

Community Resource Exchange Design

With modifications for three-year pilot

February 2021

CRE Mission and Principles

CRE Mission:

To better support communities, grassroots groups, and indigenous people in promoting and defending their rights in the context of international investment and development activities by facilitating access to collaborations across diverse areas of experience, and co-creating effective strategies that build community power and further community-led development.

More specifically, the CRE strives to:

- Facilitate a multidimensional exchange and collaboration that responds to the self-identified needs, challenges and priorities of those who will or have been harmed by international investment and development activities.
- Reach more communities and facilitate their access to more comprehensive support in the following strategy areas: corporate and financial research; access to remedy; community organizing; advocacy and campaigns; scientific and technical expertise; and security support.
- Build capacity among CRE collaborators to support communities by:
 - Expanding the number of people who can undertake the strategies used by CRE collaborators; and
 - Mobilizing resources to be able to better meet existing need for support.
- Generate information to:
 - Provide better strategy advice for the next request for support by learning from collaborations about what works;
 - Provide collaborators with input for policy debates and systemic reforms; and
 - Provide collaborators with material for strategic communications campaigns.

CRE Principles:

- The system supports efforts that help build collective power at the community level, defend human rights, advance social and environmental justice, and hold international investors and development actors accountable for violations.
- The system is co-created with and led by the people who would use it, representing the vibrant diversity of communities and civil society as a whole -- from different cultures, with different lived experiences, and who engage with different strategies.
- The system values all skills, experiences and expertise, facilitating collaborations that are directed by and accountable to affected communities.
- The system is accessible, transparent, practical, flexible, and responsive while maintaining a shared commitment to security and effectiveness.
- The system prioritizes resource allocation and capacity building closest to the community.

- The system complements, rather than replaces or duplicates, existing networks (formal and informal), strengthening the collaboration that already exists and facilitating better coordination across organizations and strategies.
- The system seeks to expand the pool of existing funding and will avoid competing with or diverting resources from collaborators.

CRE Structure

Everyone is welcome to participate in the CRE. The system will have the following roles: CRE coordinator, CRE Regional Facilitators, collaborators, nodes, grant working groups.

Secretariat: The CRE will be supported by a Secretariat staff consisting of a CRE coordinator and regional facilitators (RFs). The RFs will be hosted in existing organizations in the regions that they serve. The CRE coordinator will also be hosted in an existing organization or network.

- Regional facilitators will:
 - Identify and recruit collaborators in their regions;
 - Serve as the intake point for requests;
 - Facilitate the collaborations. To do so, they will liaise with local and national stakeholders, including national nodes, to develop an understanding of regional and national contexts and players.
- CRE coordinator will coordinate the regional facilitators and the system as a whole, and assist with outreach, fundraising, governance, data management and communications systems, and learning etc.

Collaborators: People who participate in the system. Collaborators do not need to be formal members of any organization or network, and may be: communities, organizations, associations, social movements, academics, practitioners, socially responsible investors, and activist funders etc. Collaborators can provide support or request support. They will have agreed to be generally available to entertain requests from the CRE, to keep their contact information up to date, and to follow the CRE principles (e.g. community-centered, accountable collaboration and capacity building).

The CRE coordinator and RFs will maintain a database of collaborators organized by strategy, country, and other relevant information. In general, the collaborators in a given strategy area will not be expected to coordinate amongst themselves. Rather, there will be a roster of contacts and existing networks whom the RFs can access individually or as a subgroup, depending on the specific needs of the request. The security support strategy area, however, may benefit from being more organized internally so that resources can be identified more quickly and comprehensively. The database will not be publicly accessible but can be accessed through the RFs and nodes.

Nodes: Collaborators who are an entry point either to a country (national nodes) or to networks within a particular strategy (strategy nodes), or some intersection (regional strategy node). There can be multiple nodes within each country or strategy. The nodes may help review and vet requests and identify possible collaborators. The organization hosting a RF could serve as a national node.

Grant working groups: At a minimum, each regional will have a grant working group that will help review and approve requests for financial support. The working group will be made up of communities and organizations from that region.

CRE Pilot structure

- The Coalition for Human Rights in Development will host the CRE pilot for an initial period of three years.
- The CRE coordinator will be hosted by the Coalition Secretariat.
- There will be three RFs, one each in Asia, Latin America, and Africa. The exact locations of the RFs are still to be determined. The RFs will be hosted by existing organizations (either members of the Coalition or not).
- The RFs will be assisted by the Coalition's regional coordinators and secretariat staff.
- There will be an advisory committee to inform and guide the implementation of the pilot. The advisory committee will be chosen from those who have provided a formal expression of interest and represent a diversity of geographic distribution; gender; race and indigeneity; abilities; other kinds of diversity; skills, expertise, connections; sector of work; type of group; etc.
- The Coalition's existing Community Engagement Partnership Working Group will serve as the grant working group initially. It will be expanded and restructured to create three regional working groups.

Requests for collaboration

Who can submit a request for collaboration?

The CRE is designed to respond to community-led efforts. The CRE will accept requests from anyone – from community members, local, national, or international groups. However, if requests for tier 2 or 3 collaborations (see below) are not submitted by those directly affected by an international investment or development activity, the individual or group presenting the request should show that they are presenting the request with the knowledge and consent of those directly affected. For requests involving financial support, priority will be given to requests supported by a group or collective, unless it is a request for security support for defenders.

About what?

The CRE will respond to requests involving communities and grassroots groups defending their human rights, including the right to a healthy environment, in the context of international investment or development activities. That includes activities financed by national, regional or international development banks, international commercial banks, or multinational corporations. The CRE will accept requests for assistance addressing adverse impacts that have already occurred, as well as requests seeking to avoid or prevent adverse impacts. This can involve efforts to ensure meaningful community participation in a project, or to fight against a project that doesn't align with local development priorities and visions for the future.

Tier 1 requests for information do not have to be specific to an international investment or development activity.

How?

A simple request form will be available in multiple languages (e.g. who is making the request, relationship to affected community; what organization(s) they work with; what they know about the project/investment; what collaborations/strategies they seek, if they know; what outcome they seek, a reference or referral; and any security concerns regarding communications).

It is not realistic to expect most communities or even local organizations will know about the CRE and access it directly. Therefore, while requests will certainly be accepted from community members and grassroots groups, outreach will target national groups and larger social movements who are already working with and trusted by local groups and communities to serve as a link to the CRE.

When?

Requests for collaboration can be submitted at any time and will be processed by the RFs on an ongoing basis. Funding decisions, for collaborations that are not self-funded, will occur through regular calls for proposals (as well as the ability to entertain urgent requests between scheduled calls).

Making the Connection

Types of Collaboration

The following are the types of collaborations that the CRE offers. Engagement with the CRE may end after one tier of support, or the requester may return to request the next tier.

- **Tier 1: Information Requests.** If the request is relatively specific and simple, the RF will answer the request directly, providing information, quick connections, or simple advice regarding advocacy options. The requests do not have to relate to a specific international investment or development activity. The CRE hosts an online resource library and can recommend relevant manuals and toolkits.
- **Tier 2: Facilitated Collaborations.** The regional facilitator will identify potential collaborators relevant for the objectives of the collaborator(s) who submitted the request. If requested, RFs can assist--either with or without research support from other collaborators--with mapping the actors (investors, corporations, etc.) involved in the activities affecting requesters. After potential collaborator(s) are identified, the RFs may facilitate a discussion among all of the parties in order to ensure clarity about the activities to be undertaken, the roles for each collaborator, and the budget, if any. The result of the discussion can be reflected in a formal memorandum of understanding (MoU), letter, audio recording, or any format useful for the parties. The regional facilitator will monitor the implementation of the plan. These collaborations can be self-funded (e.g. the collaborator may have a budget or offer support pro bono), or can include a funding request of up to 5000 USD.
- **Tier 3: Facilitated Collaborations requiring substantial financing.** Collaborations that have exhausted self-funding, pro bono and Tier 2 level of support and require more substantial financing (5000-30,000 USD), may seek additional funding through a Tier 3 collaboration.

CRE Pilot Types of Collaboration

- Tier 3 will not be available for the three-year pilot, unless additional funds are secured.

Request Intake

The RF will process requests for collaboration on an ongoing basis. Additional consultation with the collaborator(s) presenting the request may be needed to understand which type of collaboration best meets their needs. RFs, with the assistance of the national nodes if needed, will conduct additional due diligence on requests for tiers 2 and 3.

Building the Collaboration

After receiving a request, the regional facilitator will identify potential collaborators within the relevant strategies and as close to the requesters as possible. Where local capacity or availability is not adequate or available, the secretariat will seek to find a regional or international collaborator that could either alone or preferably in partnership with a local organization, entertain the request. The RF may contact specific potential collaborators in the database, consult the national and

thematic nodes to assist in identifying collaborators, or send an open call to a portion of the collaborators in the database.

The regional facilitator will arrange initial discussions between the requester and potential collaborators until a good fit is found. The ultimate decision about who is involved in the collaboration rests with the requester with mutual agreement of the other collaborator(s).

The RF will facilitate further discussions, as needed, among the collaborators to enable them to co-create a plan of action. The RF will ensure that the result of those conversations is documented to provide clarity and a shared understanding of: the activities to be undertaken; the timeline; the roles of collaborators; budget, if any; and how the knowledge, experiences, and outputs can be used following the collaboration. Collaborators should also agree on how to resolve any disputes that arise. The documentation could take the form of a memorandum of understanding or any other format appropriate and useful for the collaborators.

Funding Decisions

Requests for financial support to implement collaborations will be considered by the regional grant working groups. Application requirements and deadlines will be published. Regional grant working groups will prioritize requests according to national and regional needs. Procedures for emergency funding will also be published.

CRE Pilot Grants

- The pilot will not have the capacity to accept urgent requests for funding between scheduled calls. The RFs can provide information about other organizations that offer emergency funding for HRDs.

Collaboration Implementation

The work of implementing the activities (advocacy, research, etc.) will be done by the collaborators. The RFs will not take part in the actual collaboration.

The RFs will follow up with the collaborators periodically to help ensure that the collaboration is proceeding satisfactorily, and to see if additional support is needed. The collaborator who made the request may also ask for additional support as needed. The RFs will facilitate an evaluation meeting following the completion of the plan to draw lessons learned for future collaborations.

Governance and Learning

Governance

The CRE would be governed in a collaborative manner. The success of the CRE is dependent on a feeling of collective ownership in which there is a shared interest in keeping the system funded and functioning effectively. Communities and local groups will be represented in the governance structures.

The CRE will report annually on the number of requests received, collaborations facilitated, and budget spent.

CRE Pilot Governance

- The Coalition for Human Rights in Development will host the CRE pilot. The Coalition is coordinated by a Steering Committee whose members serve for two-year renewable terms. The majority of the members of the Steering Committee are from the Global South.
- In addition, an Advisory Committee will be established to provide input on the implementation of the pilot and participate in its review at the end of the three-year period.

Capacity building and Learning

Regional facilitators will use a case tracking system to record the collaborations made, strategies employed, outcomes, and lessons learned for this collective work, drawing from a short evaluation from collaborators.

Matchmaking will prioritize local collaborators. Collaborators are encouraged to build capacity by partnering with others on activities. Funding decisions for Tier 2 and 3 collaborations will prioritize collaborations that can demonstrate that it will contribute to capacity building.

CRE will facilitate opportunities for collaborators to share lessons learned with each other. Community-to-community exchanges will be offered as one type of collaboration. Funding permitting, exchanges could be held among collaborators at the national or regional levels to swap skills and experiences.