



# KNOWLEDGE MATTERS

Diverse Partnerships  
in Concern

Issue 28 | July 2020

**CONCERN**  
worldwide

**ENDING  
EXTREME POVERTY  
WHATEVER  
IT TAKES**

If you have any contributions, ideas or topics for future issues of Knowledge Matters please contact the editorial team by email at [knowledgematters@concern.net](mailto:knowledgematters@concern.net).

The views expressed are the authors' and do not necessarily coincide with those of Concern Worldwide or its partners.

## Knowledge Matters basics

Knowledge Matters offers practice-relevant analysis relating to the development and humanitarian work of Concern Worldwide. It provides a forum for staff and partners to exchange ideas and experiences. The publication is committed to encouraging high quality analysis in the understanding of Concern's work. Concern staff and partners document their ideas and experiences through articles. Articles are very short – 500 – 1,500 words. Usually you only have space to make two or three interesting points. Here are some tips on writing a short feature article:

- Start by imagining your audience – a Concern colleague. Why are they interested – why do they want to read what you have to say? When you identify what your most important point is, say it straight away, in the title or first sentence.
- What can others learn from your story? Focus on this. Remember to back up your story with evidence. This can be taken from evaluations.
- It's easier to get people reading if you start with the human perspective – mentioning real people and real-life events. (You don't have to give names).
- Use short sentences. Use Concern's style guide to help you.
- Keep paragraphs to a maximum of six lines long.

- Use clear language. Many of the readers of Knowledge Matters are non-native English speakers, so think carefully about using idioms or colloquial language that might not be easily understood by others.
- Always avoid assuming too high a level of knowledge of the topic you are writing about on the part of the reader.
- Use active sentences ('we held a workshop' not 'a workshop was held by us')
- Use short and clear expressions.
- Keep your title short - no more than eight words.
- Where necessary use photos to accompany the narrative but ensure that you follow the Dóchas Code of Conduct on Images and Messages and Concern's internal rules on informed consent and image captions.

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**Cover photo:** The Community Resilience Action Group (CRAG) of Vati Kapasia, Kapasia Union, Sundarganj, Bangladesh showed Concern visitors the Community Action Plan (CAP) they developed following an assessment of the natural capital of their community. The CAP highlights the different issues, targeted households, what support is required, from whom and the timeframe for action. Photo: Amy Rose McGovern / Concern Worldwide.

# Contents

- 4 Working in Diverse Partnerships** Marsha Montgomery

---

- 6 Partnership in Pakistan: As local as possible, as international as necessary** Abdul Ghaffar

---

- 12 Capacity Development for Partner Organizations in Malawi** Dhaquir Bashir

---

- 16 CMAM Surge partnerships and scale-up in Niger** Lucy Lafferty, Mariama Mahamadou Hamani and Amanda Yourchuck

---

- 19 A global partnership for gender transformation: Our partnership with Sonke** Adèle Fox

---

- 22 Security risk management and partnership** Peter Doyle

---

- 24 The Zurich Flood Resilience Alliance** Samuel Fox

---

- 28 Coming in from the edge: A partnership approach to mainstreaming development education in Ireland** Michael Doorly

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- 31 Contributing Authors**

## From the Issue Editor:

When I was first approached with the idea of a Knowledge Matters issue on Partnerships, I leapt at the opportunity to showcase the many diverse partnerships that I was slowly learning about in Concern. I hope that this issue offers a glimpse of the varied partnerships that exist across the organisation and hopefully might inspire you to contribute to further effective partnerships across the organisation.

This issue highlights Concern's approach to working in partnership across various sectoral interventions, programmes and regions. Pakistan's RAPID Fund article describes a programme which has evolved and refined how it supports primarily local NGOs over a period of time. The article about Concern Malawi documents an Irish Aid funded Graduation programme implemented by four local partners and how Concern works with them and builds their capacity to improve systems. An article on cross-cutting interventions includes CMAM (community-based management of acute malnutrition) and how through informal NGO partnerships, the CMAM Surge approach began to be formalized through project consortiums across the region. The gender transformative approach implemented in partnership with Sonke is outlined in an article that looks at the approach and impact to date; aimed at transforming staff attitudes to be more gender equitable and support capacity in gender programming. Security risk management is explored in another article, including the nature and level of risk facing local and national NGOs, and what Concern is currently doing to support good security management practice of partners. The article on the Zurich Flood Resilience Alliance illustrates the coming together of the private sector, INGOs, research and academia in partnership, with the goal to increase investment into pre-event resilience building that better support vulnerable communities. Finally, an article by our Active Citizenship team focuses on how Concern works in a consortia partnership across Ireland in a bid to mainstream development education, in the belief that an educated and engaged public is central to creating a sustained commitment to the world's most vulnerable.

I would like to thank all those who took the time to contribute to this issue of Knowledge Matters on Partnership, especially in light of the unprecedented time we currently find ourselves having to work in, under the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Marsha Montgomery**, Partnership Adviser, Dublin

# Working in Diverse Partnerships

By: Marsha Montgomery

Concern's Partnership policy (2019) states that, '*Concern cannot achieve its mission in isolation. We believe we can achieve greater impact working in collaboration with other organisations and institutions*'. Concern is increasingly working in fragile and conflict-affected states. The varied country contexts that influence Concern's interventions incorporate a host of elements, some of which include, geographical access to communities, political contextual analysis (local, national and regional structures), and importantly access to sufficient funding. Together these and other elements help shape how Concern chooses to work in various countries. This can be either through direct implementation, alliances, through sub-contractors, implementing partners, the private sector or in consortia; alongside working with relevant local authorities, ministries of national government and other INGOs, local and national NGOs and civil society networks.

It has taken me a little time to find out about the many diverse partnerships that currently exist across Concern. This is what I have discovered alongside the variety of articles that are illustrated in this Knowledge Matters issue.

Concern remains committed to working **strategically** in partnership with other international actors, such as the UN, International NGOs, and global platforms, where we can have a greater impact.

**Strategic advocacy** partnerships include working with Alliance 2015, with seven

European non-governmental organisations working together to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We are a member of the Global Nutrition Cluster (GNC) Standing Advisory Group and contribute to the overall goal of safeguarding and improving the nutritional status of crises-affected populations. Concern also works with Interaction, USA, a thought leader and voice for nearly 200 NGOs working to eliminate extreme poverty, strengthen human rights and citizen participation; with Dóchas in Ireland, a leading voice for organisations working towards global justice; the NGO Voice in the EU on humanitarian aid; and the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) in Geneva, working towards more principled and effective humanitarian action.

Concern are keen to work in partnership with **evidence-based institutions**, academia, speciality based organisations such as: Sonke Gender Justice who advocate for greater gender justice and equality; the Conflict Unit in Dublin City University on research; Tuft University on research on seasonality of water contamination across the water chain and child malnutrition; the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine on measuring health utilisation of the extreme poor and marginal people in Bangladesh.

In the **private sector** Concern is a partner in a consortium working with Z Zurich Foundation funding Concern's flood resilience work in 22 flood-vulnerable communities in Bangladesh. In Niger, a

partnership with Kerry Group has been established since 2012 to increase food production and diversity of nutrient-rich fruit and vegetables; promote key health practices; access to safe water and improved sanitation. Also in Niger, the David Nikkel Foundation funding focuses on cash transfers, with the Turing Foundation complementing the current Concern education projects, with a focus on teacher training and improving access for vulnerable children to quality formal education.

In Somalia, a partnership was formed with the main Mobile Network Operator of Somalia to test the introduction of voice recognition technology to strengthen identity verification of recipients receiving cash through mobile operators. In addition, Concern has a partnership with the multinational engineering company Mott MacDonald, who provide technical support for engineering projects.

In Turkey, a host country to over 3 million Syrian **refugees**, there are several key partnerships. The Maya Foundation implemented the Trauma Informed Schools programme in nine Turkish public schools in Sanliurfa Province, where Concern Turkey staff had little access to. Adyaman, is a small grassroots organisation, in which the partnership with Concern focused on delivering protection programming. Concern Turkey is also working on a NetHope grant to provide 5- to 14-year-old children with tablets in order to provide them with access to educational resources in Arabic and Turkish at home, to support the transition of Syrian children into Turkish schools.

As outlined here, Concern engages in many different types of partnerships in order to achieve our goals. The following articles outline a selection of these partnerships across several different countries of operation. Country programmes looking to enhance their partnership engagements are encouraged to liaise with Concern's Partnership Adviser in the Strategy, Advocacy and Learning (SAL) Directorate for advice and support.

# Partnership in Pakistan: As local as possible, as international as necessary

By Abdul Ghaffar

## Pakistan: Humanitarian Context

Pakistan's diverse topography, geology, changing weather and complex geopolitical position underlie its vulnerability to natural and complex disasters. The northern and central part of country was affected by devastating floods for almost seven consecutive years (2010-17) whereas the southern part of the country, over the last many years, is facing drought of moderate to severe intensity. This has resulted in protracted food security and nutrition crises exceeding the World Health Organisation (WHO) emergency threshold of 15% for wasting rates of children under the age of five years. Situated in a seismically active zone, the country has experienced major earthquakes in 2005, 2013, 2015 and 2019. The country is also marred by the internal conflict in the North-western Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) resulting in internal displacement of about five million people over the last few years with regular periodic returns.

## Strategy to leverage from partnership with local NGOs

Concern has been implementing humanitarian and long-term development programmes in Pakistan since 2001. As per our assessment of local civil society actors, the country has a substantial local NGO base with strong potential to contribute towards timely and effective humanitarian

preparedness, response and long-term development issues. However, Pakistani NGOs have serious capacity limitations coupled with resource/funding constraints. Therefore, since the start of our operations in Pakistan, we are working in partnership with the local NGOs with broader objectives to provide timely and effective humanitarian assistance as well as to support in capacity development of local partners to sustain national capacity to prepare for and respond to future crises.

As part of our partnership strategy, Concern undertook an expansive hazard and vulnerability assessment of the different parts of the country including assessment of potential partners to engage in case of any emergency. Concern conducted an assessment of each organisation's operational and systems capacity. After selection of suitable partners, Concern signed 'partnership agreements/Memorandum of Understand (MoU)' with these partners and provides training on rapid needs assessment, emergency response, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Sphere Standards, financial management and logistics on a regular basis. As per the MoU, partners monitor the situation in their vicinity, share humanitarian situation updates and support in assessment where required. In the event of an emergency, Concern and the local organization would activate the partnership into a formal response project agreement (depending on availability of funding). This strategy is a central pillar in Concern's ability to leverage





Local NGO staff attending a training on needs assessment and proposal development organised by Concern Pakistan, March 2020. Photo: Iqbal Shahid / Concern Worldwide.

emergency response in Pakistan. To date this approach has proven to be effective and Concern in partnership with local NGOs has responded to a range of natural disasters and complex emergencies, including the Afghan refugee crisis, earthquakes, cyclones, droughts, flood, and internally displaced people (IDP) crises.

The pool of pre-identified local partners in disaster prone areas sharing disaster updates directly from the field help Concern in advocacy with the donors and prioritizing the humanitarian responses. Due to their grassroots knowledge and broad outreach, the local NGOs from affected areas enable Concern in reaching the most vulnerable<sup>1</sup> in far-flung areas across the country. For example; in the aftermath of the 2015 floods and earthquake in northern Pakistan, the local NGOs in Chitral district helped Concern to rapidly assess the needs

<sup>1</sup> It has been found that the group of people termed 'most vulnerable' in Pakistan includes women, children, people living with disabilities (PWDs), people with existing poverty and affected by crisis (flood/drought), the elderly, people affected by re-current crises, protracted displacement etc. Disasters and crisis have varying degree of impacts on these groups – for example, during conflict-induced displacement the women, children, PWDs and elderly suffer the most.

Working through local partners has increased Concern's outreach to communities in most neglected and hard to reach areas. The approach has helped Concern to develop in-depth contextual knowledge, develop relationships with the communities and stakeholders as well as increased capacity to respond to multiple humanitarian crisis in different areas.

and facilitate coordination with the local government. These local NGOs lacked capacity and resources to respond, but the RAPID<sup>2</sup> programme supported them to meet critical needs. These NGOs helped RAPID in overcoming barriers related to culture, language and access, and enabled Concern to reach over 400,000 beneficiaries. Similarly, when IDPs were returning to the ex-FATA region, after two years of government's operation against militants, the local NGOs enabled RAPID to access North Waziristan (NW). International organizations were not allowed to work

<sup>2</sup> Responding to Pakistan's Internally Displaced (RAPID) is an emergency response programme funded by USAID.

inside NW, however, Concern with the support of local partners was the first international organization allowed to access and deliver humanitarian assistance to 412,178 newly returned IDPs. Due to RAPID's quality work and effective coordination with the stakeholders, access for other humanitarian actors was restored thereafter.

Concern also engaged these tested partners of emergency response in the delivery of its development programmes. Having this pre-identified pool of tested partners with compatibility to Concern's vision and mission helps us in quick engagement and better programming in remote parts of the country.

## RAPID – Localizing humanitarian aid delivery

Based on its history of successful engagement and expertise of working through local NGOs in Pakistan, Concern was awarded RAPID Fund by USAID/OFDA. RAPID's objective is to assist the most vulnerable population in the aftermath of any natural or human-induced disaster across the country through small projects. In close coordination with the relevant clusters, I/NGOs, target communities, Disaster Management Authorities (DMAs) and working alongside existing humanitarian mechanisms, RAPID provides timely, flexible, effective, and needs-based projects to NGOs through a systematic, short-term, small grants mechanism.

Concern has been implementing RAPID since 2009, having worked in partnership with over 100 NGOs and completed 260 projects assisting over 6 million people. Due to its short format (3-4 months projects), availability of funds at the onset of disaster, multiple thematic sectors and wide geographic coverage, RAPID is a unique funding mechanism easily accessible to local NGOs and has allowed Concern to respond timely to the critical

humanitarian needs. Concern, through RAPID, is among the first responders to a number of humanitarian crisis across the country contributing toward Concern's humanitarian identity to maintaining the capacity to respond quickly and effectively to emergencies. A study commissioned by IASC regarded RAPID to have the shortest processing time for humanitarian programmes and noted that RAPID good practices in sub-award to local NGOs was highlighted as a strength<sup>3</sup>.



A drought-affected family collect water from the Hand Pump installed by local NGOs partner in Umerkot district, Sindh province February 2020. Project supported by Concern RAPID. Photo: Manooj Kumar / Concern Worldwide.

## Capacity Development of Partners

Concern has worked through a range of local organizations in Pakistan for short and long term periods. Capacity building and support underlie each relationship to promote quality work and projects are managed on the principles of accountability and transparency. Concern's approach tends to focus on making local organisations a better fit for partnerships, as well as well as a more effective humanitarian actor.

<sup>3</sup>. <https://www.icvanetwork.org/resources/partner-capacity-assessments-humanitarian-ngos-fit-purpose>.



Apart from humanitarian assistance to millions, RAPID through its capacity building initiatives has worked with over 100 NGOs as well as national disaster management authorities increasing local disaster management and response capacities. CAFOD in their study on “Investing in national NGO response capacity” regarded RAPID as a model for replication<sup>4</sup>.

**“Mr. Israr Khan, CEO of local NGO Alfalah Development Foundation (ADF) share that the partnership with Concern was unique in certain ways, the foremost and exceptional aspect of the partnership was the capacity building of the partners. Prior to this partnership, ADF was struggling to develop and institutionalize various essential systems, which require resources and guidance. The partnership with Concern streamlined our functional departments, enabling a change in organizational culture from adhocism to professionalism with improved capacity of the staff, strengthening programmatic and operational systems and ensuring accountability/transparency at all levels”.**

RAPID follows a multi-pronged strategy for the capacity building of local NGOs with a focus on enhancing both institutional and staff capacity and capabilities through both formal trainings and on-the-job capacity building support. RAPID convenes training sessions for the NGOs based in disaster prone areas on needs assessment and proposal development. RAPID closely works with potential partners to finalize the project proposals and jointly develop the implementation plan. A project board is formed including a representative from each partner to jointly oversee the progress and determine the support required by partners. Support to partners is based on the assessment of gaps, risk and

capacity development needs identified in consultation with the partner prior to engagement as well as during regular follow-ups and interactions.



Concern RAPID engineer provide technical backstopping to partner staff while implementation of infrastructure rehabilitation project in Chitral district, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, 2016. Photo: Ihsan Ur Rehman, Creative Approaches for Development (CAD) / Concern Worldwide.

During the project implementation, capacity-building support is not only specific to project deliverables, but also on enhancing partners’ internal controls and their understanding of humanitarian standards. RAPID conducts a detailed induction with the partner’s staff while on-the-job capacity building continues for procurement of programme supplies, beneficiaries/site selection, distributions, technical support, security management and developing and operationalizing monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plans. The approach to capacity enhancement is unique in terms of formal training supplemented with on-the-job capacity enhancement and hands-on support, the ‘learning through doing’ resulted in improved systems and quality programming by local NGO partners. Over the period, Concern has developed tools, templates and guidelines compatible to the profile and size of local NGOs. Many of the small NGOs adapted a number of good practices from Concern which significantly contributed in improving their organizational capacity and internal controls systems, enabling them secure funding from other donors. The Executive Director of local NGO,

<sup>4</sup>. Investing in National NGO Response Capacity,” CAFOD, 2013: <https://www.icvnetwork.org/node/6300>.

Bright Star Development Society Balochistan (BSDSB) Mr. Naseer Ahmed shares;

**“Prior to partnership with Concern, my organization did not have procurement experience through competitive procedures (i.e. tendering) for emergency response materials. BSDSB prepared its own procurement manual and harnessed internal controls procedures with support and guidance from Concern team. BSDSB got attention from implementing Low Cost Transitional Shelters Project (via Concern partnership), and was able to secure a similar project worth USD 100,000 from Government of Sindh. Moreover, partnership and work experience with Concern has helped my organization to obtain funds from USAID Small Grants Programme”.**

According to the CEO of SWRDO, a small local NGO operational in extremely poor areas of South Punjab, which was supported by Concern during 2010 and subsequent flood responses,

**“Concern / RAPID not only built capacity of our staff but also strengthened our SoPs, financial and programmatic systems which now meet the international standards of project implementation. RAPID team provided valuable technical support during our partnership and on the basis of this support and experience, we have been able to access funding opportunities from other donors”.**

## What makes the partnership successful?

The principles of equality, transparency, result-oriented approach, responsibility and complementarity underpin our partnership with the local NGOs. Our approach of providing hands-on support



Partner staff in system training (HR, procurement, finance and security management) organised by Concern RAPID, March 2020. Photo by Abdul Ghaffar / Concern Worldwide.

and working together with the local NGOs remained successful in maintaining programme quality as well as improvement in partner capacity to respond to critical humanitarian situations. As a result of our engagement, local partners have developed necessary skills to advocate with local and national actors and secure funding from institutional donors for emergency as well as development programmes.

Despite the short duration of the projects, RAPID engagement with local partners proved effective due to following key approaches;

- Involving the local NGO partners during the design of the proposal is critical to develop ownership and common understanding on project approaches and implementation. Support to small local NGOs in development of Accountability to Affected Population Plan (AAP), Code of Conduct Implementation Plan and Complaint Response Mechanism (CRM) for the project helps in the implementation of an accountable programme.
- Coordination with relevant Clusters/ Working Groups and Disaster Management Authorities at the initial on-set of the emergency and during implementation helps in getting access to the areas and avoids duplication as



Partner staff deliver an awareness session to drought affected families on nutrition and hygiene, February 2020. Photo: Manooj Kumar / Concern Worldwide.

well as supporting local NGOs' access and understanding of coordination mechanisms.

- Over the period, RAPID has developed context specific guidelines (referred to as 'Grantee System Pack') with templates, documents/procedures compatible to size and duration of the project and profile of local NGOs. These ready-to-use guidelines and tools proved effective for successful implementation of projects.
- The training and induction for partner staff was based on adult learning approaches with regular follow-ups and support in implementation of learnings.
- Based on Concern's communication strategy, Concern supported partners in developing project communication procedures to guide their staff to involve committees in beneficiary selection, sharing entitlements, criteria and CRM. It also assists partners to coordinate with local authorities/line departments, involve village committees, beneficiaries in monitoring of the project activities and handover of communal infrastructure.
- On-the-job capacity building was carried out by providing support during selection of beneficiaries, procurements of major supplies, etc. Concern staff participates as advisors in all major procurements to support the process and ensure compliance.

- Technical training and periodic support and supervision of partner teams for WASH, shelter and engineering works was provided.
- Programme, System and technical staff regularly visit the field areas to support (identify gaps and advise the remedial actions) and review documentation. Short refresher training (few hours or one day training) is given where required.
- To avoid end of project burden and compliance issues, partners submit documentation immediately after the completion of the activity to Concern / RAPID. A thorough review is conducted and feedback shared to address the gaps and recommendations for future improvements.
- In case of access constraints, Concern utilizes remote monitoring such as involvement of line department officials to conduct monitoring/end of project evaluation (with necessary orientation/tools), photos/videos of completed schemes and interviews of beneficiaries, and peer monitoring through other I/NGOs or partners working in the area.



Concern RAPID engineer provide technical backstopping to partner staff while implementation of infrastructure rehabilitation project in Chitral district, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, 2016. Photo: Ihsan Ur Rehman, Creative Approaches for Development (CAD) / Concern Worldwide.

# Capacity Development for Partner Organizations in Malawi

By Dhaquir Bashir

## Background

With support from the Irish Aid Programme Fund II (IAPF II), Concern Worldwide Malawi is implementing the Graduation Programme (2017-2021) in Nsanje and Mangochi districts. The programme focuses on four main outcomes as follows:

- **Outcome 1:** Increased asset ownership and returns from assets for most vulnerable (graduation model) households
- **Outcome 2:** A more equitable community
- **Outcome 3:** Reducing community risk and vulnerability to climate change and locally identified hazards.
- **Outcome 4:** Improved national and district level policy frameworks and implementation of social protection principles and sustainable graduation

Concern is working in partnership with four Local Partner Organizations; CISANET (Civil Society Agriculture Network) is leading on the climate smart agriculture advocacy component of the programme (Outcome 4); Churches Action for Relief and Development (CARD) is leading the household visits for cohort 2 and 3 in Nsanje. Concern also works with two additional NGOs on outcome 2 that are engaging with communities to fight HIV/AIDS stigma. Friends of AIDS Support Trust (FAST) in Nsanje and Community Initiative for Self-Reliance (CISER) in Mangochi. All partnerships are in the form of annual sub-

granting agreements. Concern works closely with all four local NGOs and includes them in Graduation team catch-up meetings as well as planning and review meetings.

## Capacity Development



Concern M&E Coordinator providing M&E support to FAST in Nsanje in 2019: Photo: Dhaquir Bashir / Concern Worldwide.

In Malawi, Concern works in high quality, strategic, objective-driven and innovative partnerships with its partners that complement Concern's capabilities with local context and knowledge and ensures good relationships, open communication, respect and a strong commitment to mutual learning and accountability by appreciating a diversity of perspectives. Concern commits to the following principles;

- Transparency and authenticity with our partners by respecting autonomy and their organizational journey.

- Providing mutual agreed capacity development process as part of our commitment to accountability
- Being a reliable partner that supports mutual accountability within the partnership and strong accountability to Concern's donors and other stakeholders.

In ensuring compliance to the above principles, partners went through an annual capacity assessment (CLOFAT/CLOSAT<sup>1</sup>) where their capacity and risk were rated on programme management, financial/procurement systems, HR systems, policies (including safeguarding), and governance (regulatory compliance). Gaps were identified and capacity development plans established together with the partners. The process took about a week. Following this, the team conducted 2-day trainings through workshops or on-the-job trainings followed by ongoing mentorships and coaching focusing on the identified gaps and prioritizing areas that partners felt they could add value for growth. The partners were given 1 – 2 months to test and pilot different approaches that are supported with frequent check-ins for guidance and feedback. This was monitored through follow up phone calls and visits on a monthly basis. We found that partners have implemented most of the recommended practices. i.e. policies, recruitment processes, registrations, and payment of taxes.

The support provided is as follows;

- a. Supported partners with monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems that include data collection tools and monitoring the log-frame.
- b. Reviewed and supported partners in strengthening their organizational systems (HR, Finance and Operations)

- c. All partners underwent a successful safeguarding and code of conduct workshop/training.
- d. Trained partners on 'Effective Communication and Reporting' and developed a standard reporting template for all Graduation partners to improve efficiency in reporting.
- e. Supported partners in development of policies – Safeguarding, Data Protection, Recruitment policies, Anti-Fraud, IT and Data protection policies as well as Complaints Response Mechanisms.
- f. Employed gender initiatives with the partners – reviewed gender policy for one partner (CARD) and currently planning to conduct gender sessions with all partners.

## 1. Challenges

- a. **Limited availability and commitment** by the partners to engage in the capacity development process. One partner (CISANET) faced challenges when a key staff member received an opportunity to undertake a fellowship in the UK and was not replaced during that time. This led to an overburdening of other staff, particularly the Executive Director, resulting in a lack of time available for the remaining CISANET staff to engage with capacity building activities. The staff member has since returned, and improvements are already being seen. However, this highlights an important factor in that partner organisations may not be able to fill temporary gaps in staffing. In order to ensure progress, capacity development initiatives are broken down into small pieces/areas according to functions and then we identify who is available amongst the team to provide support, which is specific to that function or person. The other areas are followed up during the next visit.

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



**b. Partners taking time to implement recommended practices.** This is due to either being used to the old ways of doing things or they have not yet seen the value in adopting the recommended practice so they resist change. To ensure that this is avoided, partners are involved and engaged in every step of the process, ensuring that they contribute a lot in developing the new system so as to establish a sense of ownership. The system is piloted before being adopted to allow the partner to see value and appreciate why they need it.

**c. The size of the Partner Organization** also affects the nature of support provided to the partner (financial systems recommended for example). To deal with this challenge, the support provided is tailor made to each partner and we recommend processes and systems that are very easy to understand, follow and adopt. We also ensure that there is easy tracking of all processes where one can easily follow through. i.e. every transaction to be properly recorded in the books, have approved requisitions and vouchers before payment is made and the payment to be supported with a valid receipt – ensuring that every document is linked to the other, files are properly marked and stored for easy reporting.

**d. Communication challenge** between partners and Concern. This is due to unclear reporting lines and flow of information i.e. which type of information to report, to who and by when. To address this challenge, we have established key contact persons for programmes, finance and partnership related functions and the team is working on enhancing efficiency to ensure that there are clear reporting mechanisms and flow of information.

## 2. Major Lessons



Safeguarding workshop with CISANET in Lilongwe, July 2019. Photo: Rebecca Roemer / Concern Worldwide.

It is important to conduct regular programme review meetings including partner staff, usually quarterly, in order to monitor progress, work on challenges and provide/gain feedback to/from the partner.

- a. Increase partnership involvement and participation i.e. making sure they are part of the process when developing policies rather than just dictating or providing a readymade template for them to adopt. This improves a sense of ownership and responsibility.
- b. Check with other organizations working with the partner on capacity development areas to avoid duplication of efforts or overloading the partner with too much information.
- c. Support to partners should be tailor made and partner specific. This is because partners are different in size, funding, number of staff among other characteristics.
- d. Focus on strong relationship building between Concern, the partner organizations as well as other stakeholders.



### 3. Results

Through the capacity development process, partners have realised the following impact on their organizations:

Name of partner	Impact as a result of Concern support		
	Knowledge/skills acquired	Policies Developed	Operational
<b>CARD</b>	Effective communication and reporting training, training on Finance processes and reporting, Safeguarding and Code of Conduct training and having capacity development plans.	Safeguarding Policy, recruitment process, review of Gender Policy, Anti-Fraud Policy, IT Policy, Recruitment Policy.	Improved reporting using a standard template, use of logbooks on vehicles, use of donor codes on fuel, clear reconciliation processes on fuel (fuel management), having clear procurement and evaluation processes (to ensure value for money), M&E systems, improved financial reporting with appropriate documentation, designing and implementing CRM. Having an Asset Register, started complying and paying pensions, tax that are now up to date and tracking of progress on work plan.
<b>CISER</b>	Effective communication and reporting training, Safeguarding and Code of Conduct training, and having capacity development plans.	Safeguarding Policy, Code of Conduct, Anti-Fraud Policy and IT & Data Protection Policy.	Fuel Management (using donor codes), Financial reporting with appropriate documentation, clear procurement processes and evaluation (Value for Money), Installing a Quick Books accounting software, renewal of the Council of NGOs in Malawi (CONGOMA) fees for 2020.
<b>FAST</b>	Effective communication and reporting training, Safeguarding and Code of Conduct training, Finance processes systems and reporting and having capacity development plans	Safeguarding Policy, Code of Conduct, Recruitment Policy, Whistleblowing Policy and IT & Data Protection Policy.	M&E reporting tools, Improved reporting using a standard template, Fuel Management systems, Clear financial transactions, currently piloting CRM mechanism in Nsanje, Coming up with innovative ways on program delivery
<b>CISANET</b>	Safeguarding/Code of Conduct training and having capacity development plans	Safeguarding Policy	Safeguarding included in the recruitment process, improved reporting using the standard reporting template, able to track progress on work plan.

### 4. Conclusion

Concern adopted a systematic and integrated approach to partners' capacity development that involves trainings, provision of technical support and mentorship in all organizational areas on a monthly basis. Concern has made major progress with its partners, which has led to improved financial systems of partner organisations; human resource and recruitment practices; programme management, delivery and reporting due to well-established M&E systems; and compliance to their respective statutory requirements and policies.

# CMAM Surge partnerships and scale-up in Niger

By Lucy Lafferty, Mariama Mahamadou Hamani and Amanda Yourchuck

## Introduction

Concern has been providing life-saving treatment for children under five with acute malnutrition through the community-based management of acute malnutrition (CMAM) for 20 years, first piloting the programme in 2000 in Ethiopia. Despite this revolutionary approach to treatment, cases of acute malnutrition remain unacceptably high. This is particularly true in areas that are remote, underserved, and prone to shocks. It is in these places that health systems can experience both seasonal or unanticipated increases in cases of acute malnutrition, which can overwhelm already overstretched and fragile health services.

CMAM Surge was developed in response to these challenges. Rather than relying on traditional emergency responses to address spikes in acute malnutrition, which are often triggered late into an emergency only after nutritional surveys are completed, CMAM Surge relies on localized information and health systems strengthening (HSS) principles to ensure that health systems are able to better respond to and anticipate increases in demand for acute malnutrition treatment services. The aim of CMAM Surge is to ensure not only a more rapid, but also a more sustainable response, as health facilities and the local authorities that oversee them are encouraged to first look internally to determine what actions they can take to prepare for and respond to shocks.

CMAM Surge has experienced rapid scale-up and growth since its initial development,

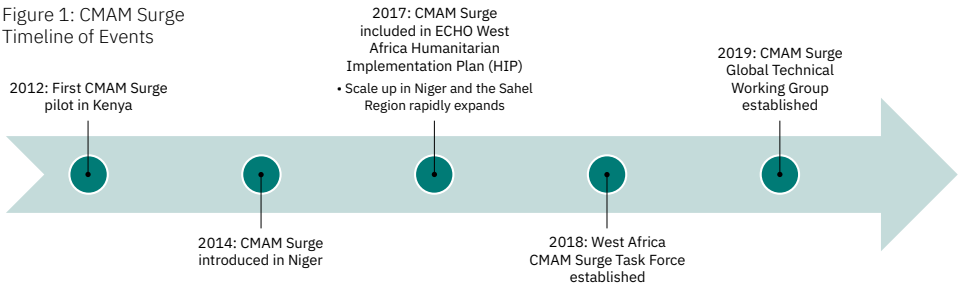
particularly in West and Central Africa. The need for fast and reliable technical assistance to both government ministries of health and partner NGOs has created a unique network of both formal and informal partnerships that support not only quality implementation but also encourage learning and sharing across a wide variety of contexts.

## CMAM Surge in Niger

The CMAM Surge approach was first developed in Kenya in 2012 and was introduced in Niger in 2014. Concern had already established a strong working relationship with the Niger *Ministère de la Santé Publique Direction de la Nutrition* (Ministry of Health [MOH] Nutrition Department), having supported the integration of CMAM into routine health services since 2009. The Tahoua region of Niger was chosen for the initial pilot, based on the high prevalence of acute malnutrition and its known health system challenges, which included insufficient human resources, poor stock management skills, and a limited understanding of how to manage a CMAM programme within the context of overall health facility operations.

Government support for the approach and the publication of the CMAM Surge Guidelines in French paved the way for the scale-up of the approach in Niger and the wider Sahel Region. 2016 and 2017 saw several workshops held in Niamey to sensitise other non-governmental

Figure 1: CMAM Surge Timeline of Events



organisations (NGOs), UN agencies and government structures on the approach. Of significant importance was the inclusion of CMAM Surge as an example approach in ECHO's 2017 Humanitarian Implementation Plan (HIP).

Rapid scale-up of CMAM Surge began across the Sahel in 2018 following the inclusion of the approach in ECHO partner project proposals. With the award of new projects across the region, there was a sudden increase in demand for technical assistance to introduce and scale-up the CMAM Surge approach. ECHO's partners, in Niger and throughout the Sahel, turned to Concern for this support and a network of informal CMAM Surge partnerships was created.

In Niger, Concern conducted CMAM Surge trainings for multiple NGOs across Tahoua and Zinder regions. This was done at the request of the partners, with no formal programme or partnership arrangements in place and often included visits to Concern's implementing site in Tahoua. Some partners even brought staff from other countries to attend trainings conducted by Concern in Niger. Save the Children also invited the Concern team to Mali to train the Malian MOH and their NGO partners<sup>1</sup> on the approach.

<sup>1</sup> Save the Children was providing technical assistance and coordination support to the Mali MOH and the following NGO partners: IRC, Tdh, ACTED, AMCP/ALIMA, COOPI, ACF

## Formalisation of NGO Partnerships

Beginning in 2019 these informal NGO partnerships around CMAM Surge began to be formalized through project consortiums. In Niger, Concern is currently leading an ECHO-funded consortium with ACF and COOPI of which one of the primary objectives is to support the government in the scale up with CMAM Surge. This project includes a dedicated CMAM Surge National Expert to provide technical support to other NGOs through trainings and the sharing of technical materials. In the same year, the MOH committed to financing a proportion of CMAM Surge national scale up and included activities in their 2020 budget via a donor pooled fund called the *Fonds Commun* (Common Fund). The collaboration with the government is continuing as we support them to form a national pool of CMAM Surge trainers, so that the approach can be implemented across the country.

Given the large number of partners implementing CMAM Surge within Niger and across the region, the need for strong coordination grew. In Niger, CMAM Surge coordination was originally conducted through the ECHO Nutrition Alliance, of which seven of the nine partners are implementing CMAM Surge in Niger and all have received training on the approach by Concern. This donor and NGO-driven partnership has since been formalized through a shift towards anchoring CMAM Surge coordination within the government-led *Groupe Technique de*

*Travail* ([GTT] Nutrition Technical Working Group) through the creation of the CMAM Surge National Taskforce as a sub-body under the existing GTT CMAM working group. All partners who are implementing CMAM Surge are part of the group, which has as an objective to harmonise and coordinate the implementation of CMAM Surge across Niger.

Alongside national level coordination activities in Niger, regional coordination is led by a regional CMAM Surge Task Force that promotes the sharing of lessons learned and technical expertise across NGOs and Sahelian countries as they implemented CMAM Surge for the first time.

The need for ongoing partnerships around the scale-up and refinement of the CMAM Surge approach continues to grow as global

interest in the model increases. CMAM Surge, including adaptations of the approach to tackle other health system challenges such as malaria, is now being implemented in 12 countries globally. At global level, Concern has laid the initial groundwork for a global CMAM Surge Technical Working Group, comprised of NGOs and donors, that will help oversee quality scale-up and the dissemination of new learning and innovations.

Partnerships have clearly played an important role in the scale-up of CMAM Surge, contributing to its quality through shared technical expertise and to its ongoing improvement by exchanging lessons learned and best practices.

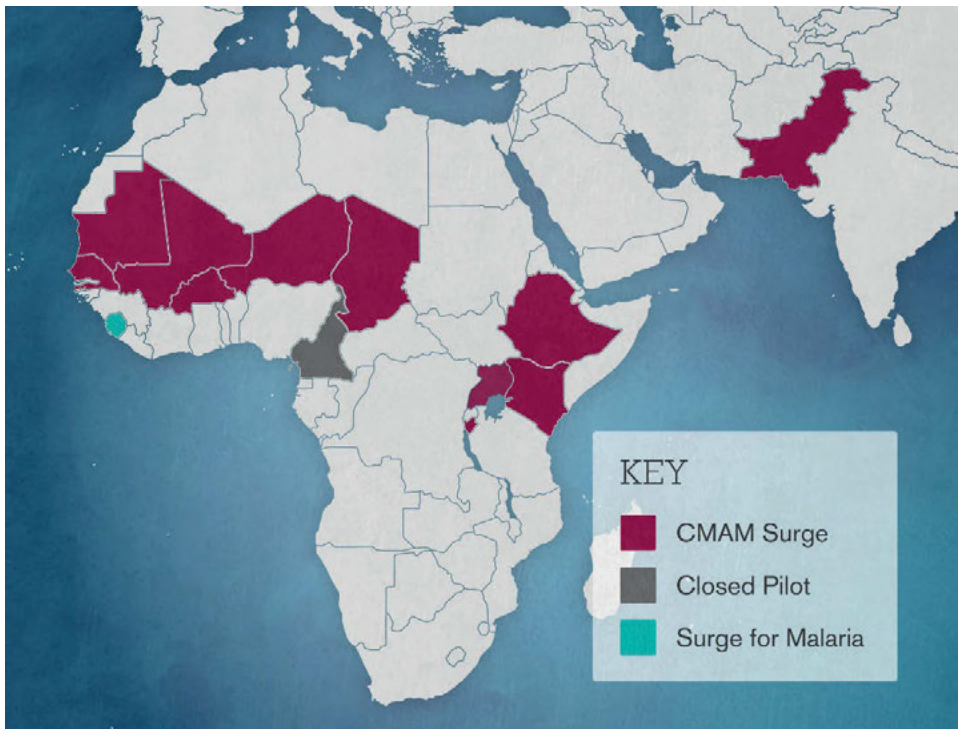


Figure 2: Mapping of CMAM Surge Implementation

# A global partnership for gender transformation: Our partnership with Sonke

By Adèle Fox

## Our partnership with Sonke

Concern is dedicated to tackling inequality as a means to addressing extreme poverty. Since 2012, we have gathered promising evidence that gender transformative dialogue is effective in achieving greater results in our programme areas. However, it became clear that the next step was to implement this type of approach consistently and at scale across our programmes. In order to do this, we needed greater technical support and experience in the Engaging Men approach to build our capacity globally. Our partnership with Sonke Gender Justice, a South African NGO specialising in gender equality, prevention of gender-based violence and HIV, is helping us to achieve this aim.

Through the partnership, which began in 2017 and is now in its second phase, we aim to transform staff attitudes to be more gender equitable by identifying and practicing positive changes in their own lives. Following this shift, we are striving to create a more equitable workplace and build capacity in gender programming so that we realise an organisational shift towards gender transformative programming.

The advantage of partnering with an organisation like Sonke over a prolonged period and across multiple countries is that Concern has developed a standard approach with associated materials that can be tailored appropriately according to the context. At the

same time, Sonke has developed a greater understanding of Concern's programming and can support staff to develop plans for integrating gender more effectively into their programmes, while their flexibility to adapt to specific country needs has been an added advantage to the partnership. Additionally, having one administrative process for the period of the partnership mitigates the need for the regular consultant procedures for each country visit.

## Gender transformation in Concern staff

Overall, staff have reported that they have found the workshop engaging and impactful, with the majority reporting that they are now more aware of their gender bias in different situations. Many have reported that they have noticed positive changes to gender relations in the workplace, such as women being more vocal during workplace discussions, and greater capacity to strengthen programming from a gender perspective. In some countries, local partner staff also participated in these workshops.

The Gender Role Attitude (GRA) score was used as a pre and post indicator at most Sonke workshops. In DRC, staff scores increased from 7.79 to 8.34; Malawi from 8.1 to 8.85 and Afghanistan from 7.81 to 8.43 (out of 10). However, it was quickly noted by Sonke facilitators that these scores



Staff participating in the Violence Clothesline activity during a Sonke workshop in Liberia, Adèle Fox 2018

can be misleading as to the real views of the participants. Thus, going forward more qualitative methods will also be included to measure the impact of the workshops.

One challenge faced in some contexts was the strong religious influence over participants' views on equality. Sonke facilitators adapted to these contexts allowing discussions on religious texts to unfold but not dominate discussions. In response to this challenge in Niger, progressive Imams were invited to the second Sonke workshop to respond to points relating very specifically to the Qur'anic teachings that could not be resolved within the group and this allowed discussions to progress.

Additionally, breaking negative social and cultural norms was highlighted as the greatest obstacle to respondents being able to maintain the changes they committed to and many staff pointed out that without their spouses/partners going through the same process, change will be harder to implement.

## Impact at programme level

Sonke's support has assisted several country programmes to implement variations of the approach. In addition to transforming staff's own attitudes, this has included reviewing materials for use at community level and related strategies, building staff capacity in facilitation skills and monitoring the quality of implementation through field observation visits.

Concern's programme in **Central African Republic (CAR)**, for example, has put in place a strategy for community leaders and their spouses to engage in gender transformative trainings and develop subsequent community action plans to disseminate messages more widely. **Bangladesh** continues to work through local partners to implement gender transformative sessions with 'Change Makers' in its urban slum and pavement dwelling communities. The GRA score for all programme participants increased



from 4.38 at baseline to 6.72 after three years while those who participated in the sessions reported greater personal agency, increased involvement of men at home, their role as a positive role model for others and greater engagement with local authorities. In addition, households in which women are at least consulted in key areas of household decision-making increased from 16% at baseline to 91% in year three. **Rwanda** continues to engage members of the Graduation programme in gender transformative dialogue. Qualitative data showed an improvement in women's decision-making ability in the home, improved communication and reduced conflict between couples, increased involvement of men in household chores and childcare, and couples being seen as role models to others in the community.

In a similar Graduation model in **Malawi** (as part of research with Trinity College Dublin), women are observing positive changes in their partners leading to improved handling of intra-familial conflict and improved partner relationships. Men are taking more responsibility for household chores and women report greater freedom of movement and engagement in economic activities outside the home. Participants report that gender-based violence has decreased while the consultation of women in key areas of household decision-making has improved from 37% at baseline to 52% in year three.

Research also continues with University College Dublin in **Sierra Leone** using a gender transformational approach with both teachers and couples aiming to improve literacy outcomes of children through creating a safer learning environment. The GRA score improved from 4.15 at baseline to 7.2 after three years while male domination of household decision-making on resources, assets, and finances reduced from 6.41 to 2.1 out of 10. Additionally, the team also documented that engagement with Sonke had been particularly useful in their work with teachers to discourage corporal punishment of students and instead promote positive discipline methods. Sonke's gender transformative approach was also incorporated into the adolescent Life Skills curriculum, which staff felt had helped children behave more respectfully and had improved communications and relationships between adolescents and parents/teachers.

Concern's experience of engaging men and women in gender transformative dialogue continues to broaden, with an increasing number of country programmes implementing similar approaches. Sonke has provided a technical backstop for the design and implementation of many of these. As we scale up Sonke's support to all Concern country programmes, we anticipate that the momentum and impact seen so far will continue to strengthen.



Graduation programme participants taking part in Engaging Men sessions at community level, Mangochi, Malawi, Justyna Maciejczak, 2019.

# Security risk management and partnership

By Peter Doyle

Increased focus and attention on Security Risk Management (SRM) is required in partnership relationships between international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) like Concern and local or national non-governmental organisations (LNNGOs).

Following a significant decline in attacks on aid workers from the peak in 2013, the number of attacks has started to rise again over the last couple of years. NGO national staff continue to suffer the highest number of attacks, both in terms of absolute numbers and, increasingly, in terms of relative attack rates. According to the Aid Worker Security Database (AWSDB) about 60% of all aid worker fatalities in 2018 were national staff of LNNGOs. This 'risk-transfer' to local partners and personnel raises pressing ethical questions about the SRM resources afforded to local actors. As LNNGOs are being increasingly relied upon to deliver humanitarian assistance in conflict-affected and insecure contexts, their support requirements in terms of SRM need due consideration. Additionally, the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic - travel restrictions, repatriation of international staff and suspicion of international agencies – is increasing focus on the importance of collaboration between INGOs and LNNGOs.

A 2019 study conducted by Interaction and Humanitarian Outcomes found that the majority of field staff of both INGOs and LNNGOs see insecurity as the number one

threat to humanitarian operations. Survey respondents nearly unanimously agreed that INGOs have an “ethical duty of care” to their national partner organizations, but this has not always been realised in policy or practice. The Global Interagency Security Forum (GISF) is conducting research on SRM from the local partner’s perspective and has found that SRM is not sufficiently discussed in partnerships. The fact that LNNGOs do not request specific SRM support does not mean they do not have support needs. The power dynamics within partnerships, as well as competition for funding, can lead LNNGOs to take risks that they are not comfortable with in order to demonstrate effective programme delivery. As part of the ‘localisation agenda’ LNNGOs are being asked to do a lot more, but without necessarily sufficient resources being allocated to SRM.

SRM is an enabler of humanitarian action and is there to support programme delivery. Improved SRM practice among our partners leads to greater levels of assistance for the vulnerable communities that Concern and its partners serve. When the risk to partner staff is reduced to acceptable levels, those in need in some of the most insecure places in the world will have improved access to aid. Given stringent donor compliance, INGO support to partners has tended to focus on financial management and procedures to try and prevent fraud, theft, or other corrupt practices. However, SRM deserves at least equal consideration.

Concern has been supporting our partners with SRM in a number of ways. We have invited partner staff to our own security trainings, recent examples include partner staff from South Sudan attending both the Hostile Environment Awareness Training (HEAT) trainings that we run in Uganda as well as the 'soft' security management training that we run on a regional basis, in this case in Nairobi. Partner staff from Somalia also attended the Nairobi training. Our own Security Focal Points (SFP) liaise with their counterparts in our partner organisations, sharing information and analysis in order to improve the security management practice of each organisation. The provision of communications equipment can also be a key element of SRM support. All of this support contributes to improved SRM practice by our partners, including the development of standard operating procedures (SOP) covering key aspects such as journey management and communications. We encourage partner staff to report security concerns and incidents to facilitate analysis of the threat environment. The ultimate aim is to provide safer access to target communities so that they can continue to benefit from our programme interventions.

There is still more that we could do in terms of supporting partners with SRM. For instance, we could carry out more joint risk assessments with our partners and advocate for additional funding for SRM with donors. This is an area that the Emergency Directorate will be focusing attention on, with plans to map existing good practice on supporting our partners that can be replicated within other country programmes. Ultimately, this is an opportunity for improving SRM, not just for our partners but also for Concern. We can benefit from our LNNGO partners' knowledge and networks to improve our own understanding of the risk environment, our own SRM practice and ultimately our impact on the target populations.

# The Zurich Flood Resilience Alliance

By Samuel Fox with thanks to Paul McGrath for historical knowledge on the formation of the partnership.

## Introduction

In 2013, Concern Worldwide established a small team with a brief to develop new funding and partnership opportunities outside of its established fundraising markets (then Ireland, UK, and USA). During its first year of operation, this new team, known as the New Business Development Unit, contacted and developed relationships with a number of organisations which offered the potential for strategic and/or funding relationships, including Zurich Insurance. This organisation (Zurich Insurance) had already embarked on a programme with a small number of NGOs to build community resilience to flooding, funded through the Z Zurich Foundation, and this was of interest to Concern due to the impact that flooding has in many of the countries where Concern works. Following initial contact by the New Business Development Unit, various conversations, and a competitive proposal submission process, Concern joined the programme as a “boundary partner” in 2015. From 2015-2017, Concern piloted a Flood Resilience Measurement Tool (version 1, which became the known as the Flood

Resilience Measurement for Communities in its second iteration) developed by the Zurich Flood Resilience Alliance, and used the insights generated by the tool to design and implement flood resilience interventions in Afghanistan and Haiti.

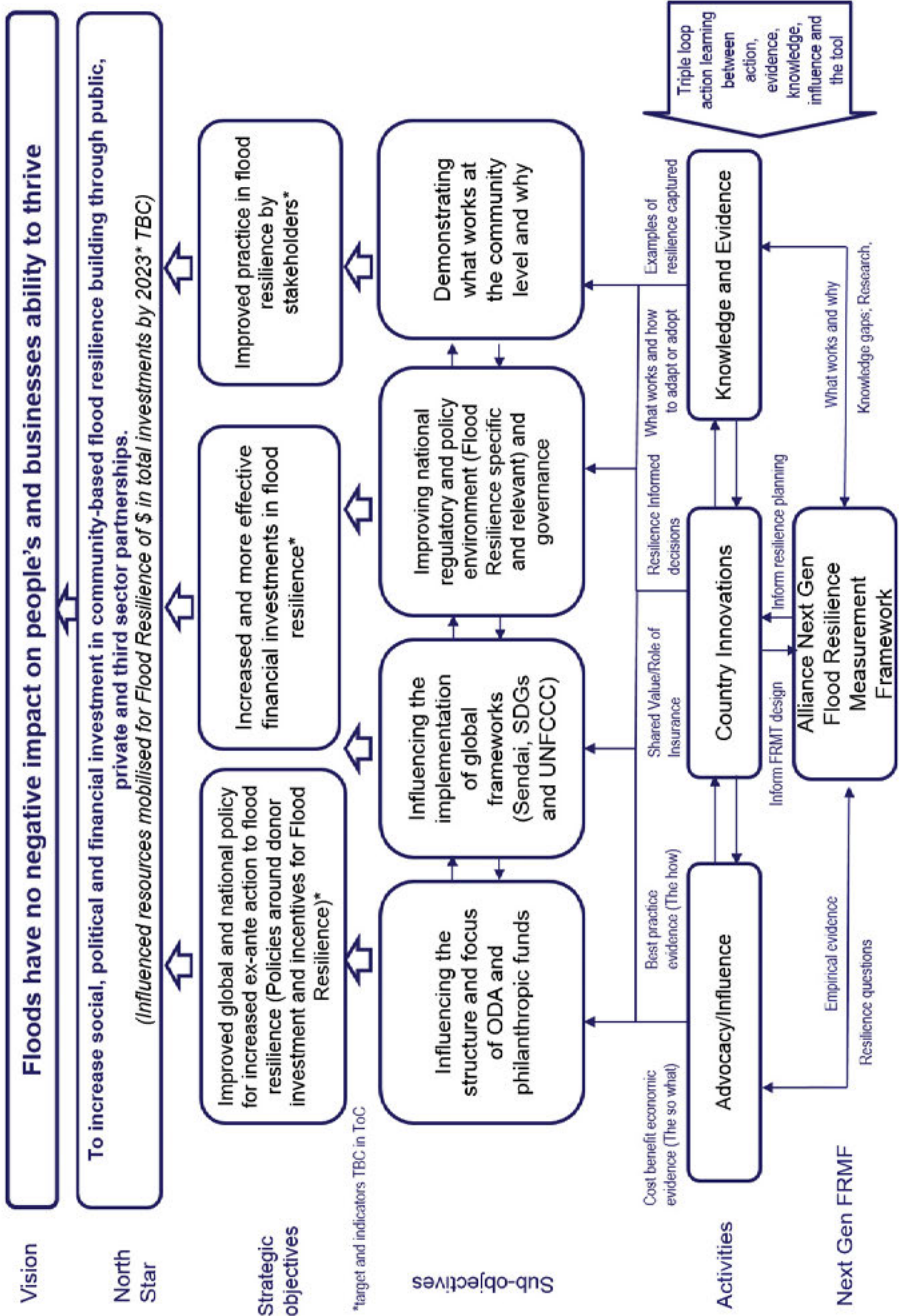
## Concern’s full partnership in the Zurich Flood Resilience Alliance

Concern Worldwide became a full partner in Phase 2 and joined the ‘Zurich Flood Resilience Alliance’, which is fully funded through the Z Zurich Foundation. This will run for 5 years and started in July 2018, preceded by a 6 month planning period. During phase one, data was collected and analysed from 16 communities in Afghanistan and Haiti, and this experience was used for preparing the second phase proposal. It was decided that Concern would implement Phase 2 in Bangladesh initially, with scale-up to other countries to be decided in later years of the Phase.

The programme approach focuses on communities and has developed a Flood Resilience Measurement for Communities (FRMC) approach. The overall framework for the phase 2 programme can be seen summarised on the next page:



# Overview of Alliance 2.0: Strategic Framework and Workstreams



\*target and indicators TBC in ToC

The overall structure of the Alliance is unique, with the Z Zurich Foundation asking the funded organisations to self-organise and lead on technical working groups, which guide overall implementation of activities in line with the agreed framework. There are eight other partners (Plan International, Mercy Corps, Practical Action, IFRC, ISET International, IIASA, LSE) and the Z Zurich Foundation team who also work in the capacity of a technical partner as well as donor. There are working groups for Advocacy, Knowledge generation, Research, Community Programmes and the FRMC (tool). Each working group was tasked with appointing a chair and drafting a Terms of Reference to guide the work over the lifetime of the grant. These ‘workstreams’ oversee the implementation of activities to support the delivery of an agreed Theory of Change as well as each of the implementing partners programme plans.

This structure has meant that Alliance partners have had to design and agree the overall initial Theory of Change and the reporting systems to be used to update the Z Zurich foundation. Additionally we have had to define and coordinate the delivery of training across all country programme teams, minimum standards for programme design and delivery, and the minimum standards for monitoring and evaluation of interventions.

There are ambitious advocacy targets related to influencing global and national funding allocations for flood resilience and policy development and implementation. Cross working group collaboration between partners has led to a number of joint initiatives across a number of regional and international events including COP 25 and the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Concern sits on all working groups and chairs the Community Programmes working group. We have also been tasked

with leading on the development of the monitoring and evaluation components, including supporting the design of an overall impact assessment as well as the monitoring and evaluation of community interventions.

The community programmes use the FRMC approach to assess community resilience to flooding:

- **After an event** – To evaluate a community’s actual resilience measure such things as total losses, time to return to some standard of normal operations, etc. after the risk event has occurred.
- **Before an event** – To know whether the community will be resilient, we have to measure the sources of resilience (look for indicators of capacity in the community’s socio-economic system).

The process engages community and district level representatives in a system wide analysis, to design appropriate flood resilience interventions.

There are 22 communities in the Bangladesh programme which Concern implements, and each have designed community action plans and mechanisms to engage with the relevant stakeholders at district and national levels. Concern operates through a Bangladeshi local partner Assistance for Social Organization and Development (ASOD). Practical Action implements the programme in an additional eight communities in Bangladesh and Mercy Corps implements advocacy activities in Bangladesh also. The three organisations work together at a country level in Bangladesh, pooling knowledge and resources to influence policy makers, funders and practitioners to invest more, and more wisely, in context specific and robust evidence-based flood resilience solutions at scale across Bangladesh.





The Community Resilience Action Group (CRAG) of Vati Kapasia, Kapasia Union, Sundarganj, Bangladesh showed Concern visitors the Community Action Plan (CAP) they developed following an assessment of the natural capital of their community. The CAP highlights the different issues, targeted households, what support is required, from whom and the timeframe for action. Photo: Amy Rose McGovern / Concern Worldwide.

The partnership with Zurich has been different from usual donor relationships. The structures set up within the Alliance have promoted solid working relationships where consensus has been needed across the development of systems and approaches. All grant agreements are individual between the Z Zurich Foundation and implementing partners, but built into these agreements are specific roles to fulfil within the technical and system support structures. Zurich also see itself as a technical partner as well as the overall donor, and participates in most working group discussions and decision-making. The inception period allowed a high degree of flexibility to set up systems and design appropriate interventions, without imposing unreasonable deadlines. This approach aims to ensure the generation of evidence

of good practice around programme cycle management, which in itself is one of the objectives within the programme Theory of Change. They also recognise the significant investment and support needed for the generation of evidence and linking this to advocacy efforts and have allocated significant resources to support these activities.

For more information on the Zurich programme please contact Amy Rose McGovern who oversees the relationship with the Z Zurich Foundation.

# Coming in from the edge: A partnership approach to mainstreaming development education in Ireland

By Michael Doorly

**A bit about Active Citizenship:** Long before the Sustainable Development Goals were adopted by the United Nations in 2015 and long before SDG 4.7<sup>1</sup> was written as a 'target' for the international community, Concern's Active Citizenship (AC) programme (aka Development Education) based in the Dublin office, was working with thousands of youth each year across Ireland on issues of global solidarity, equality and yes, sustainable development.

From our earliest days, Concern has held that an educated, engaged and active public is vital to ensure long lasting and sustained commitment globally to the world's poorest people. Our active citizenship work is based upon the values that underpin the work of the organisation and which, among other things, focus on extreme poverty and highlight respect and dignity of all people. Our 'voice' in Ireland derives legitimacy and credibility from our overseas programme work. As such, we are in a unique position to convey 'on-the-ground' experience and learning to the public by incorporating case studies, organisational learning and beneficiary voices into our AC work.

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<sup>1</sup> By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

**Partnership:** While our Active Citizenship unit has a substantial programme of work that our team of seven roll out, including the all-Ireland Concern Debates, which has involved over 50,000 students over the past 36 years, we are also committed to working with partners, to extend the reach and depth of Active Citizenship education, to schools and youth groups around the country. We do this in two ways; firstly through our Concern Grants Scheme to groups involved in development education work and secondly by working in consortia with key partners to deliver strategic programmes of work. It is the second of these that I would like to expand on in this article.

WorldWise Global Schools is a consortia of three organisations Self Help Africa, Concern Worldwide and the Curriculum Development Unit of the Dublin Education Training Board and is an Irish Aid strategic partner. For many years a key question surrounding development education in secondary schools in Ireland was 'how do we make it mainstream?' In other words, how do we bring it in from the 'edges', by moving it from an optional, 'extra-curricular' activity, to an integral part of a schools ethos and learning?

As we set out from 'the edge', we (the WorldWise consortia members and five staff) created a tool which served not only to ensure that we were going in the right direction, but also measured how well we were doing with our key stakeholders, not only teachers and students, but principals, boards of management, parents and the local community as well.

The tool, which we named the ‘Global Passport’ is made up of six ‘passport stamps’ and covers how a school can engage with development education; 1) through the state curriculum, 2) in extra-curricular activities, 3) by enhancing teacher capacity and engagement, 4) strengthening student participation, 5) engaging school leadership and boards of management and finally 6) engaging the broader school and local community.

Rather than keeping the Global Passport to ourselves as a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) tool, WorldWise shared it with schools around the country and have developed a school recognition scheme; a *Global Citizen* award for schools that have acquired the first 4 stamps, a *Diplomatic Award* for those who have involved school principals and boards of management and finally a *Special Award* for those schools that can demonstrate a development education ‘ethos’. Since the Global Passport was developed in 2014

WorldWise has reached and continue to engage 40% of all secondary schools in Ireland. Each year we hold trainings for hundreds of teachers on development education methodologies, symposium for principals, we have created advisory boards with teachers, unions, and other NGOs and of course conferences for students.

While not having the space to go into it here Concern has a range of other development education partners in Ireland (15) across formal, non-formal, adult and community sectors. The depth of those partnerships is measured in the table below and are categorised as ‘cooperative’, ‘collective’ and ‘collaborative’ depending on the level of integration between Concern and the given partner.

The template scores the partnership according to the following criteria in order to determine which category best reflects the partnership:

Table 1: Active Citizenship partner scoring criteria

<b>Are the following examples of Partnership and Collaboration Engagement true of this partnership</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Partially agree</b>	<b>Not applicable</b>	<b>Score</b>
Meeting to discuss each other’s work	2 points	1 point	0 points	
Regular information sharing	2 points	1 point	0 points	
Provided input at an event run by other group or vice-versa	2 points	1 point	0 points	
Collaboratively delivered a single event	4 points	2 points	0 points	
Joint advocacy initiative	4 points	2 points	0 points	
Collaboration around a project or series of events	4 points	2 points	0 points	
Representation on a committee/working group of other organisation	4 points	2 points	0 points	
Named in the other organisation’s operational plan	6 points	3 points	0 points	
Jointly-funded short-term (6 months or less) project/s	6 points	3 points	0 points	
Jointly-funded long-term (more than 6 months) project/s	6 points	3 points	0 points	
Other (please assign no. of points)				

<b>TOTAL</b>	
<b>Level of partnership:</b>	
Cooperation: 1-6 points	
Collaborative partnership/strategic alliance: 7- 23 points	
Partnership for collective impact: 23-40 points	

### **Concern Active Citizenship Partners Consortia and Networks 2018-2019**

<b>Partners</b>	<b>Sector</b>	<b>Partnership Status</b>
8020 EABW	Post Primary	Collective
AFRI	Post primary Campaigns	Collaborative
African Students Association Ireland	Third Level	Collective
All Together in Dignity (ATD)	Adult and Community	Collective
Centre for Global Education (Belfast)	DE Sector	Cooperation
Comhlamh	Adult and Community	Collaborative
Development Perspectives	Adult and Community	Collective
ECO Unesco	Youth	Collaborative
Inishowen Development Partnership	Primary	Cooperation
King Molloy Films (What in the World)	Public	Cooperation
NYCI	Youth	Collective
Waterford One World Centre/Sli	Post Primary	Cooperation
Young Scientist Tanzania/Kenya	Post Primary	Collaborative
<b>Consortia</b>	<b>Sector</b>	<b>Status</b>
Youth 2030	Youth	Collective
WWGS	Post primary	Collective
Saolta	Adult and Community	Collective
DE.ie	Education/Public	Collective
<b>Networks</b>	<b>Sector</b>	<b>Status</b>
Coalition 2030	Public	Collaborative
Dochas DEG	DE Sector	Collaborative
IDEA (Formal Ed Working Group)	DE Sector	Collaborative
Fairtrade Ireland	Public	Collaborative

We have come a long way in from the edge and for that huge credit needs to go to the WorldWise Global School staff for the delivery and management of the programme. After eight years as a consortium group there still remains an energy and direction in the coalition partnership, our work is by no means finished. Our achievements to date would only have been possible through the experience, knowledge and networks that each of the consortium partners working with Irish Aid and the WorldWise staff collectively brought to the table.

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## For whom is the publication?

All staff involved in designing, implementing, managing, monitoring, evaluating and communicating Concern's work. This publication should also be shared with partners.

## What this publication includes:

- Promising practice
- Organisational learning
- Promotion of multi-sectoral and integrated approaches to programming
- Links to full reports

## What it doesn't include:

- Targeted recommendations
- Additional evidence not included in the papers cited
- Detailed descriptions of interventions or their implementation

## EDITORIAL WORKING GROUP

- **Finola Mohan:** Editor-in-Chief
- **Marsha Montgomery:** Issue Editor

### Key words

Partnership, capacity building, strengthening systems, innovative partnerships, reporting mechanisms, compliance, security risk management, sustainable development, funding constraints, strategic partners, risk assessments, community resilience, collaboration, sense of ownership, statutory requirements.

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# KNOWLEDGE MATTERS

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WHATEVER  
IT TAKES