OPERATIONS MANUAL

CRG Strategic Initiative project

Developing skills and building capacity of transgender communities
to meaningfully engage with Global Fund processes
in areas of HIV, Malaria and Tuberculosis

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The policies and procedures outlined in this Operations Manual are designed to guide the implementation of the project to be carried out by GATE, and subcontracted organizations for the implementation of activities. This project is financed by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria through the Communities Rights and Gender Technical Assistance Program (CRG).

The project is to be implemented by Global Action for Trans* Equality, for which the main office is in New York City in the United States of America and which has a global reach. GATE will be responsible for carrying out all activities described in the work plan submitted and approved by the CRG, including overseeing work subcontracted to other organizations, and GATE, along with any partners or subcontracted organizations, are subject to the standards, requirements and policies set forth in the signed contract with the CRG.

The administrative aspects of the project will be the responsibility of GATE. GATE will ensure that disbursements are given in a timely manner and will verify all reports and activities carried out by subcontracted organizations and the contracted consultants.

The need for this manual arose out of the requirement to standardized procedures and policies between GATE and subcontracted organizations. This manual was developed for the sole purpose of the implementation of the present project to facilitate implementation, and to ensure that the same reporting format is followed for accountability.

GATE and any subcontracted/partner organizations are required to adhere to this manual for the entire duration of the project.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

1.1 The GATE CRG Strategic Initiative project focuses on developing skills and building capacity of transgender communities to meaningfully engage with Global Fund processes in areas of HIV, malaria and tuberculosis. This two-year project, beginning in January 2018, includes ten countries: Nepal, Philippines, Thailand, India and Vietnam from Asia; and Dominican Republic, Guyana, Nicaragua, Belize and Peru from Latin America. The objectives include:

1. Developing skills and understanding of the Global Fund and related processes on human rights, gender equality, and sexual and reproductive health services.
2. Ensuring that Global Fund supported projects address and include transgender issues and contribute to the UNAIDS Fast-Track targets for 2021 (especially the 90-90-90 targets on testing, treatment and viral load suppression) and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.
3. Strengthening the capacity of transgender people to participate in national strategic plan developments, country dialogues, concept note developments and budget allocation, and monitoring implementation of activities.
4. Protecting the gains made in transgender programming and supporting sustainable transition plans for transgender communities in middle-income countries and countries without generalized HIV epidemics.
5. Collecting strategic information and data on transgender people for evidence-based advocacy for trans-specific programming.
6. Strengthening capacity of global, regional and national transgender networks including peer-to-peer knowledge sharing and coalition building for increased investment in community-led transgender programming and responses.

1.2 As a community-led network, GATE is sensitive to a participatory approach and works to ensure that all those involved are engaged, respected and have the opportunity to learn from each other's experience and knowledge. All activities will be developed in consultation with communities and all efforts will be made to ensure that engagements with local transgender communities are culturally sensitive including acknowledging the range of identities within the transgender communities.

1.3 It is intended that the project will give transgender communities in these countries the opportunity to develop links with each other and the broader set of key populations, as well as creating links with policy makers and service providers engaged in the HIV, TB and malaria responses and health systems. The project will also strengthen connections between the transgender community and the Global Fund's Community, Rights and Gender Coordination and Communications regional platforms, hosted by APCASO in Asia and the Pacific, and CRAT VIA LIBRE-International HIV AIDS Alliance in Latin America and the Caribbean.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 GATE

1. Coordinate and ensure that activities are implemented in accordance to work plan.
2. Provide technical assistance to ensure the timely implementation of activities.
3. Keep financial records to ensure that all activities are within the approved budget.
4. Ensure that all activities and actions are aligned to the operations manual.
5. Coordinate the logistics to implement activities in region and beneficiary countries.
6. Consolidate the production of data that is based on evidence.
7. Ensure high quality of reports.
8. Implement all activities in the work plan within the expected time frame.
9. Coordinate the process of purchase of goods and/or services for the implementation of the project.
10. Write detailed quarterly reports.
11. Safeguard evidence of implemented activities.
12. Administer the funds of the project in accordance with CRG stipulations.
13. Produce timely programmatic and financial reports for the donor.
14. Supervise the budget and inform in a timely manner of any misuse or unauthorized expenses.
15. Support the work of the Technical Coordinator for the success of the project.
16. Support the work of the Finance Officer to guarantee good financial standing of the project.
17. Support the work of the Communications Officer to produce timely and quantitative information on the project and findings.

2.2 Sub-contracted organization

1. Coordinate and ensure that activities are implemented in accordance to work plan.
2. Provide technical assistance to ensure the timely implementation of activities for organizations in the corresponding beneficiary country.
3. Keep financial records to ensure that all activities implemented are within the approved budget.
4. Ensure that all activities and actions are aligned to the operations manual.
5. Coordinate the logistics to implement activities in the beneficiary countries.
6. Consolidate the production of data that is based on evidence.
7. Ensure high quality of reports.
8. Implement all activities in the work plan assigned in subcontracts.
9. Coordinate the process of purchase of goods and/or services for the implementation of the project in the beneficiary countries corresponding to subcontract.
10. Safeguard evidence of implemented activities.
11. Administer the funds of the project in accordance with CRG stipulations.
12. Produce timely programmatic and financial reports to submit to GATE.

2.3 Technical Coordinator

1. Coordinate the development, design and follow up of all administrative and monitoring processes of the project.
2. Ensure the observance of the procedures manual and coordinate any updates to the manual.
3. Guarantee payment to service providers.
4. Coordinate the timely, high quality production of reports to be submitted to the donor.
5. Identify any administrative problems during project implementation and submit suggestions for improvement.
6. Monitor the implementation of the project.
7. Provide TA as required for grant implementation.
8. Periodic monitoring of activities and evidence submitted of the activities.
9. Send programmatic and financial reports to the donor as requested.

2.4 Focal Point/Lead of Subcontracted Organization

1. Coordinate the development, design and follow up of all administrative and monitoring processes of the project corresponding to the subcontracted region or country.
2. Ensure the observance of the operations manual.
3. Guarantee payment to service providers.
4. Coordinate the timely, high quality production of reports to be submitted to GATE.
5. Identify any administrative problems during project implementation and submit suggestions for improvement.
6. Monitor the implementation of the project in the subcontracted region or country.
7. Provide TA as required for project implementation.
8. Periodic monitoring of activities and evidence submitted of the activities.
9. Send programmatic and financial reports to GATE as requested.

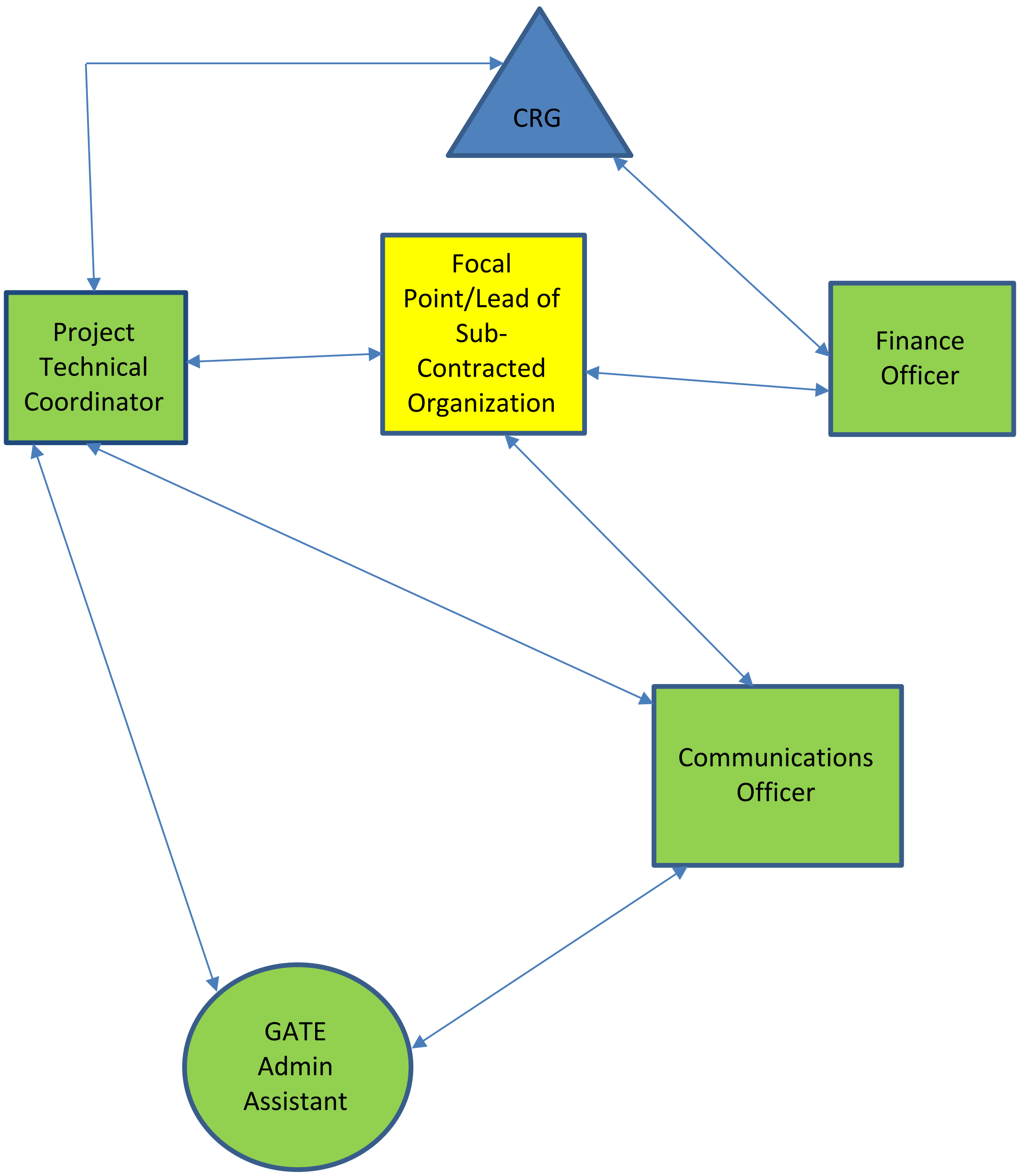
2.5 Finance Officer

1. Submit all payments to service providers in a timely manner.
2. Review the financial reports submitted by GATE and sub-contracted organization.
3. Supervise and submit financial reports to the donor.
4. Monitor expenditures for activities in both regions.
5. Inform Technical Coordinator of any variance in budget.
6. Approve financial reports.
7. Provide support to sub-contracted organization in financial reporting as required to ensure successful project implementation.

2.6 Communications Officer

1. Produce and update communications plan for the project.
2. Develop and share a graphic line to be used for the project.
3. Edit and support the graphic design in reports and publications.
4. Provide TA to GATE, subcontracted organization and organizations in beneficiary countries as required.
5. Update website with project publications.
6. Approve any publication related to the project prior to sharing on social media.
7. Disseminate reports, news and findings during the project implementation on GATE website and social media in a timely coordinated manner.

Work Chart



KEY

= GATE
= Sub-Contracted Organization
= Personnel receiving % compensation from project
= Personnel not receiving % compensation from project

Hiring of consultants

3.1 All hiring processes must be done according to the specifications in this manual. Specific processes are to be in place for development of ToRs, approving of consultants to hire and results of products of consultants.

3.2 The hired consultant will perform their duties according to the ToRs and signed contract in order to achieve the objectives of the consultancy and the project.

Types of contracts

4 All contracts are to be service demand product-based contracts without exceptions. The consultancy services may be provided by individuals or organizations depending on the consultancy and experience of provider.

Salaries

5 The salaries of staff directly involved in project implementation are specified in the work plan and budget and these are to remain fixed for the duration of the project.

Recruitment processes

6.1 GATE actively promotes and respects gender equity in all its recruitment processes and encourage the participation of trans and intersex persons in all recruitment processes.

Recruitment methods

6.2 Direct recruitment:
This method of recruitment is permitted only in exceptional cases with adequate justification for direct contracting. Any and all direct contracts must be approved by the Technical Coordinator in writing.

6.3 For all consultancies a new ToR must be developed, detailing the profile sought, description of responsibilities and expected deliverables.

6.4 ToRs must be widely disseminated for a minimum of 10 days. This must be shared on social media, websites, mailing lists and partner organizations platforms.

6.5 A selection panel will be established with a minimum of 2 persons. The panel will be responsible for pre-selection of candidates. At least 1 person on the panel must be a trans person.

6.6 The panel must use a pre-selection table where a score is to be assigned to candidates according to the required profile in the ToR. A maximum of 3 candidates with the highest scores are to be invited for an interview. The interviews can be conducted in person or via skype.

6.7 The interviews will be conducted according to an interview format designed specifically for the consultancy.

6.8 After the interviews, a table of interview results will be developed, and a score will be given to all candidates in accordance to the interview questions.

6.9 If only 1 person applies, the ToRs must be re-issued for another minimum of 10 days, and all efforts must be made to ensure that it is distributed as widely as possible. If, after the 2nd call, there is still insufficient expression of interest, direct contracting is permitted if the person fulfills the requirements of the ToRs.

6.10 All hiring documents (listed below) must be sent to Technical Coordinator:

a. ToRs
b. Pre-selection table with scores
c. CVs of the pre-selected candidates
d. Interview Format
e. Interview scores table
f. Copy of ID of selected applicant

6.11 All documents for recruitment process must be filed for the duration of the project and 7 years after the termination or expiration of the project.

Ethical considerations for contracts

7.1 The filing and management of personal data or any other confidential information must be protected and kept confidential.

7.2 All consultants hired under this project must be respectful and observe zero discrimination to the populations GATE and sub-contracted organizations work with.

7.3 Consultants hired under this project understand and agree that all the products from this project are the sole property of GATE.

7.4 Any hired consultant must declare conflicts of interest, especially if they receive any form of income from another GF or CRG related project. If consultant receives/d forms of income from CRG, the Conflict of Interest of the consultant must be submitted to CRG for clearance prior to confirmation of hiring.

7.5 All fiscal obligations are the sole responsibility of the consultant, and GATE is not to be held liable for any tributary contributions (i.e. tax, social benefits) derived from the income of contracts.

7.6 Consultants are to be contracted under signed agreement with GATE and/or sub-contracted organizations and should not assume that they are hired by the Global Fund or the CRG.

7.7 The rights and obligations of the consultants must be specified in the ToRs and signed contracts.

7.8 Rescission of any contract by the consultant must be notified in writing. If consultant rescinds a contract and has not fulfilled obligations in contract, they must reimburse any monies that have been provided in advance and the amount will be calculated in accordance with percentage of work done and products received.

7.9 Payments to consultants will be made in accordance to payment plan stipulated in each contract without exceptions.

7.10 For all payments and disbursements, the following must be observed:

a. An invoice must be submitted to GATE Finance Officer specifying the currency, amount, services provided, products submitted and quoting the contract number.
b. The invoices will be reviewed in a maximum of 5 days and any observations or comments will be sent within this time frame.
c. Once the Finance Officer and Technical Coordinator have approved reports, invoices etc. the payment is to be made via wire transfer no later than 10 days after approval of documents submitted.

7.11 Disbursement request must be aligned to work plan and budget and must quote the activity to be implemented with a detailed budget for the activity.

Authorization limits:

8.1 The acquisition of services and/or goods will be guided by the following limits:

8.2 Any amount below $999.99 USD can be obtained by direct acquisition with only one quotation.

8.3 Any amount above $1,000.00 USD but below $4,999.99 USD can be obtained through direct acquisition with evidence of 3 obtained official quotations indicating procurer information.

8.4 Any service or product that has a cost above USD$5,000.00 needs to be done through a well-documented bidding process.

8.5 Any amount below $1,000.00 USD for reprogramming of funds requires written notification to the CRG and this shall be done via the GATE Technical coordinator. The reprogramming of funds can only proceed after confirmation of receipt of the notification.

8.6 Any amount above $1,000.00 USD for reprogramming requires authorization by the CRG and this must be done via GATE Technical Coordinator

8.7 Any changes to the activities and work plan shall be notified in advance to the CRG in writing by the GATE Technical Coordinator, and changes to financial matters by GATE Finance Officer. Sub-contracted organizations shall inform GATE Technical Coordinator of any changes to activities, work plan and/ or finance matters in writing.

Filing of documents

9 GATE and subcontracted organizations must ensure that all documents related to the project are properly filed and readily accessible when requested. Documents must be filed by activity and available in hard and soft copies during project implementation and for 7 years after the project expiration or termination.

Travelling policies:

10.1 The following travelling policies must be applied to everyone equally, inclusive of GATE's and sub-contracted organizations' staff and beneficiaries.

10.2 Each region coordinator is responsible for all logistics regarding flights of staff and participants.

10.3 All flights will be purchased in economy class with the most direct, lowest fare possible, without exception. Any deviation from itinerary is the responsibility of the traveler. All flights are to be purchased with travel insurance. The only exception for purchasing a ticket in business class is for medical reasons where the person travelling cannot travel in the comfort offered in economy class. This justification must be accompanied by a medical certificate specifying that the person is not able to fly in economy.

10.4 All flights should be purchased with a minimum of 15 days before activities in order to ensure a better price. Any flights booked outside of the window period, can only be justified if it is within approved budget in accordance to the work plan.

10.5 All flights are to be purchased specifically for the events convened. Any variation on dates needs prior approval of coordinators and any budgetary implications will be the responsibility of the traveler.

10.6 All participants will be required to complete a travel request form which will be reviewed by coordinator(s) and, if approved, submitted to travel agency.

10.7 Participants will be presented with a proposed itinerary for approval before purchase.

10.8 Any changes in itinerary after purchase will be the responsibility of the participant.

Logistics arrangements:

11.1 For regional meetings and travel that will include long haul flights, all travel requests need to be submitted a minimum of 3 weeks before travel date to ensure lowest rate possible.

11.2 Lodging will be reserved in single rooms for all participants according to the most convenient location for the activity being implemented but always within the budgetary limits.

Per diems

12.1 All participants will receive per diems for the days agreed in each activity.

12.2 Per diems are to be calculated according to the number of days and rate for the country where the activity is being implemented.

12.3 Per diem rates are calculated from the US Department of State per diem rates. 50% of the M&IE rate is calculated for per diem.

12.4 The rates can be found here: https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp

12.5 Any additional expenses, for example visa costs, airport ground transportation etc. require a receipt form for reimbursement. In countries where receipts are not available, a flat rate will be used based on the organization's policies.

12.6 There are to be no advances in per diems without exception.

12.7 If a participant requires a visa, it will be the responsibility of the participant to verify this information prior to any activity.

12.8 Visa costs will be reimbursed upon submitting a receipt.

12.9 Local transportation that is under 50 km will be done via ground transportation either bus or train. Flights for local travel will only be considered for trips above 50 km with an overnight stay.

12.10 To reimburse local transportation costs, participants will need to submit a receipt. In countries where receipts are not available, a flat rate will be used based on the organization's policies.

12.11 Local participants will receive the per diem rate specified above.

Petty cash policy

13 Petty cash can only be considered for payment of per diems and reimbursements and this needs to be pre-calculated to ensure accurate petty cash amounts.

Reporting:

14.1 After each activity, a programmatic and financial report must be submitted no later than 20 days after completing the activity.

14.2 The programmatic report needs to include sign-up sheets, photo/video consent forms, PPT presentations, agenda, findings and observations and detailed budget outline expenses with reference to receipt numbers.

14.3 Any form that is not included in this manual but is needed during the project implementation will be designed by Technical Coordinator along with Communications Officer and will be approved by GATE before its use.