

Coordination Mechanism for Alliance Humanitarian Action

For internal use

Version: Updated

June 2023

Background

No single ChildFund Alliance Member can deliver the capabilities, linkages and resources needed to respond effectively to large-scale humanitarian crises. Collective action among Members is therefore critical. This protocol outlines the mechanisms for the coordination of humanitarian actions among Members during complex emergencies. It defines the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders. This document will be updated as needed based on feedback from Members on the practical application in the field and changes in other Alliance policies and guidelines.

ChildFund Alliance members respond to emergencies in both presence and non-presence countries. These emergencies can be human-made such as wars and natural disasters including earthquakes. Normally, the Alliance Member already present in an affected country — or the Member appointed Lead in a non-presence country — will lead the response. In the event that more than one Member is present in the affected country, the Lead should already have been designated through an existing collaboration agreement.

Emergencies in presence countries¹

When emergencies occur in countries where a ChildFund Member organization is already present, that Member will normally commence response activities — possibly with support from other Members — without waiting for an Alliance declaration. The Member in the affected country should disseminate information about the emergency through the Alliance secretariat managed Humanitarian Assistance Communication Unit (HACU), email listing or request a meeting with another Member(s) and/or the Secretariat to appeal for support.

Exceptionally large-scale emergencies may warrant a meeting of the CEO Forum to decide how to respond. For responses involving more than one Alliance Member, the Member already present, or the Lead Member, as per the Alliance Collaboration Agreement, will be designated as the Lead

¹ Countries as per the new Geographic Collaboration Policy

Agency for the response. If the present or designated Lead Member in a country affected by large-scale emergency is not able or willing to respond, that Member should immediately inform the Alliance Secretariat and other Members – who will undertake the same consultation process described below, under ‘Emergencies in non-presence countries’, to determine a possible response. In all cases where a different Lead Member is selected to respond, the Member present on the ground is expected to provide full support for registration, banking, legal matters, and all aspects of the host government relationship.

When more than one Member is present in a country, an emergency may affect the operational territory covered by only one Member and not the territory covered by other Members present. In this circumstance, if a Lead Member has been previously designated in that country as per a collaboration agreement, the Member(s) concerned may request a meeting of the other members to decide who will be designated as Lead Member for that emergency.

Emergencies in non-presence countries

In the event of an emergency requiring a response, in a country where a Member is not at that time operational or where the Member present is not able to lead the response, the decision to respond will be made by the CEO Forum. Any Member of the CEO Forum or the Secretariat may send an email, stipulating which Member should lead the response and which Member should be the main implementing partner, with a clear justification. **The deadline for CEOs to respond to that email is 24 hours.** If all Member CEOs agree to the suggestion, the response will proceed accordingly. If full consensus is not reached by email, the Alliance Secretary General will call for an emergency meeting of the CEO Forum to decide which Member will be the Lead. This meeting of the CEO Forum may ask for input from representatives of the Humanitarian Action Sub Committee to inform their decision. The CEO Forum should make a decision within **48 hours of the original meeting request.**

When deciding whether to respond, the CEO Forum will consider the following criteria:

- **Scale:** size of affected geographic area; number of affected people, particularly children, the number of those likely to be affected; the number of countries affected; damage to infrastructure; the environmental and economic impact; and whether a state of emergency has been declared.
- **Urgency:** scale of population displacement; intensity of conflict; and child protection issues; the number of vulnerable population at risk of mortality or death toll.
- **Complexity:** level of humanitarian access; and security and political risks.
- **Capacity:** national response capacity; the strength (or fragility) of the state; and other actors responding.
- **Visibility:** media and public attention on the disaster; and potential to obtain funding through an appeal.

In the initial CEO Forum meeting, in addition to the response declaration decision, the CEO Forum will decide:

- Whether to schedule a follow-up meeting for later consideration if a response is not launched immediately (such as in a slow-onset emergency).
- Which Member organization is designated to lead the response.
- The primary modality of response, which may include: 1) direct implementation through deployment of Lead Member staff² 2) contracting implementation out through a grant agreement to one or more humanitarian organizations that is already present on the ground.
- Whether to launch a joint public appeal.
- **How to allocate the funds raised by the Alliance in the case of countries that have more than one Member or external partner operations.**

The CEO Forum will look strive for a consensus in make the above decisions – whereby 75% of members agree, while the remainder can accept the recommendations proposed. **The principal consideration guiding the CEO Forum will be to provide a humanitarian response in line with key humanitarian standards and principles for assisting affected population.**

After the initial meeting and within approximately 48 hours of declaring a new emergency response, the **Humanitarian Action Sub Committee** should meet to report on:

- Initial levels of financial, human resource, technical, and material commitment to the response.
- Fundraising prospects in Members’ home-countries, including both individual marketing appeals and institutional donor proposals.
- Providing other technical trainings and support needs of staff in the field.

The designated Lead Member should inform the Secretariat immediately or within 48 hours of any preliminary arrangements for coordinating the response at country and head office level and, if applicable, about the external partner organization(s) selected to implement activities, subject to their involvement being approved by the Member.

The Lead Member should also keep the CEO Forum informed as to their activities in a non-presence country as the emergency evolves. This should include changes to their planned response and recovery activities, as well as when they plan to withdraw from the country.

External partnership responses

In the case that the CEO Forum opts to initiate a response through an external partner(s) as the response modality, the Member selected to lead the response on behalf of the Alliance will be

² Even if the direct implementation modality is selected, that does not preclude the Lead Member from engaging different

responsible for managing the relationship with the external partner(s) and monitoring their work. The Lead Member should be directly involved in selecting the external partner(s), with input from other Members and the Secretariat. **The final selection should be approved by the CEO Forum, which can raise objections for legal, fiduciary, reputational or other reasons³.**

Roles and responsibilities of Alliance Members

Lead Member:

- Implements response activities on the ground and/or manages relationships with external partner organizations ***through grant agreements or a Memorandum of understanding***.
- For directly implemented responses, coordinates management and technical support for the National Office or response team on the ground.
- Works with supporting Alliance Member agencies (when operational in the same country) on joint assessment and response planning.
- Provides SitReps, photos, and other communication materials to Members supporting the response via HACU mailing list, managed by the Senior Advisor Humanitarian Affairs within the Secretariat. A SitRep template is available in the members-only section of the Alliance website (Note: you must register to use the members-only section).
- Engages proactively with donors in country, particularly missions/delegations of institutional donors based in Alliance Member countries.
- Participates actively in country-level response coordination mechanisms, whether host government-led or UN/cluster-led. This includes taking a leadership role in the national clusters and other working group or equivalent body if it exists.
- Facilitates accommodation, care, and supervision of Member staff and consultants deployed to support emergency response.
- Effectively manages all funds and material resources received for the response.
- Provides program implementation reports to Members and donor agencies, as per stated requirements.
- Liaises with the Alliance Secretariat Senior Advisor, Humanitarian Affairs.
- Coordinates Alliance support and manages Member reporting requirements.
- Supports participating Members to undertake any required monitoring and evaluation activities.

Supporting Members:

- Proactively seek funding from home-country individual and institutional donors.
- Launch public appeals as necessary.
- Where the Supporting Member is operational in the same country with the Lead Member,

³ Some Members face legal restrictions from their home-country governments, which could cause prospective partners to be disqualified.

works on joint assessment and response planning.

- Identify deployable staff and consultants to support response.
- Advise on specific communications requirements for home-country markets.
- **Manage grants received from home-country donors, and advise the Lead Member about grant compliance issues, documentation, reporting, and other requirements.**

Modalities of humanitarian actions that require multi-Member agencies:

- Common branding as “ChildFund”, without any specific Member’s brand
- Lead Member reports to the CEO Forum
- Public Appeals are coordinated by Alliance Members in conjunction with the Secretariat
- Coordinated advocacy and media work among members

Alliance Secretariat:

- Develops and coordinates Alliance-wide communications and advocacy strategy for the response
- Represents members with key internal and external stakeholders and global platforms including:1) Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (ACPHA); 2) OCHA(HQNY); 3) United Nations Security Council and 4) other relevant international bodies
- Engages with UN agencies and other inter-governmental organizations at central level to inform decision-making around the ChildFund Alliance response.
- Supports external partner selection in non-presence countries.
- Facilitates communications among Members via the HACU email list, and with the CEO Forum
- Assists Members with funding proposals for the response as needed.
- Updates the Coordination Mechanisms paper as needed.
- Orient Members responding to emergencies with internal procedures and protocols including partnership agreement template and staff secondment issues, ToR template where necessary.
- Resolve misunderstanding, discoordination or issues arise out of cooperation mechanism through a neutral and arbitration support of the Alliance Secretary General.
- Engage with the news media to inform the public about the Alliance’s response.

CEO Forum:

- Oversee and guide the implementation of the principles and modalities of the coordination mechanism in humanitarian actions as stipulated in the above sections. The CEOs will solicit the technical knowledge of their emergency person as necessary.

Annexes containing countries with emergencies and long term Humanitarian crises were removed as per the CEOs request in 2020.