



Informational Webinar on Call for Concept Notes to Improve SRMNCAH

June 9, 2022

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Do you have any grants targeted for Zimbabwe that are in the forecast or pipeline.

A: At this stage, CORE Group is only issuing grants to eligible NGOs/CSOs in Bangladesh, Cambodia, and Nepal.

Q: Are the grants strictly for national NGOs, not international NGOs?

A: Yes. This is because one important purpose of the small grants is to strengthen the capacity of local NGOs that usually do not get opportunities to compete and participate in program implementation as compared to international NGOs.

Q: Have you decided on the number of total grants and grants for each country?

A: At this round, CORE Group is prepared to issue a total of three grants, one for up to \$250,000 and two for up to \$90,000 each. There is no strict number of grant allocation for each of the three priority countries (Bangladesh, Cambodia, and Nepal). We will select the best concept notes that are likely to achieve the purpose of the small grants project. There will be more grants issued by CORE Group in following rounds.

Q: Is collaboration between NGOs or NGO and CSO allowed for applying jointly?

A: This is possible. It is up to the applying NGOs/CSOs to design their methodology in the way that can maximize the success of their intervention. However, applicants need to consider the administrative and financial complexity that would be caused by having multiple NGOs implement a small grant.

Q: What number or percent of the applicants will be shortlisted for capacity development and final proposal development?

A: All NGOs/CSOs submitting a successful Concept Note for any of the three grants will be invited to participate in the following steps of capacity strengthening and full proposal development.

Q: How about combining this project with Local NGO's existing, similar, or related projects?

A: If an NGO has already started the implementation of an intervention related to the purpose of this grant opportunity, the grant could be used to support the implementation of such intervention. In this

case, the applicant should explain in the Concept Note the current stage of the intervention implementation and how the grant will be used to support the remaining steps of implementation.

Q: Can one partner NGO apply for the two different projects?

A: Yes, however to maximize the benefit of the small grants in NGO capacity strengthening, we would like to have three different NGOs implement the three different grants.

Q: Can organization apply for the in two different cluster/districts? How many districts can be select in maximum and minimum?

A: The geographical location where the intervention should be implemented is up to the applicant NGO to decide. The decision should be influenced by what is best to serve the objective/s and methodology of the intervention as well as the available resources.

Q: Who will provide technical assistance?

A: Depending on the nature of the needed capacity strengthening, a technical person, or persons, from CORE Group, from CORE Group's network, or from a pool of consultants will be assigned.

Q: Will the grants be provided directly by the donor agency or by CORE Group?

A: The grants will be provided and monitored by CORE Group.

Q: What is the time frame of the project?

A: Grants are to be implemented between 12 and 18 months. Please refer to the webinar slides as well as the Call for Concept Notes for an estimation of the implementation time frame.

Q: Since we have to submit the policies during the concept note, are they needed in English version?

A: The Concept Note does not require submission of NGO policies or other documents. We request Concept Note submission to be in English.

Q: Can the grants be received by one NGO in one country but implemented in multi countries (the three eligible countries)?

A: In theory, yes, however, considering the small size of the grants, it will be challenging to implement the intervention in multiple countries.

Q: Is it possible to choose one or two challenges, for e.g., child marriage?

A: Yes, this is up to the NGO to select the challenge to be addressed by the grant. Addressing more than one challenge is acceptable if the intervention methodology can allow for the adequate implementation and monitoring and evaluation of results.

Q: Is this grant for government run organization too?

A: No, the grants are for local NGOs/CSOs.

Q: Will the amount of the annual budget handled by the organization affect the selection criteria? I mean if there is an organization who have handled minimum budget each year, are they eligible?

A: Grant issuing is not related the amount of budget handled by the NGO. However, the number of years of experience of the NGO can reflect its ability to handle which size of grant. We understand that new NGOs may have limited experience and capacity to handle budgets. The small grants project is an opportunity to develop their capacity. We suggest organizations with less than 3 years of experience to apply for the smaller grant and organizations over with over 5 years of experience to apply for the larger grant.

Q: Is there a priority challenge that CORE Group would like to focus on?

A: To maximize the impact of the small grants opportunity, CORE Group would like to focus on addressing key challenges to SRMNCAH. Please see the [webinar slides](#) as well as the Call for Concept Notes for the list of key SRMNCAH challenges.

Q: Would you please share your overhead/indirect rate?

A: The CORE Group grants allow NGOs to charge overhead/indirect cost. The details will be shared with NGOs that submit a successful concept note and invited to submit a full budgeted proposal.

Q: To apply for both grant amounts- should we send two concept notes? Or just explain in the concept note how will the different grants strengthen the program?

A: To maximize the small grants opportunity to benefit several NGOs, it is preferred that each interested NGO submits a concept note of only one grant opportunity. However, if an NGO selects to apply for more than one grant, it is preferable for the NGO to submit a separate concept note for each grant.

Q: In terms of capacity building for the organization, what support will provide from CORE group?

A: CORE Group will provide free technical assistance to NGOs implementing the grants. The specific area of capacity building will be determined based on an initial assessment of the capacity of the implementing NGO. Implementing NGOs will be asked to suggest the specific area where their capacity needs strengthening. This could be in policy, structure, sustainability, proposal development, project implementation, project monitoring and evaluation, data management, results documentation, report writing, or other areas requested by the implementing NGO. The support will be in the form of webinars, discussions, and joint activities.

Q: Is the grant for health service providing? Or awareness raising on access to health services? I mean is it for providing direct service or doing advocacy for access to health service?

A: The grant is to be used to address the key SRMMCAH challenges. To address a challenge, the intervention could include any aspect affecting access, quality, or utilization of high impact SRMNCAH interventions. This could include service provision access or quality, community awareness or utilization

of services and adoption of health behaviors. The intervention should be developed to address the specific challenges according to the local context.

Q: Is there any supporting document needed to be submitted along with the Concept Note?

A: No, at this stage, only the Concept Note is needed. Later, we may ask NGOs submitting a successful Concept Note to provide other documents such as proof of registration in the country of operation.

Q: Would a locally registered office of an international NGO qualify?

A: No. The rationale is that the small grants has one of its purposes to strengthen the capacity of local NGOs that usually do not get an opportunity to receive/implement grants. International NGOs tend to have more opportunities to implement grants.

Q: Do you have a specific format for the concept note that should be followed?

A: Please use the guidelines for developing the concept note specified in the Call for Concept Notes posted by CORE Group. Please note that the total number of pages of the Concept note should not be more than 7. No specific font or font size is specified. Please use a suitable font size that is visually comfortable to read. In the following round of preparing a full proposal, a specific format will be shared.

Q: Would you be willing to fund projects that focus on reproductive health, including safe abortion?

A: The donor providing fund for the small grants opportunity requires that the grants do not support abortion services. However, reproductive health services such as access and quality of contraceptive counseling and services as well as addressing post-abortive complications are allowed.

Q: Is there a total of 3 grants for all 3 countries? Or 3 grants per country?

A: At this stage, CORE Group is preparing to issue a total of three grants for all the three countries.

Q: It's great that Core group will improving capacity of implementing organization, and for the capacity development the budget will be calculated from sum amount of the grants or it will be from Core group separately?

A: The capacity strengthening component will be provided by CORE Group free of charge to participating NGOs. Hence, the cost of the capacity building will not be part of the NGO proposal budget. Please note that at this stage, only a Concept Note, without a budget, is request.

Q: If the primary objective of this grant is strengthening NGO and CSO in different areas of project implementation, then why you work on strengthening only the selected NGOs/CSOs. Other organizations could take advantage of your strengthening sessions.

A: The methodology selected for capacity building is by engaging with the implementing NGOs in jointly developing the proposal and by working with CORE Group experts and consultants in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation, documentation, and utilization of grant's results. The grants are not meant to provide wider training for non-participating NGOs.

Q: Should we write the concept note focusing on both rural and urban area?

A: That is up to the NGO to decide depending on the nature of the SRMNCAH challenge to be addressed and the context in your country.

Q: Can a local NGO implement the work in government health facilities?

A: That is up to the NGO to decide depending on the nature of the challenge to be addressed. Nothing in this small grants opportunity prohibits NGOs from working with governmental health facilities.

Q: Is there any budget threshold indication? Min xxx Dollar to Max XXX?

A: As the Call for Concept Notes indicates, the grant size is either up to \$250,000 (one grant), or up to \$90,000 (two grants). At this stage, only a concept note is requested without a detailed budget.

Q: What about the eligibility of recently registered local NGO?

A: Eligibility criteria requires the NGO to be currently registered and is capable of providing evidence of registration. Recently registered NGO may qualify.

Q: Can we design the intervention?

A: Yes, you can design the intervention to address the selected health challenge. We encourage creativity and innovation for overcoming barriers. Please describe your intervention methodology and monitoring and evaluation plan as specified in the Call for Concept Notes.

Q: Can we design the intervention to address mental health of pregnant and breastfeeding women?

A: Yes, if you think that maternal mental health is a key challenge in your context. Please include in the Concept Note the rationale for selecting such topic from your country context using evidence/data if possible.

Q: How many local NGOs will be selected from one country? Do this have limitations or it will depend on issues and problems?

A: The total number of grants to be issued in this round is three grants for all three countries. There is no specific number of NGOs decided to receive a grant per country. It will be ideal to spread the grant issuing to one grant in each country. However, the quality of the submitted Concept Notes will be key in deciding on the NGOs that will receive any of the grants.

Q: Can we select relevant topics except the 10 areas you have mentioned?

A: Please note that the Call for Concept Notes specifies nine key SRMNCAH challenges to be addressed. The tenth item is "other challenges". This is purposely included to allow for addressing any other challenge that you think key to advancing SRMNCAH. If you select one of the "other challenges", please indicate in the Concept Note the rationale for selecting such challenge from your country context providing evidence/data if possible.

Q: Can an NGO in the process of registration apply?

A: If your registration approval is imminent, you may select to apply. However, grants will only be issued for registered NGOs.

Q: Can we consider for Rohingya (Cox's bazar)?

A: Yes, addressing SRMNCAH needs of special groups, such as refugees, internally displaced populations, women with disabilities, LGTBQ community, is an important focus of the grants.

Q: Regarding Early Marriage/Pregnancy of adolescent girls -- Does the project address both pregnancy within and without marriage?

A: Yes, as early pregnancy of adolescent girls, with or without marriage, increase the risk of maternal and newborn mortality.

Q: Can research also be proposed either as a whole or as part of the intervention?

A: Although the small grants are not called “research”, the Concept Notes must include a sound methodology and a monitoring and evaluation plan including measuring indicators and data collection and management plan. Hence, there are some basic elements of “research” included. However, the small grants do not provide adequate resources to implement a “case/control” type of research/intervention.

Q: To have influence on policy makers, does CORE Group support conducting advocacy with policy makers?

A: To scale up the utilization of the results and the experience of the small grants at a wider scale, it is important to engage policy makers and relevant stakeholders so that they endorse the implementation of the intervention at a wide scale. The grants’ results should be a leverage to inflict a wider policy and programmatic improvement in any aspect of SRMNCAH. For this reason, it is important that the Concept Note includes a plan to engage with policy makers and relevant stakeholders in any way you think effective for them to endorse the results of the grant.

Q: Can universities submit concept notes for receiving small grants?

A: No, the small grants project is for local NGOs that usually do not get opportunities for their capacity building.