be available in all working relationships as UMN staff coach and mentor partner organization staff. In some cases there will be specific human resource agreements with partners which will usually be for:

Consultancy: The mechanism by which a UMN staff member is assigned to work with a partner organisation usually for a short period of time with well-defined responsibilities in order to support specific activities defined in an Activity Agreement with mutual ownership and well defined monitoring process.

Secondment: The mechanism by which a UMN staff member is assigned to work under the management authority of an organisation with whom UMN has a working relationship through a formal agreement.

Possible organizational partners – four categories have been identified:

HMG/N at national, district and local level

Institution particularly training/educational foundations

Enterprise includes private for profit (Pvt. Ltd.) and private for non-profit (hospitals/poly-clinics)

NGO/CBO; international/national/local level

3. Potential Partnership; Initial Screening and Relationship / Rapport Building

It is envisaged there will be a time of relationship building during which the suitability of the organisation will be assessed. The relationships built will depend on the type of possible partner. During this period there will be opportunity to share about UMN values, gender awareness and any other issues of concern. The following criteria are to help the Cluster Team in their identification of Potential Partners.

SN	Essential characteristics
1.	Strategic Directions – good fit with one or more of SD1 Addressing the Root Causes of Poverty SD2 Addressing Injustice SD3 Bringing Peace and Reconciliation
2.	UMN's identified Areas of Work – Good fit with one or more of current areas; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AoW; Education, Enterprise Dev., Food Security, HIV/AIDS, Women and Children • SD2 to 4; Advocacy, Peace and Conflict Transformation and Relief
3	At least 50% of beneficiaries of the organisation or potential partnership are poor (as defined by the median value of Overall Poverty Index in the UMN Core Poverty control group for the Cluster)

SN	Preferred characteristics
4.	What partners are doing will have lasting impact
5.	Compliant with rules and regulations of HMG/N including SWC and the Nepali NGO Federation Members Code of Conduct if applicable
6.	Vision – clear well developed and internalised
7.	Open and agreeable to participating in a UMN facilitated assessment of the organisation. For some types of partner this may be restricted to specific aspects of the organisation and its work.
8.	Involvement of Dalits and women at senior decision making level – such as on Board or Executive
9.	Transparency demonstrated through regular audited accounts and / or documented reporting

SN	The following should be taken into consideration
1.	Awareness, understanding and/or fit with UMN vision, mission and values
2.	Geographical location according to constraints of the Cluster to be as inclusive as possible.
3.	Maturity of the organisation – years in active existence and achievements to date Preference will be given to newly emerging organizations
4.	Number of other partnerships that the organisation has. Preference will be given to organizations with few or no partners
2.	Geographical location according to constraints of the Cluster Team
3.	Maturity of the organisation – years in active existence and achievements to date
4.	Number of other partnerships that the organisation has

While working with and observing the potential partners it is anticipated the following behaviours will be demonstrated

SN	Desirable behaviours
1.	Eagerness to learn and apply that learning as they are able in their situation
2.	Capacity to initiate activities and work under their own leadership
3.	An ability to meet commitments (accountability)
4.	Willingness to share knowledge and learning with others (participating in forums and networks)
5.	Open attitude to debate and critique learning

4. Partnership; Selection of Organisations for Endorsement by PMC

Depending upon the type of organisation and the working relationship, a secondary level identification has been developed which takes into account the differences between the different categories of organisations and working agreements. The Cluster Team has autonomy to modify these in the light of the local situation.

HMG/N

SN	Preferred characteristics
1	Stable local staff at middle level
2	Proven experience of working with partners in the NGO / INGO sector
3	Evidence of skills gained though working with partners in the NGO / INGO sector
4	Clear understanding of UMN TA/DA training allowance policy

Institutions

SN	Preferred characteristics
1	Women and Dalits represented on the Board
2	Committed to local resource mobilisation to achieve local participation in the activities.
3	Partnerships will enhance the capacity of existing faculty and generation of subsequent faculty
4	Possibility of a national impact from their programme or as example should be considered

Note: for educational institutions this could mean a Secondee may for example serve as a:

- Educational Administrator charged with assembling and developing a faculty
- Educational specialist working with curricula, teacher training etc.
- Academic researcher facilitating Nepal junior faculty who is a co-researcher.

Enterprise

SN	Preferred characteristics
1	Financial accountability; Independent and transparent auditing or maintained cash flow records (as appropriate to the enterprise turnover). These should be made available to UMN.
2	Sales / marketing, purchasing and legal practices which are to high ethical standards (includes paying taxes and tendering)
3	Products not incompatible with UMN Vision for Nepal (a “black list” of products may be a useful).
4	Wage structure with defined appropriate levels of pay
5	Employment and staff review policy which is implemented
6	Social responsibility in treatment of employees and resource use
7	Safety and environmental issues; willingness to address these.
4	Possibility of a national impact from their programme or as example should be considered

- Notes:**
1. Enterprise could be a company that is a major local employer or a small extended family business reaching out to include the neighbourhood etc.
 2. Making assessments of enterprises as potential partners should, if possible, involve UMN staff who are familiar and supportive of enterprise as a positive model for implementing change.
 3. Recognise the tension in enterprise support (Does UMN engage business partners with social objectives or business objectives)

NGOs and CBOs

SN	Preferred characteristics
1	Local resources mobilised
2	Accountability guidelines
3	Chairperson and Board not directly involved in programme implementation as paid volunteers/staff
4	Membership list published
5	Members from beneficiary groups being targeted
6	Commitment to follow the process and requirements set-up by the community and Cluster Team
7	Women and Dalits represented on the Board
8	Committed to local resource mobilisation to achieve local participation in the activities.
9	Possibility of a national impact from their programme or as example should be considered