

Working in a Consortium Environment



CAFE tool

1. Share and model the CRS Café Standards guidance to improve consortium governance
2. Share information on best practices, approaches, tools that improve the quality of consortium governance and management
3. Brainstorm recommendations / next steps for improving consortium management

- Think of one word that describes a well-functioning consortium
 - Take 2 min
 - Write this word on a post-it
 - Stick post-it on flip chart

CAFE assists CRS and partners to:

- form and maintain strong consortiums that respond to the needs of the most vulnerable
- meet donor requirements
- make the managerial, financial, and administrative functions of a consortium effective, efficient, and supportive of project goals, community needs, and donor intent

Available in English, French, and Spanish on www.crsprogramquality.org under Capacity Strengthening



- **CAFE Standards:** describes the essential principles for forming and working in an effective and efficient consortium in *Goals, Strategy, Roles, Structure, Process, Interpersonal Relations, and Organizational Learning*
- **CAFE Reference Sheet:** suggests tools and good practices for forming and operating a consortium; provides descriptions of attributes and processes for each standard
- **CAFE Implementation Guide:** pre-consortium planning, formation, proposal design, project approval, and implementation phases: start up, execution, midterm, closure, and continuation, including definitions, outputs, conditions, and indicators for success, pitfalls, monitoring checklists, suggestions for tools and best practices
- **CAFE Glossary:** defines the terms most commonly used in consortium

COMPONENT	STANDARDS	INDICATORS (Sub-standards)
1. Goal The consortium has a clear, shared purpose and mission statement.	1.1. The consortium has a clear, shared purpose and mission statement.	1.1.1. The consortium has a clear, shared purpose and mission statement.
2. Strategy The consortium has a clear, shared strategy and action plan.	2.1. The consortium has a clear, shared strategy and action plan.	2.1.1. The consortium has a clear, shared strategy and action plan.
3. Structure The consortium has a clear, shared structure and roles.	3.1. The consortium has a clear, shared structure and roles.	3.1.1. The consortium has a clear, shared structure and roles.
4. Process The consortium has a clear, shared process and procedures.	4.1. The consortium has a clear, shared process and procedures.	4.1.1. The consortium has a clear, shared process and procedures.
5. Learning The consortium has a clear, shared learning and improvement process.	5.1. The consortium has a clear, shared learning and improvement process.	5.1.1. The consortium has a clear, shared learning and improvement process.

COMPONENT	ATTRIBUTES & PROCESSES	TOOLS	GOOD PRACTICES
Goals The consortium has a clear, shared purpose and mission statement.	• A mutually agreed to, transparent, and rigorous process should be reported and used to identify the implementing agencies, based on the demonstrated technical, managerial, and financial capacity of each agency. The consortium may wish to consider vertical and horizontal complementarity (technical versus agency approach) for across different consortium member's structure. • The consensus vision for the consortium, is ideally negotiated and agreed to by each agency at all levels, including but not limited to the country program, sub-national, regional, and headquarters offices. The vision for the consortium should respect the diversity among consortium member agencies. • The consortium should define and agree to all of the common criteria for excellence in management, programming, and financial management. The criteria should be formalized with a written agreement at the onset, reviewed, and updated on a mutually agreed to schedule . • A review of principles, values, and missions of each consortium member may serve as the basis of a joint statement committing to accountability to communities and/or beneficiaries, donors, and to each other. • Goals are set at the highest level and describe the desired state, condition, or situation . They resonate with donor, participants, and host country priorities and are mutually agreed to by all parties.	• One-on-one dialogue • Organizational capacity assessment • Task analysis at the structure level • Reports for fiscal, financial, baseline, annual, evaluation • Performance indicator Tracking Table (PIT), agency performance scorecard • Likelihood analysis • Project orientation • Training agreements • List of management, finance, and organizational development consultants • Integral Human Development framework, concept, and users guide • Catholic social teaching	• Annual retreat/reflection with external facilitation • Midterm survey before the actual mid-point in the project • Process participatory processes for advisory body

TIMELINE OF PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION STAGES			
1. PRE-CONSORTIUM PLANNING	RESPONSIBILITIES AND RESULTS This section defines what takes place at this stage of consortium development. It includes descriptions of the types of activities, identifies who is responsible, and lists anticipated outputs.	CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS These columns describe how to measure progress toward the desired outputs of this stage of consortium development, and illustrate what works and what to avoid.	LEARNING This section lists materials created by CRS and partner organizations— manuals, guidance, processes—that can assist a consortium at this phase. Many CRS tools are useful throughout the life of a consortium and may be introduced to partners as best practice.
2. FORMATION OF CONSORTIUM			
3. PROPOSAL DESIGN			
4. PROPOSAL APPROVAL OR REJECTION			
5. IMPLEMENTATION PHASE: START UP			
6. IMPLEMENTATION PHASE: EXECUTION			
7. IMPLEMENTATION PHASE: MID-TERM			
8. CLOSURE			
9. CONTINUATION			

- From your consortium experience, rate the 7 management standards on a scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (great) against the list in your handout
 - Take 5 min
 - Using dots, show your ratings for each standard on the wall flipcharts

- In your experience, what practice, approach and/or tool has worked well to improve consortium performance in this standard?
- Identify the top 3 practice/approach/tool(s) you feel are MOST effective to improve consortium practice in this standard
 - Take 20 min
 - Appoint a facilitator, note taker and a rapporteur
 - On the flipchart, write what worked well and your Top 3
 - Prepare to share in a 2-min report-out

- Individually, take 3 minutes to further reflect and write down the most important next steps
- In pairs, take 5-7 minutes to discuss next steps:
 - How do you personally intend to apply what we've discussed to your work in consortium management
- A selection of responses will be shared in a 5min plenary