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## **RAPID Operational Guidelines- Capacity Building Component for NGOs**

**May- 2019**

This document briefly explains the RAPID capacity building component, including the key objectives, process for selection and engagement with local NGOs and potential capacity building activities. RAPID also include targeted capacity building activities for Disaster Management Authorities (DMAs), however this document mainly cover the guidelines for local NGOs capacity building.



*Local NGOs from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province attend a training sessions related to needs assessment and proposal development, organized by Concern RAPID through USAID-OFDA funding.*

## **RAPID Fund- An Overview**

Concern Worldwide is a non-governmental, international, humanitarian organization dedicated to the reduction of suffering and working towards the ultimate elimination of extreme poverty in the world's poorest countries. Concern is implementing the RAPID program in Pakistan with the support of the United States Agency for International Development's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID-OFDA). Established under a cooperative agreement between Concern Worldwide and USAID-OFDA, RAPID is a mechanism that seeks to address the urgent relief and early recovery needs of natural and human-induced disaster-affected populations in Pakistan by sub-grants to international and local non-governmental organizations (I/NGOs) operational in the affected area. RAPID aims to complement the efforts of the Government of Pakistan towards relief and recovery assistance to disaster-affected populations.

RAPID's objective is to assist the most vulnerable populations in the aftermath of any natural or human-induced disaster across the country. In close coordination with the relevant clusters, I/NGOs, target communities, Disaster Management Authorities (DMAs) and working alongside existing humanitarian mechanism, RAPID provides timely, flexible, effective, and needs-based sub-grants to national and international NGOs through a systematic short-term small grants mechanism. In addition to sub-grants for disaster response, RAPID also includes targeted support activities for both national NGOs and DMAs to contribute in their disaster management capabilities.

## **Local Capacity Building**

Local NGOs and the Disaster Management Authorities (DMAs) are most often the first responders to a disaster. However, they struggle to cope with the regular, multiple disasters due to both institutional as well as staff capacity constraints. Therefore, in addition to relief and recovery response through sub-grants, the 2<sup>nd</sup> component of the RAPID provide capacity building support to local NGOs and Disaster Management Authorities. The basic objective is to invest on the local capacity as the country has a considerable national NGO base with strong potential to contribute toward timely and effective humanitarian preparedness and response. Similarly, with the established of National and Provincial Disaster Management Authorities (DMAs) the country now has an institutional structure to prepare for and respond to natural disasters.

### **1. Identification/Selection of NGOs**

The process for identification and selection of the NGOs begin with a call for proposals or expressions of interest posted on the webpage and circulated through National Humanitarian Forum (NHN), and select local NGOs (identified from our database of 1,000+ local NGOs fulfilling eligibility criteria mentioned below). The interested/committed NGOs submit their interest on standard RAPID [Expression of Interest Template](#). RAPID conduct a review of applications/expression of interest and the key consideration for selection of NGO to receive capacity-building support include:

- **Organizational (NGO's) mission of emergency response:** The key objective of capacity building support is to strengthen national emergency preparedness and response capacity. Therefore, the panel consider alignment of organization's internal goals and objectives with the RAPID objectives of capacity building and assistance objectives.
- **Location/reach to disaster-prone areas:** The Project Board consider organization presence and access to disaster prone districts or previous working experience in disaster/conflict prone areas.
- **Demonstrated past performance in relevant areas:** The Project Board conduct an initial analysis of prospects for success of capacity building support and from the past performance/experience evaluate the prospect for sustainability of assistance. RAPID does not aim to start from scratch therefore RAPID will consider organizational previous experience in relevant thematic areas.
- **Commitment to performance improvement and learning:** Commitment to performance improvement is key consideration to select NGO for capacity building support. The panel evaluate organization previous record of accomplishment of improvement in performance, its current interest and potential barriers to performance improvements. Organization must

demonstrate a commitment for working on its areas for improvement, its own performance challenges and commitment to provide any resources or support such as staff time, office space, senior management time and commitment.

NGOs' inclusion in capacity building program must confirm to following requirements;

- Registered NGO with established office in disaster prone district or demonstrated past experience of implementing humanitarian program in disaster/conflict prone districts.
- NGO that have previously implemented humanitarian response projects with previous working experience with INGO, UN or any institutional donor. RAPID understand that in few disaster prone districts the small local NGOs have great potential to contribute but due to funding constraints they have limited previous experience therefore RAPID also consider target area vulnerability, NGO interest/commitment and prospects for performance improvement.
- The NGO with operational experience of not less than of 3-5 years. Newly registered NGOs may not be considered unless otherwise with proven institutional capacity and prospects for sustainability.
- The NGOs confirming to above requirements, demonstrate commitment for performance improvement, potential and prospects for sustainability but due to financial and technical capacity constraints is struggling to remove barriers to capacity constraints challenges.

## **2. Conduct Capacity Building Needs Assessment**

RAPID will form a project board including representation from potential/selected NGOs. The project board will constitute an assessment team including program and system staff from RAPID and selected NGO. Using our tested CLOSAT and CLOFAT<sup>1</sup> capacity assessment tools (applied to hundreds of NGOs worldwide) tailored to RAPID capacity building objectives, the assessment team will conduct capacity and training needs assessment to identify the gaps and areas for potential performance improvement in close collaboration with the local NGO. During assessment, the assessor will evaluate existing institutional and individual capacity; identify the gaps, barriers and prospects for improvements and opportunities to unleash.

The assessment process focus on both institutional and staff capacity building gaps and needs. The assessment team will use wide array of information gathering activities to identify the capacity building needs including one-on-one interviews and focus group discussion with the key personnel in target NGOs, other INGOs (those working in partnership with local NGOs) and stakeholders including NHN. In addition to assessment of capacity gaps and needs, the assessment exercise also include determination on possible solutions for performance improvement and the required actions to address gaps and meet capacity development needs.

## **3. Develop Capacity Plans/Solutions/Activities**

Concern will sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the selected NGOs to get their commitment on capacity building deliverables. The project board including team member from NGOs conduct an analyses of the assessment report, identify key performance/capacity gaps in line with RAPID capacity building objectives. Once the capacity building gaps, needs and commitments identified and agreed upon, the project board define capacity buildings activities, develop plans with the timeline and appropriate measures for completing and monitoring of agreed action plans.

## **4. Implement the Plan /Capacity Building Activities**

The Capacity Building framework includes an integrated and reinforcing set of capacity building activities that address both individual/workforce and organizational/institutional levels of capacity to enhance national emergency response capacities of local NGOs.

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<sup>1</sup> Concern Local Organization Selection/Financial Capacity Assessment Tool.

Based on assessed needs and agreed action plan, the project board design a capacity building strategy adapting adult learning approaches. Activities will be tailored to each organization, but meant to support two key areas of capacity: (1) institutional systems, tools, and processes; and (2) human resources, especially staff knowledge, skills, and abilities.

The activities for NGOs mainly focus on capacity building on humanitarian needs assessment, proposal development, program implementation, monitoring and evaluation, procurement, financial and human resource management. After necessary trainings, practical exercises, simulation, the project board will engage the trained staff of NGOs to develop/refine their program, financial, HR, M&E and procurement manuals. The relevant team member in project board provide mentoring support in design and review of the organization manuals.

The core staff of selected NGOs complete online courses on a separate web portal developed by RAPID. The portal includes courses related to humanitarian architecture such as sphere, CHS, Code of conduct etc. The web portal will also link the NGO staff with free online courses offered by UN and INGOs like the OFDA-supported Building a Better Response and National NGO Program for Humanitarian Leadership. Additionally, as part of all agreed capacity building plans, capacity building activities include at least two complementary activities per NGO using mentoring and coaching methodologies, such as learning/study visits of the local NGOs to RAPID's ongoing projects to further enhance and develop skills via exposure and in-person learning for each NGO.

The capacity building activities aim to strengthen local NGOs capacity to conduct needs assessments develop proposals to secure funding from RAPID and other donor opportunities, and to put in place adequate systems to ensure they not only secure funds from international donors, but also manage the funds/projects, ensure compliance with the humanitarian standards and donor compliances.

## **5. Follow up/Monitor the Actions and Develop Linkages**

Concern will continue to monitor the change in performance and capacity of NGOs and DMAs against the agreed action plans and targets. NGOs will be linked with DMAs to assist them to conduct needs assessment in the immediate aftermath of any disaster and also support immediate rescue and relief efforts, and DMAs may second staff to NGOs (and vice versa) to promote experiential learning.

The relevant team in project board conduct monitoring and support visit on regular intervals to track progress on agreed action plans and recommend solutions for further improvements. The project board conduct regular performance review meetings to evaluate progress on agreed plan, additional support required and progress toward desired results.

## **6. Assess Performance Improvements**

After completion of capacity building activities, both DMAs and NGOs continue to implement the learnings and adopt the improved system developed during capacity building activities. RAPID project board including team member from NGOs and DMAs, conduct a post capacity assessment to analyze the improvement made during the course of capacity building initiatives. The assessment team compare the result of post assessment with the pre-assessment findings to determine the success and recommend any improvement or support if required. The immediate outcomes of the capacity building initiatives will take time to deliver the desired results however the success can be assessed to review the improvement in internal system, implementation of learnings across the organization (such as NGOs started using improved procurement manual or the DMAs has developed emergency response SoPs).