Toolkit for a community-based emergency fund

Experiences from LGBTQI+ communities in Southern Africa

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Toolkit for a community-based emergency fund:
Experiences from LGBTQI+ communities in Southern Africa

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Toolkit for a community-based emergency fund
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The publication is dedicated to all LGBTQI+ persons supported by the emergency fund and all those who face discrimination, harassment, abuse, and violence in their everyday lives.

Electronic copies of this booklet can be accessed at:
www.cospe.org and www.southerafricalitigationcentre.org.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CBO	Community-based organisation
CCPR	Centre for Civil and Political Rights
COSPE	Cooperazione per lo Sviluppo dei Paesi Emergenti
CSO	Civil society organisation
CTT	Crisis Task Team
HRs	Human rights
HRDs	Human rights defenders
LGBTQI+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex and other sexual or gender self-identifications
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NRA	Nyasa Rainbow Alliance
ROH	The Rock of Hope
SALC	Southern Africa Litigation Centre
SOGIESC	Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression and Sex Characteristics
TREAT	Trans Research, Education, Advocacy & Training

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PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

The community-based emergency fund for the protection of LGBTQI+ persons in Eswatini, Malawi and Zimbabwe formed part of the project "Out & Proud: LGBTI Equality and Rights in Southern Africa", co-funded by the European Union and implemented by Southern Africa Litigation Centre (SALC), Cooperazione per lo Sviluppo dei Paesi Emergenti (COSPE), Centre for Civil and Political Rights (CCPR), Nyasa Rainbow Alliance (NRA), The Rock of Hope (ROH), and Trans Research, Education, Advocacy & Training (TREAT).

The community-based emergency fund was part of a more comprehensive plan for the empowerment and protection of LGBTQI+ persons and their organisations by:

- **Strengthening the safety, security, collective visibility and capacities of HRDs and their organisations;**
- **Building solidarity, alliances and information-sharing mechanisms at the regional level among HRDs, CSOs, lawyers and journalists; and**
- **Promoting strategic litigations and advocacy actions for policy reforms.**

The community-based emergency fund formed part of the cluster of activities aimed at providing capacity strengthening on crisis management and security for LGBTQI+ HRDs and their organisations.

While some support exists in the region for LGBTQI+ people, primarily through programmes focused on promoting inclusive access to health and HIV care and prevention, minimal attention is paid to the social component of prejudice and its impact on the violation of human rights at multiple levels and the increased shrinking of civic spaces. In Malawi, Zimbabwe and Eswatini, hate speech, criminalisation of same-sex sexual acts, discrimination, social exclusion, and violence persist,[1] contributing to a dangerous environment, isolation and insecurity for LGBTQI+ community members and HRDs. These factors create substantial social and economic barriers for the LGBTQI+ community members, which are difficult to overcome, resulting in structural insecurity, financial instability and a breach in personal safety. The emergency fund was therefore intended as

[1] Müller, A., & Judge, M. 2022. *From the Inside Out: Social Exclusion Linked to Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, and Sex Characteristics in Eswatini, Malawi and Zimbabwe*. Research Report. Out & Proud LGBTI Equality and Rights in Southern Africa; Out & Proud LGBTI Equality and Rights in Southern Africa, 2021. *LGBTQI+ Risk and Vulnerability Analysis*.

part of a broader empowerment strategy and to reaffirm LGBTQI+ rights. The objective of the fund was to provide help to LGBTQI+ people in the critical moment of distress and crisis. The project's kick-off in February 2020 coincided with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The emergency fund had to provide suitable solutions to the aggravated problems raised by the isolation and the pandemic, dealing with contingencies and difficulties that emerged along with the new scenario. When the pandemic brutally spotlighted the higher instability to which LGBTQI+ persons are exposed, the decision to immediately start the fund was taken despite additional difficulties linked to the initial remote or partly remote implementation modalities. All the actors involved had to start learning by doing.

USERS' GUIDE

This booklet is an easy tool to help others set up similar – but not necessarily identical – emergency funds and contribute to a global sharing and learning platform. It offers learning experiences from which some best practices can be drawn for designing and implementing a community-based emergency fund.

The booklet motivates communities to set up a community-based emergency fund using various experiences worldwide. During the COVID-19 pandemic and immediate aftermath, emergency funds were available to respond to new or aggravated needs.

Therefore, when answering the question "who can use this booklet?" we refer to a wide range of potential users, such as local communities (informal groups, CBOs, sector associations); international emergency agencies that work with communities to prepare, respond and recover from emergencies or crisis; government officers who support community development and crisis management programs; INGOs and CSOs that work with communities at the local level; donors and philanthropic associations.

"*user*" refers to any actor interested in building a community-based emergency fund or is already managing, promoting or funding this kind of initiative and can use this booklet for inspiration, reference and guidance.

"*beneficiaries*" refers to those who receive assistance through the emergency fund. Endorsing a human rights-based approach, this terminology shall not be intended to undermine the empowerment and the status as rights holders of those supported.

"*applicants*" refers to those who seek assistance from the emergency fund.

The fact that this fund has been designed for LGBTQI+ people does not mean that it cannot be used as guidance to create emergency fund criteria for other groups or communities. The design of this fund was shaped by an LGBTQI+ risk and vulnerability assessment in specific contexts.[2] Any replication or use of this toolkit should be adapted according to the vulnerabilities and risks of the beneficiaries that the user wants to tackle with the fund.

WHY A COMMUNITY-BASED EMERGENCY FUND?

In general, community-based initiatives intend to prevent isolation and build the collective capacity of individuals and organisations lacking in marginalised areas or social groups. The underpinning idea of a community-based emergency fund is to foster community participation and engagement in responding to people in need, promoting a positive experience for applicants, whether successful or not, and building linkages and connections among community members that might be helpful and resourceful in a broader and long-term perspective. When looking for help and support, people will find respondents that deeply understand and value their experiences, trust them, and can support them in finding appropriate answers to their needs. In this way, people in an emergency or crisis have a valuable opportunity to get in touch with a collective dimension of life, which is often deprived for people belonging to minority or vulnerable groups.

What also distinguishes a community-based emergency fund is its decentralization. International aid funds (development, investment, post-disaster or emergency) tend to be centralized and flow from the donor through multiple actors, thus reaching the final recipients with high management costs. Centralized funding aid schemes are sometimes preferred when efficiency, high technical and professional expertise, or promptness are required and represent a priority, as they minimize the challenges of communication, training, information sharing and coordination. On the other hand, decentralized funding mechanisms have the advantage of closeness to the beneficiaries, fewer management levels involved, and the promotion of trust and ownership building. This kind of scheme, like any other kind of community-driven development initiative, can reduce concerns of accessibility for the most marginalized members of the targeted community and can support a decolonized approach to the human rights work and the aid sector.

The case of the LGBTQI+ community is particularly suitable for building up a community-based emergency fund as it can provide advantages not only in terms of capacity to reach out, understand and address the needs of the different sexual and gender identities and

[2] Out & Proud, LGBTI Equality and Rights in Southern Africa, 2021. *LGBTQI+ Risks and Vulnerability Analysis.*

expressions of the community but also in terms of fostering social inclusion, community cohesion and multi-dimensional support. Every time, the focus is centred on supporting the empowerment of a specific community that presents peculiar needs that can be better recognized and managed by the community members. Such a funding scheme has comparative advantages over others. Moreover, the involvement in managing the fund of different community members and organisations allows the distribution of more resources to different actors of the same community besides the individual beneficiaries of the fund.

METHODOLOGY

The community-based emergency fund was designed based on the findings of preliminary risks and vulnerabilities analyses conducted in Eswatini, Malawi and Zimbabwe, participatory consultations with the LGBTQI+ organisations in the target countries and a desk analysis of existing literature and other emergency fund mechanisms.

Since the beginning, it became evident that the design of this fund was quite innovative for the context and the sector. Constant monitoring and evaluation were carried out throughout the implementation. This has led to learning-by-doing adjustments in processes, tools, and roles. At the end of the experience, an evaluation was conducted, revising and sharing feedback on the whole process with all stakeholders involved.

The compiling of the booklet implied an analysis of the reports produced by experts and project staff in the three years of implementation and direct data gathering in Malawi, Eswatini and Zimbabwe through interviews and focus group discussions with key informants, members of the LGBTQI+ community, beneficiaries of the fund, and representatives and staff from the CSOs involved.

The booklet represents the final account of successful experiences, innovative solutions found along the way, and unexpected critical issues to address. This has helped to identify best practices that can be replicated and challenges that might be encountered when setting up similar initiatives. The booklet intends to share an extraordinary learning experience with the hope that it can be a helpful tool and a reference for other users. However, it remains highly contextual and does not intend to be a universal guide on how to build a community-based emergency fund, nor does it give an account of all the existing models of community-based emergency funds.

PART TWO: SETTING UP THE FUND

OVERVIEW OF THE MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The LGBTQI+ community-based emergency fund was designed as a flexible grant scheme relying on the coordinated actions of different partners in each context. Three types of actors were identified to guarantee transparency, efficacy, efficiency, community ownership, credibility and sustainability in the decision-making and management processes:

1. **An LGBTQI+ CSO in charge of managing, monitoring and reporting, from a technical and financial point of view, the fund's disbursement to the beneficiaries (hereinafter the Service Provider CSO);**
2. **A Crisis Task Team in charge of evaluating help requests, approving the disbursement of funds, guiding in the integrated response to be given to the beneficiary and overseeing the positive conclusion of the fund (hereinafter CTT);**
3. **Other collaborating LGBTQI+ CSOs and CBOs, active in the protection or empowerment of community members, contributed to disseminating information on the fund, supporting the application and verification process and sometimes assisting the beneficiaries in managing the received support (hereinafter other CSOs).**

The Service Provider CSO

The Service Provider CSO was the core organisation responsible for the sound implementation of the fund received from the donor and was accountable for it. Staff and volunteers of the organisation were involved at different levels in managing the fund, such as the programme and finance officers and a dedicated backstop person in charge of taking care of and following up on the cases. The Service Providers CSOs in this case coincided with the local partners of the Out & Proud project at the country level, thus linking the emergency fund with other advocacy and protection actions promoted by the project.

The CTT

The CTT comprised five members, ideally representing diverse groups of the LGBTQI+ community in each country. Its function was to rapidly respond, by examining and evaluating applications, to any LGBTQI+ person or activist in crisis, under attack or a victim of abuses applying for the emergency fund. The decision to have an external and independent team deciding collectively on the applications was taken to help mirror in the evaluation process the different SOGIESC perspectives, to define appropriate responses for each applicant, and to reduce possible conflicts, especially in case of rejection of applications. At the same time, it was intended to avoid the risks of the fund being monopolised by a single CSO, and overwhelming staff and volunteers with work. Members of the CTT were chosen amongst well-known LGBTQI+ activists and professionals with a balanced mix of expertise and experiences in the social, political, cultural and economic support of LGBTQI+ rights. The CTT members' vast network of connections proved to work as a safety net in cases where the funds were insufficient for the survivors.

Collaborating CSOs

The role of other local CSOs and CBOs proved necessary for reaching potential beneficiaries, verifying cases, detecting fake claims, and assisting in supporting and monitoring fund beneficiaries, especially where there were significant geographical distances. They also facilitated referral pathways for LGBTQI+ community members needing emergency support. Generally, they have proven to play an essential role in making the fund a successful safeguarding mechanism.

The main features of a community-based emergency fund are summarised in a short document, "Guidelines of the Emergency Fund" (Annex 1), that was used for training and information sharing.

Be clear from the beginning about the governance structure

Other alternative structures might be possible to set up and manage a community-based emergency fund, considering different geographic and social scopes or different needs and vulnerabilities. For example, if the fund implementation is concentrated in a small geographic area (i.e., a specific sub-urban area or rural community), it makes sense to think about a single CSO managing the whole process from receiving the applications to disbursing the funds. However, more extensive geographical areas may require focal points and physically accessible CSOs or CBOs. In this case, the issue to be considered is proximity to beneficiaries for appropriate assistance and follow-up of cases, considering operational factors such as the digital gap or not having a bank account. Identifying an advisory body to act as the CTT, separate from the entity managing the fund, is recommended. The partners must consider the representation of the community's diversity and potential conflicts of interest.

LET'S GET STARTED: THE RISKS & VULNERABILITIES ANALYSIS

The risk and vulnerability assessment[3] was among the first actions implemented within the scope of the Out & Proud project. A preliminary consultation was held with LGBTQI+ HRDs in the three countries to identify critical issues to be covered by the survey. The questionnaires were then tailored to the reality of each country. The data-gathering tools included semi-structured interviews, open-ended questions, and multiple-choice questionnaires. These were disseminated through multiple methods guided by country context (social media platforms, instant messaging applications, emails, phone, door to door visits).

Although the survey did not claim to represent all the realities experienced by the LGBTQI+ communities in Malawi, Zimbabwe and Eswatini, it presented relevant findings on the risks and vulnerabilities faced by the community members, and HRDs helped to identify the protection and support needs. The risk and vulnerability analysis results informed the design of the fund's structure, the procedures, the forms to be used and the choice of the goods and services to support the people in an emergency.

Include an assessment of the operational environment

The operational environment may hinder providing quick assistance to individuals needing help. For example, obtaining a tenancy agreement for short-term periods in some contexts can be problematic. Due to prejudice and stigma, this could be even more difficult for minority groups like LGBTQI+ persons. Some countries make little use of bank transfers, or transgender people might have difficulties opening bank accounts. For example, some specific goods or services in the health sector cannot be available or easily accessible in practice. It is important to include an operational context analysis in the preliminary needs assessment to ensure that the goods and services included in the emergency fund are accessible to the CSO and community members.

Intersectionality is a necessary approach

The lived experiences of the LGBTQI+ people documented during the risk and vulnerability analysis indicate that intra-categorical (among the various SOGIESC) intersectionality is a valuable and necessary approach for understanding specific multiple-level dimensions of exclusion and discrimination. By adopting an intersectional lens, the preliminary needs assessment can identify the risks and all the levels of additional vulnerabilities of the beneficiaries in a specific context and time and tailor appropriate responses.

[3] Out & Proud, LGBTI Equality and Rights in Southern Africa, 2021. *LGBTQI+ Risks and Vulnerability Analysis.*

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Consultations with CSOs and community members in the three countries highlighted the importance of helping those most at risk of exclusion. HRDs are usually more visible and capable of seeking support through other networks or social connections. Many existing emergency funds address HRDs' needs and offer them mobility, safety or relief options. While prominent activists were certainly considered eligible, priority was given to LGBTQI+ community members who did not necessarily define themselves as activists nor benefit from the visibility and networks that usually accompany activism. The distinction between community members and activists was not always clear-cut; often, these two concepts overlapped or were subject to different interpretations.

Applicants already benefitting from other funds and accessing significant personal economic resources were not eligible. The applicants' social, cultural, and economic origins were considered irrelevant to the evaluation. For example, a well-off applicant could be chased from home, temporarily unable to access savings.

Only individuals and not their families or groups were eligible. This decision had to do with the significant and challenging assistance required by a group. As a pilot action, the focus was on providing effective support within the limits of funding, duration and actors involved.

When a member of a CTT applied for support, they were considered eligible, but special precautionary measures were taken to guarantee objectivity and impartiality in the evaluation of the request.

For more information, see "Guidelines of the Emergency Fund" (Annex 1).

CSOs play a crucial role in reaching at-risk community members

Sometimes, due to risks associated with visibility, people are reluctant to share their problems, or be associated with an LGBTQI+ organisation. The ability of the CSOs to guard the confidentiality and listen carefully to the needs of those individuals is thus crucial to reach as many people at risk as possible and encourage them to apply for emergency funds when appropriate, in a safe and friendly environment.

Find ways to reach at-risk people not linked to CSOs

A person not associated with any LGBTQI+ CSO may experience difficulties accessing information on the availability of an emergency fund. There are many ways of disseminating information: leaflets, posters, advertisements on relevant websites or social media, WhatsApp groups and helplines. The choice depends on the context: putting a poster in a safe space or a gay bar can be a good option, while schools or public institutions in certain countries may refuse such advertisements. It may put applicants who access the information in those places at risk. It is still very challenging for people in rural areas to access information. In such cases, mobile health clinics or other outreach services can be a viable option. Other strategies could be experimented with based on context, keeping in mind the importance of safety and security. Another factor to be considered in the advertisement of the fund is the management capacity of the actors involved; wider dissemination channels, such as radio or social media, can attract many applications and increase the possibility of fake cases.

WHAT CAN BE FUNDED?

The kinds of goods and services covered by the emergency fund were determined by the needs identified in the preliminary risk and vulnerability analysis. This included food, clothing, rent for a house or room, medical services, psychological therapy or counselling, travel expenses, communication costs, and unlawful arrest assistance.

See "Guidelines of the Emergency Fund" (Annex 1) and the Application form (Annex 2).

The underpinning idea was to provide emergency support for an immediate risk but not to support the individual to cope with a structural vulnerability that requires long-term assistance. At the same time, a lengthy legal procedure can be fundamental in an emergency, i.e., legal assistance for arbitrary arrest. For the same reasons, medical expenses did not include therapy administered for prolonged periods unless therapy was a specific and short-term result of the emergency (such as the inability to access hormonal therapy while hiding in a shelter). Identifying goods and expenses matching the beneficiaries' needs was not always easy. These were sometimes not accessible in some contexts. Sometimes beneficiaries cannot express their perceived needs clearly because they are distressed. This requires active listening, negotiation and physiological support.

The application form included a list of approved goods or services and an option to suggest other conditions. In this way, the CTT could cross-check the requests with the information on the case and evaluate which goods or services were more appropriate, ensuring the match between the needs and the response provided. After approval of the application, the beneficiary was informed of the type of assistance available and the reasons for differences with the initial requests, with the opportunity for the beneficiary to refuse the proposed solutions.

People in need of shelter

It was common to get requests to relocate beneficiaries to safe spaces. This was one of the highest risks faced by the LGBTQI+ community due to precarious jobs, financial insecurity, prejudice, stigma, family and intimate partnership violence, and family rejection based on SOGIESC. The sudden loss of personal/familial stability can increase the vulnerability of criminalised and marginalised groups, such as LGBTQI+ persons. Whatever the cause of household instability, finding shelter is fundamental but often not easy. If there is no permanent shelter or safe house available or accessible, it will always take some time to find a safe, decent and accessible housing solution. Access to safe spaces should be considered before initiating an emergency fund to identify possible options to be activated during an emergency.

The quickest is usually the best

No support can achieve its function if it is not provided promptly. Examining an application requires verifying facts, listening to witnesses, asking for clarifications and double-checking the information. Nonetheless, it is essential to provide a quick negative or positive response. If the need is of high priority, it is better to provide the support quickly instead of waiting for detailed verification which may be too late to be helpful. Purchasing goods and services quickly and efficiently is also important to reduce the response time in an emergency. A suitable restricted choice of goods and services can allow the CTT and the Service Provider CSO to adopt standards and timesaving procedures for approval and disbursement of funds.

DESIGNING FORMS AND TOOLS

The design of the forms considered the target population that the fund wanted to support. An emergency is a time of emotional and physical suffering. In most cases, the applicants could find it very hard to focus on the form and give a clear, coherent, exhaustive account of the facts. Considering these factors, the forms have been designed in a very friendly way. They provide extra space for longer explanations and guide the applicant in clear steps, proposing questions that follow a coherent order to explain their lived experience. The multiple-choice questions were more accessible and less demanding for the applicant.

The forms were designed to enable the applicants to express their specific risks and vulnerabilities through an intersectional lens, starting from those generally identified in the community during the preliminary needs assessment. The forms were also meant to convey these risks and vulnerabilities comprehensively to the CTT.

The forms are a simple Word document to enable most CSOs and beneficiaries to use them independently. Other tools linked to the application procedure include:

- An application form to be filled by the applicant (see Annex 2 - Application form).
- A verification tool to be completed by the CSOs receiving and assessing the case (see Annex 3 - CSO Verification report).
- An evaluation report to be completed by the CTT deciding on the approval or rejection of the application (see Annex 6 - CTT Evaluation report).

Other tools were designed to guide procedures, implementation and define functions.

- Annex 4 - Terms of reference for the CTT members
- Annex 7 - Final report
- Annex 8 - Letter of agreement with other CSOs
- Annex 9 - Administrative forms

Keep it simple

Community-based funds should be a learning experience and build trust among community members and CSOs and encourage participation of those at risk of marginalisation. The applicants should not feel overwhelmed when completing the application. Some applicants prefer to talk on the phone, while others prefer an in-person interview. It might be difficult for some individuals to complete the application form, so additional support may be needed to ensure that marginalised groups are not at a disadvantage when applying for emergency funding support. It is important to keep the forms simple, assist beneficiaries to fill them out, giving space for oral narration, translating all the tools into local dialects, and having user-friendly designs.

SETTING UP A CRISIS TASK TEAM

Members of the CTT comprised members of the community and activists selected based on their leadership experience, dedication and involvement in promoting LGBTQI+ rights. They were visible, accessible to the community and able to support beneficiaries. The CTT was a good mix of geographical locations, professional background and SOGIESC, reflecting different sensitivities, experiences and identities within the LGBTQI+ communities.

Manage the risk of turnover of CTT members

Although being part of the CTT is an enriching experience, it is emotionally demanding. Evaluating and verifying multiple application forms implied significant commitment, especially when receiving urgent requests simultaneously. Each member was required to act in the applicants' best interests and ensure full and equal access by adapting the procedure to the applicants' needs. Because of the long processes, some members of the CTT felt overburdened and resigned from the Committee.

The CTT held periodic meetings to discuss the decisions on the applications collectively. To reduce costs, online meetings discussed the applications while quarterly physical meetings were organised to evaluate the overall functioning of the fund, the impact on the beneficiaries, bottlenecks and find possible solutions. The group work methodology also implied that someone had the task of coordinating the discussion (Chairperson); completing the relevant forms (Secretary); and communicating the outcome of the process.

The following activities were undertaken by the CTT members:

1. **Evaluating the applications according to the guidelines of the fund;**
2. **Completing the relevant forms duly signed and timely transmitted to the CSO managing the fund;**
3. **Ensuring proper case management: compliance with timelines, conflict resolution procedures, scheduling of interviews with interpretation when needed; timely communication of the decisions;**
4. **Conducting interviews with the beneficiary;**
5. **Evaluating follow-up requests; and**
6. **Supporting the applicants through referral mechanisms to provide complementary assistance.**

For more information see: Annex 1- Guidelines of the community-based emergency fund, Annex 6 – Evaluation Report, Annex 4 - Terms of reference for the CTT members and Annex 7- Final report.

Establish clear tasks and ensure continuous training

There might be confusion when a team is working together for the first time, on a voluntary basis, and free of rigid working hours and settings. It is important from the beginning that candidates are clear about their roles and responsibilities. It is important to assign the tasks of Chairperson and Secretary on a rotational or fixed basis or upon any other fair agreed mechanism and to balance the workload among members of the CTT in verifying information and supporting the cases. An inception training of CTT members on the Guidelines and Forms is important. Regular meetings are helpful to analyse bottlenecks and share information. Refreshment training is necessary if there is turnover of CTT members.

Use a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to ensure CTT performance

A CTT can include a variable number of members or experts with specific skills depending on the nature of the community or the fund. The CTT should be small enough to guarantee an efficient decision-making process. Being part of the CTT implies visibility but also a strong commitment. After a first period of excitement and enthusiasm, members could progressively give up their responsibilities or become aware of the fact that they are not compatible with their ordinary work, leaving the team on short notice and/or creating delays in the evaluation procedure. It might be useful for both the Service Provider CSO and the CTT members to agree on a MoU to be signed by all members on their roles, the rules of engagement and to foster personal commitment.

PART THREE: THE APPLICATION PROCEDURE

THE PROCESS OF APPLICATION AND VERIFICATION

The Service Provider CSO disseminated information to the other LGBTQI+ CSOs active in the specific context to enable them to promote the fund's visibility among the communities they represent and work with. The other CSOs often represented the first contact with the person in the emergency, providing orientation and counselling. The CSOs were not in charge of evaluating the applications and it was not their task to encourage or discourage applications to the fund. They acted as facilitators, providing guidance and support to the applicants in completing the forms and sending them correctly to the CTT. This proved to be very important as the applicants were often confused or stressed and unable to fill in the forms or did not have internet access and IT tools to scan and send the application and documents to the CTT.

The CSOs were also responsible for the first screening of the applications through a verification process. This first screening mechanism saved time for the CTT by avoiding the need to examine ineligible applications. The verification process can be quite demanding due to the fragile situation or the sensitivity of the referred situation. Verification included different processes, ranging from a confidential conversation with the applicant, or a close relative or friend that could help explain the facts, writing emails or calling someone that previously assisted the person, requesting additional documents from the applicants or supporting the gathering of documents.

After verification, the CSOs were supposed to send to the CTT, through an email address specifically created for applications, the scanned application form completed by the applicant (see Annex 2 - Application form) and the verification report (see Annex 3 - CSO Verification report). The verification report included the name of a contact person within the CSOs for further information sharing with the CTT.

Recognise the work and support of the other CSOs

The CSOs that contribute to the collection and submission of applications and their verification put people, time and resources at disposal of the process, which are important to recognize. While the personal commitment is irreplaceable, and the community networks are often activated on voluntary basis or for some organisations this kind of support is part of their institutional work, it is always important to verify if there is the need to make a provision of resources to cover the expenditures involved in accompanying the applicant during the process. This is especially relevant when long distances are involved, and the verification process is onerous.

Appoint and mentor reference persons in the CSOs

Staff and/or volunteer turnover or not clearly appointing internal reference persons within the Service Provider CSO risks breaking the information chain reaching the people at risk. It also increases the risk of inappropriate advice being given on how to access the fund. It is recommended that the CSOs nominate an internal reference person in charge of supporting dissemination, application and verification processes of the fund. This allows training of relevant staff, smooth flow of information, and enables periodic feedback and sharing sessions to identify bottlenecks in implementation. Though practical, verification can often be a burdensome and emotional activity for the staff and volunteers on the frontline of receiving requests. Feedback and coaching sessions can support coping mechanisms. Where there is no specific officer responsible or whenever there is a turnover, refresher training and updates are recommended. Guidelines of the fund should be distributed to the CSO's staff and volunteers.

EVALUATION BY THE CRISIS TASK TEAM

The evaluation of the applications was done collectively by the CTT members to guarantee an unbiased and careful decision. The meetings were held either physically or virtually, during lockdowns or to reduce costs.

1. Examine the applications and other supporting documents.
2. Engage with the verification report provided by the CSO.
3. Use the information gathered to inform discussions.
4. Verify that there was no conflict of interest.
5. Decide whether to gather more information.
6. Use the evaluation guidelines to finalize the evaluation process (see Annex 5 - Guidelines for the CTT evaluation).
7. Make a final decision based on a clear and credible risk and vulnerability of the applicant.
8. Document the final decisions in a form signed by the Chairperson and Secretary (see Annex 6 – CTT Evaluation Report).
9. Communicate approval or rejection of applications promptly to the Service Provider CSO.
10. Service Provider CSO immediately notifies the collaborating partner CSO and applicant about the outcome.
11. Service Provider CSO immediately initiates the disbursement procedure.

Even where the requests were unsuccessful, the applications provided useful knowledge regarding the context of LGBTQI+ community in a given area, therefore all the data was collected and packaged for advocacy, research, programme design or communication whilst maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of the applicants.

All these tasks are in the term of reference shared with the members of the CTT (see Annex 4 - Terms of reference for the CTT members).

Transparency is essential

The applicants should always receive feedback on their request and an explanation if their application was not approved. Community-based funds should reduce the dissatisfaction of the community with lack of transparency around funding schemes. This approach ensures transparency and less disruption of community networks. Transparency and accountability are important because, in many instances, applications that are not approved may not be because of lack of vulnerability of the individuals but because of the ineligibility of the requested assistance (for example, being a structural situation of marginalization or vulnerability, requiring actions that an emergency grant cannot fund).

Ensure credible information

In some cases, the CTT may need more information to decide on the application. The Service CSO must advise if the process would cause secondary trauma. If no risk, the CTT can conduct an additional interview with the beneficiary. This is especially recommended when there are issues of credibility of the application. However, multiple interviews should be avoided because they can be time-consuming and costly and may require the CTT members to travel. A viable option, often used, was to verify facts over the phone or ask the CSO reference person to clarify some circumstances. The flow of information between the CTT, the Service Provider CSO and partners CSOs should always be timely, open and effective and comply with the principles of confidentiality, protection of personal information, and doing no harm.

THE DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS

Once the application has been approved, the decision is translated into practical support to the person in distress. The CTT was responsible for immediately communicating to the Service Provider CSO the results of the application. Depending on the nature and length of assistance, the disbursement of funds could be according to different payment plans. In some cases, beneficiaries required periodic payments where circumstances did not allow single purchases: the typical example was perishable food. The amount disbursed periodically was informed by the nature of the service provided and in agreement with the applicant. In some instances, payments were done directly by the Service Provider CSO, as in the case of payment of hospital admission fees, and at other times the beneficiary was paid directly when purchasing clothes, blankets, or food items.

In situations where beneficiaries lived far away from the Service CSOs or any other barriers, the partner CSO that first got in touch with the applicant supported the disbursement of the funds to the beneficiary by purchasing goods and collecting invoices. The two partners then signed an agreement (see Annex 8 - Letter of agreement with other CSOs).

Carefully monitor financial flows

It is critical to agree on authorization mechanisms with other local CSOs or CBOs that receive and disburse funds to beneficiaries due to their proximity. However, where multiple actors disburse and manage funds, this can impact on the financial controls. As a rule, no financial responsibility should be given to partners without also agreeing on the requirement for financial accountability.

Guarantee effective and efficient support

Constant contact with the beneficiaries is fundamental to providing adequate support and monitoring. Since responsible officers are often busy with other organizational tasks and may not necessarily have adequate skills to manage and follow up with clients, one person, possibly with a legal and/or psychosocial background was appointed as a case “*validator*”. This person was in charge of monitoring the wellbeing of the beneficiary, collecting and filing all relevant documents, including administrative receipts, maintaining contact with other CSOs and the CTT. The continuous monitoring process allows the officers to identify emerging needs for additional support and informed the CTT for approval, and closure of the case at the end of the assistance (see Annex 7. Final report). The officer saved the CTT time and effort, enabling them to focus on evaluating cases, and ensured privacy and confidentiality of information.

ADMINISTRATION AND REPORTING

Administrative tools assisted case management and included a list suggesting what is fundable with ceiling amounts estimated according to market value, maximum quantity and duration for each item. The Service Provider CSO prepared these tools, for the CTT's approval and sharing with the collaborating CSOs. After the application is approved, the responsible officer used the pre-defined list to check the goods and services they may require with the beneficiary. Once the financial support was determined, the applicant and the responsible officer signed a delivery note indicate agreement. The Service Provider CSO was responsible for collecting and filing documentation of the expenses and liable for any document loss or financial inaccuracy (see Annex 9. Administrative forms).

The fund was implemented within the framework of a project governed by precise administrative and financial requirements. The donor's financial procedures required collecting and filing evidence of every single expenditure incurred. For this purpose, the guiding list of goods and services to be funded included expected supporting documents for each of them. Whenever possible, the responsible officer accompanied the beneficiary to purchase goods and services to support the beneficiary and ensure proper accountability of the funds. In some instances, accompaniment of applicants to purchase goods proved to be an effective measure of protecting beneficiaries against exploitation by family members.

Be clear about the type of assistance and any reporting requirements

Pre-defining the types of assistance and costs minimizes any discretional decisions and ensures transparency and equality in the treatment of cases. The reporting procedures may differ based on donor requirements. Always be sure to explain the administrative and financial procedure to the beneficiaries and CSOs collaborating on cases.

Reduce documentation to a minimum

Emergencies are not compatible with massive paperwork. Tracking and keeping evidence of every single expenditure can be very difficult during emergencies, and adequate storage and transmission of financial documents can be challenging. Providing receipts for the disbursed funds was extremely cumbersome. Many payments need to be made by cash because most beneficiaries did not have bank accounts due to barriers that some queer identities face. It is important that the names of beneficiaries reflected in the receipts or supporting documents are consistent to avoid confusion. All documents must be stored in a lockable space to protect the privacy and safety of the beneficiaries.

PART FIVE: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The design and management of the fund has been a demanding, challenging, and inspiring activity. All the steps for evaluating the validity of the applications, the rapidness of the response, the management of sensitive and difficult situations and the required management work, proved a continuous struggle. Overall, it can be said that the fund represented a suitable and flexible tool that, with some amendments along the way, proved to be efficient and presented an incredible learning experience worth sharing and improving on.

In general, evaluating an emergency for members of structurally disadvantaged communities is a very challenging task. Suppose the emergency is solely considered a sudden break of a safe and stable life. In that case, it is hard to apply in communities where members live in a permanent state of risk and hardship due to discrimination and social exclusion.

A three-month support does not assure adequate time for a person to get on their feet again. In other cases, if a sudden dangerous event happens in the life of a person that used to have a generally wealthy and secure life, the emergency fund cannot represent a sustainable nor sufficient option to re-establish the previous lifestyle and sense of wellbeing. There were many cases reported of young LGBTQI+ persons who were enrolled in educational institutions but after being chased from home, they were not able to continue with their studies.

Managing such an emergency fund, thus, exposed the actors to multiple kinds of expectations, needs, personal situations and vulnerabilities. The community-based dimension of the fund helped to create and strengthen collective support systems to provide a more comprehensive response.

Many factors influenced and shaped the implementation of the initiative, and the proposed recommendations are highly contextual. At the same time, they represent useful elements of attention for any organization interested in setting up or already managing a community-based emergency fund.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE DONOR

1. Promote flexible funding schemes, including community-driven development initiatives, as eligible to integrate an emergency response within the scope of longer-term initiatives addressing structural problems (economic empowerment, education, training and capacity building, housing);

2. Define compliance and reporting requirements for the CSOs managing the funds, adjusting them to the cultural and linguistic dimension and the socio-economic and political situation of the given community in the specific context. Give priority to community-driven initiatives even in the emergency sector to help the growth of locally managed and community-led organisations;

3. Consider the importance of accepting cash transfers without the need for elaborate documentary evidence of the expenditures as a preferred option for these kinds of funding initiatives. Request clear rules for eligibility, screening, decision-making, fact-checking and disbursement processes but limit the documentation needs and any excessive burden on people in a situation of distress.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE COMMUNITY CSOs

1. Consider the collaboration to an emergency fund not only for the benefit of the individual needs of the community members but also to strengthen the community. Initiatives like a community-based fund offer a unique opportunity to build or reinforce networks within and among communities, share information, knowledge, and best practices or experiences;

2. Use the issues related to the emergency cases to improve collective visibility of the challenges of the community and substantiate advocacy actions and strategic litigation. Enhancing visibility contributes to promoting new narratives and a more favourable enabling environment for change and empowerment;

3. Identify solidarity, healing and wellbeing support mechanisms within the community. Structural discrimination can create specific health and mental health needs among the community members who lack adequate support services. It is important that the CSOs offer spaces and opportunities for healing and wellbeing, including among volunteers and staff.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE SERVICE PROVIDER CSO

1. Invest in the development of internal administrative and financial skills, and engage in external capacity building sessions to acquire strong competencies that can benefit community members;

2. Consider targeting needs emerging from a risk and vulnerability analysis. Funds can be adapted to different needs and can tackle different kinds of social instability. Disaggregated data from a risk analysis can provide a clear idea of the multiple specific needs of the community to tailor effective emergency and other programmatic support;

3. Provide comprehensive support to the people who apply for an emergency grant, assist them to develop a medium-term plan to get out of the situation of emergency or crisis. Get involved in programs or projects dealing with civic participation and social inclusion of members of the community. Coping with an emergency is just a first step but the empowerment of the community needs to be exercised through political identities, direct representation, active participation, engagement, and lobbying.

ANNEXURES

1. Guidelines for LGBTQI+ emergency community response fund

What is a community-based emergency fund?

It is a fund managed by representatives of the LGBTQI+ community meant to provide a first and rapid response to basic needs of LGBTQI+ people and activists/HRDs who are victims of violence, harassment and discrimination, to decrease the risk while allowing them time to seek mentoring and advice regarding more structured alternatives and programmes. Instead of relying on external experts or evaluation committees of donors and funding institutions, the Fund is intended to be managed directly by community members and CSOs based on their proximity to the victims which can allow them to better identify and gather help requests, validate the cases and provide support.

Structure of the funding mechanism

Who is eligible?

- Only individuals self-identifying as LGBTQI+ people.
- Persons facing an emergency due to their sexual orientation and gender identity or their activism in the field of LGBTQI+ issues.
- Priority shall be given to community members in consideration of the difficulty for them to access other emergency funds dedicated to HRDs.
- The emergency must be relevant, current, coherent, consistent, and credible.
- The emergency must be documented and assessed, and the person should be able to provide details about the situation of risk that he/she is currently facing:
  - If member of the LGBTQI+ community, the credibility of this risk can be supported by witnesses, close relatives/friends/people informed of the facts, letters, other actual evidence.
  - If an LGBTQI+ HRD, the applicant should be able to provide some records or reports regarding the activity as LGBTI activist (reports or records can include newspaper articles, personal records of trials or contact with the police, pictures, etc).
- Persons not benefitting from other grants for the same expenses.
- Persons who do not have access to other personal income or financial/material resources during the emergency period (credibility assessment should also investigate the inaccessibility of these resources).

How to apply?

- Victims are referred or directed to a local LGBTQI+ CSO to ask for assistance.
- The CSO will assist in the preparation of the application (Application Form – Annex 1).
- Attention requests and/or applications can be collected by CSOs through different contact channels (web forms, email, face to face, SMS, WhatsApp).

- The CSO that has collected the application shall conduct a verification process (Verification Report – Annex 2) before submitting their verification report to the Crisis Task Team.

Who evaluates the verified applications?

- The CSO managing the fund shall identify a minimum of 3 and maximum of 5 experienced members of known activists or experts to become part of an independent Crisis Task Team for the evaluation of the applications. An additional member can be indicated as substitute member in case there is need for a substitute in conflict-of-interest situations.
- The criteria for the identification of the suitable CTT members will be being an LGBTQI+ community member/activist or ally; credibility; experience in protection; portfolio of contacts and relationships with services and institutions able to support victims.
- The participation to the CTT is on a voluntary basis. The members of the Crisis Task Team are entitled to receive only an allowance as travel/communication reimbursement for their participation in the evaluation and verification of cases; no stipend or salary is allowed.

How is the evaluation process carried out?

- The evaluation should be focused on the credibility of the risk and the emergency and never on pure self-identification as an LGBTQI+ person.
- The members of the Crisis Task Team will respect the privacy of victims and always maintain confidentiality and integrity.
- The CTT will be guided by a list of guidelines aimed at uniformly evaluating applications (Guidelines for CTT Evaluation – Annex 5).
- Applications should be approved unanimously but they can also be approved with up to 1/3 of members abstaining from any decision. If a member opposes approval, a conflict resolution mechanism requiring a mandatory interview of the applicant and a deliberative session of the CTT thereafter. If the disagreement persists, the application will be rejected.
- If a member of the CTT is in any kind of conflict situation that can represent bias towards the applicant or impair a free and independent evaluation, the concerned member must declare it and abstain from participating in the evaluation session.
- In case of multiple applications submitted at the same time by members of the community and activists, those coming from members of the community will be screened and evaluated as first. In case of an eventual scarcity of funds, priority shall be given to applications submitted by members of the community.
- The Crisis Task Team will prepare an Evaluation Report to be submitted to the CSO that is managing the grant and, for information, also to the CSO that has submitted the case, if different (Evaluation Report – Annex 6). The CSO that is managing the fund will then inform the applicant and take further steps accordingly.

How will the Crisis Task Team work?

- An email address will be opened with access to the Crisis Task Team members that must be checked on daily basis.

- The email address will be circulated to all the LGBTQI+ CSOs in the country.
- A helpline may be used to reach LGBTQI+ people who are not connected to any CSOs. In this case the hotline shall be managed and hosted by a LGBTI CSO, that will be in charge of collecting the applications or directing the person to the closest group or organisation.
- A WhatsApp group among the Crisis Task Team members will be created.
- The Committee will nominate a chairperson to organise meetings. The Chairperson can rotate on a periodical basis.
- The Committee will have fixed periodical meetings (monthly remote meetings and quarterly physical meetings) and emergency meetings when needed.
- The CTT will refer and report to the CSO managing the fund.
- The duration of the roles shall be determined in advance (e.g., for a period of 6 months).

What emergency situations and expenses do the support cover?

Eligible expenses should be those specifically and typically connected to the very basic needs in emergency situations which requires immediate and short-term assistance, such as:

- Temporary relocation;
- Travelling;
- Administrative documents fees or taxes, including police and lawyers' fees for immediate action, related to the emergency;
- Passport renewal, visa and/or residence permit fees if the person has to flee;
- Communication and digital security enhancing mechanisms, systems or apparatus (including new hardware/software, phone cards, mobiles);
- Food and first aid/relief cash in case of homelessness and basic monetary support in case of critical financial insecurity (clothes, food);
- Costs connected to treatment including for long-term treatment of chronic diseases that cannot be suspended/interrupted because of the emergency;
- Unexpected urgent medical expenses during the emergency/relocation period;
- Psychological support and counselling, especially post trauma.

When and for how long can a person benefit from the fund?

- The CSO must take charge of the request within 12 hours from receiving the application;
- The Crisis Task Team must take a decision within 48 hours of receiving the verified application from the CSO;
- The disbursement of funds must be done within 2 weeks from the approval, depending on the urgency of the situation indicated by the Crisis Task Team;
- The funds can be disbursed and used by the applicant up to a maximum of 3 months.

Restrictions to funding support

- The fund does not cover families or groups.
- The fund is not intended as a grant dedicated for activism.

- The fund generally does not cover long-term or chronic situations of need, such as legal expenses for long-term legal actions, ordinary medical assistance not linked or needed in relation to the emergency.
- Trainings and meetings fees and related travels, financial/economic support to the family, advocacy missions abroad and conference attendance, income generating activities.
- Restrictions should consider if other funding or support is available in the area to cover certain expenses.

How will the funding be distributed?

- After approval of the application by the Crisis Task Team, recommendation on costs needed and duration of the grant, the CSO managing the fund will be in charge of quantifying the support according to pre-defined and approved limits for each type of cost and fixed costs for standard needs (List of costs - annex 6).
- If the Crisis Task Team indicates in the evaluation report an item that is not listed in the table, the finance officer will quantify the cost and add it to the List of costs.
- The CSO managing the fund will then complete a check list with the quantity and frequency for each item entitled to the granted beneficiary, according to fixed costs per item or the best cost/benefit solution, possibly based on quotations, within fixed maximum amounts. The disbursement is made upon the validation of the Check list by a double signature in the CSO (Check list - annex 9).
- The Service Provider CSO can disburse the funds in periodic tranches/single payment depending on the situation. In the situation of the beneficiary needs several weeks of assistance the advance will have to be considered in several tranches (maximum monthly) to avoid the risk of not recovering the documentation or to adjust the grant to developments of the situation.
  - A reference person within the CSO managing the fund will be appointed to follow up with and take care of the victim and collecting the proper documentation. The reference person in the CSO managing the fund will do a follow-up report to the CTT if anything must be changed and a final report at conclusion of the case.
  - Payments done directly by the Service Provider CSO are highly recommended.
  - Payments done by the Partner CSO:
    - All sources of justification must be prepared, collected, and kept by the Service Provider CSO. The receipts, invoices, delivery notes and any other proof of payments/ deliveries will be under the name of the CSO to protect the beneficiary.
  - Payments done by the beneficiary:
    - If direct payments by the CSO are impossible, an advance will be given to the applicant, against proof of reception. The applicant will have to collect and keep all sources of justification. In case for minimal expenditures without receipts, a declaration of honour explaining the missing receipts will be requested.
  - Once the purchases are done, an acknowledgement of reception of the items/service will be signed by the beneficiary (Delivery Note – Annex 9).

Follow-up

- If there are developments in the case, a follow-up application form (with the same case number) will be completed by the Service Provider CSO and transmitted to the Crisis Task Team for approval, indicating the new needs and recommended assistance. The Team will compile and transmit back a new evaluation report with approval or dismissal of the assistance required.
- At conclusion of the case, a final report (annex 7) will be submitted by the CSO managing the fund to the Crisis Task Team for co-signature.
- The CSO managing the fund will need to keep records filed for each case number, comprising:

    - Application form (signed)
    - CSO Verification form (signed) and supporting docs
    - CTT Evaluation Report (signed)
    - Check List (signed)
    - Delivery note (signed)
    - Follow-up reports
    - Receipts/invoices for the amount disbursed
    - Final report (signed by CSOs and CTT Chairperson)

2. Application Form

Please complete the form and circle the correct options.

Contact details					
Name & Surname					
Age	**<18**	**18-25**	**25-35**	**35-55**	**55+**
In case of minor, legal guardian contact details					
Phone number					
Email					
Any relative or informed person to be contacted					
Are you an LGBTQI+ HRD or member of the LGBTQI+ community?			**Yes**	**No**	
What is the issue you are facing?					
When did it happen?					

Is it still happening?	**Yes**	**No**
Where did it happen?		
In case you want to tell us, do you know the identity of perpetrator(s)?		
In your words, tell us exactly what happened		
What is your current situation?		

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3">Is there any witness to the event or person supporting your complaint?</td><td colspan="3">Yes</td><td colspan="2">No</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">If yes, would you mind if we contacted the person?</td><td colspan="3">Yes</td><td colspan="2">No</td></tr>
<tr><td>If you want us to contact the person, please share their contact information</td><td colspan="7"></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Have you already taken any preventive measure or remedy?</td><td colspan="3">Yes</td><td colspan="2">No</td></tr>
<tr><td>If yes, which one?</td><td colspan="7"></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Do you feel at risk or are you living in a dangerous situation?</td><td colspan="3">Yes</td><td colspan="2">No</td></tr>
<tr><td>If yes, please tell us why</td><td colspan="7"></td></tr>
<tr><td>Have you reported the situation to any person?</td><td>Police</td><td colspan="2">Lawyer</td><td>Doctor</td><td colspan="2">Friend</td><td>Other</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Were any steps taken by the person or organisation or service to resolve the matter?</td><td colspan="3">Yes</td><td colspan="2">No</td></tr>
</table>

If yes, what steps did they take?	
What kind of support do you think could help you?	
Would you like to tell us something more?	
Date	**Signature**

For internal use only			
Assigned case number / ID			
Received by (name of person and CSO)			
Action taken	**Activate verification process**	**Dismissal for lack of eligibility**	**Other responses (activate social protection, legal assistance, report to police etc)**
If other action, please specify nature of action, dates when action taken and outcome			
Date	**Signature**		

3. Verification Report

Name of the CSO		
Reference / ID of the case		
Name & Surname of person in charge of verification		
Background		
Is the applicant and LGBTIQ+ activist or member of the community?	Yes	No
Profile of the applicant		
Current situation of the applicant in relation to:		
Risk: is the risk situation presented by the applicant relevant/current/likely to happen again/likely to produce serious consequences? *Highlight how and why.*		
Vulnerabilities: the specific vulnerabilities of the person are clear? Are they relevant in relation to the risk? *Please explain the specific relevance and list proof.*		

Plausibility: is the personal story presented by the applicant coherent/logical? *Highlight eventual inconsistencies if any.*	
Informed persons or witnesses: was it possible to make any facts cross-checking of the case report? Were reports/witnesses/supporting letters presented by another person relevant? *Explain if yes or no and what.*	
List of supporting documents in attachment (*for each one explain what kind of document it is and how it could be relevant to the evaluation process*)	
Other actions already taken by the applicant (i.e., other funding applications, contacts with police, lawyers, medical personnel, other CSOs, etc.) and how they can be relevant for the evaluation of the case.	
Description of the support requested by the activist/member of the community	

What kind of help is the applicant looking for?	
Describe how the specific kind of help requested can improve the situation of the applicant also recommending alternative options if existing.	
Notes and recommendations	
List any relevant observation that might be underrated by the evaluation board or not well perceived through the written report. Highlight if a personal interview is strongly recommended or if anything has made the previous interview particularly difficult (e.g., low level of literacy or physical/mental conditions).	

4. Terms of reference for the Crisis Task Team (CTT) members

Members of the CTT are individuals that have demonstrated leadership, dedication and involvement in the promotion and/or defence of LGBTQI+ rights. They are people who are visibly accessible to the community and are able to support the case and influence change.

The Team shall be balanced in terms of geographical locations, professional background, and SOGIESC.

Members of the CTT act collectively and the case evaluation procedure must be done in group (physically or virtually). On a rotational or fixed basis or upon any other fair agreed mechanism, one Chairperson among the members can be appointed to coordinate the meetings and sign the evaluation report of the Committee.

Each member will undertake its work in the best interest of the applicant and to ensuring full and equal access to the procedure, adapting it to the applicant's specific needs and vulnerabilities.

CTT members commit to proactively communicate with CSOs and keeping the highest confidentiality on the cases received.

The following activities will be undertaken by the CTT:

1. Implement the evaluation procedure according to the Guidelines;
2. Evaluate the application completing the relevant tools (Evaluation format), duly signed and timely transmitted to the CSO managing the fund;
3. Ensure proper case management: compliance with timelines, conflict resolution procedures, scheduling of interviews with interpretation whenever needed; timely communication of decisions;
4. Conduct, if required/needed, interviews with applicants to verify unclear situations;
5. Evaluate follow-up requests on cases which might require different decisions on the duration or type of assistance;
6. Analyse the support provided to the applicant and validate the closure of the case;
7. Support the applicants through the activation of referral mechanisms, institutions and other organizations able to provide complementary assistance.

Checklist of tasks of CTT

PREPARATION	
	Receive the application (Who? How?)
	Verify impartiality /existing conflicts/ biases (If present, call for the substitute member)
	Call for the CTT meeting (Who? How? When?)
CORE PROCEDURE	
	Read the verification report collectively
	Is it necessary to call the applicant for an interview?
	Discuss the case following the CTT Evaluation Guidelines
	Complete the checklist included in the CTT Evaluation Guidelines
	Take a decision: is there agreement on it? If NO, call for the substitute member and provide the substitute with the relevant forms
	Submit the evaluation form to the Service Provider CSO and file a copy to keep track of the decision process
POST EVALUATION	
	Notify the decision to the Service Provider CSO (How? To whom?)
	Keep in contact with the person in charge from the CSO (see contact form Verification Report) to verify the monitoring of the case and conclusion of the support.

5. CTT Evaluation Guidelines

To facilitate and to even out the evaluation process, the Crisis Task Team will strictly follow the proposed guidelines and will motivate a positive or negative decision.

The Crisis Task Team will evaluate the following documents:

- The application with its annexes and
- The verification report prepared by the CSO in charge of the application.

The evaluation process may also include a direct interview with the applicant if deemed extremely necessary by the Team itself or strongly recommended by the organisation presenting the case.

While the eligibility preconditions must be always met by the applicant, the guidelines regarding the risk and vulnerability evaluation are intended to be just a tool to ease and guide the process.

Eligibility preconditions (TO PROCEED ALL ANSWERS MUST BE YES)

Is this an individual application?	**Yes**	**No**
Is the applicant a member of the LGBTQI+ community or a HRDs?	**Yes**	**No**
Is the applicant facing an emergency due to belonging to the LGBTQI+ community or their activism in the field of LGBTQI+ rights?	**Yes**	**No**
Has the applicant NOT been granted other funds for the same support requested in this application?	**Yes**	**No**

Risk assessment

Objectively evaluating the risk is crucial to understand the credibility of the applicant and to understand the needs connected to the application. Some risks cannot be avoided through the emergency community-based fund and should instead be reported to other authorities. In other cases, the applicant could be guided towards other possible options if it is not an emergency/temporary situation, but it is a structural and permanent one. Risk can be a relative concept and should be always considered in close relation to the vulnerability situation and subjectivity of the applicant. The same situation can be considered very dangerous for a person while not so scary for another one. Both aspects – the situation itself and the person specificity – must be considered.

Is the situation described by the applicant an objectively dangerous situation?	**Yes**	**No**
Is the risk current?	**Yes**	**No**
Is the story referred by the applicant internally logical?	**Yes**	**No**
Is the story referred by the applicant credible or verifiable?	**Yes**	**No**
Is the event likely to happen again?	**Yes**	**No**
In case it is not likely, does what happened have potentially serious consequences?	**Yes**	**No**
In case the applicant is an activist, are there specific new events that have created the recent risk situation?	**Yes**	**No**

Low-income assessment or inability to access personal resources

Low income is not necessarily a requirement but the inability to access other resources must be verified. The following questions are intended also to guide the Team toward the decision of which could be the most helpful and appropriate support. In case the person has already applied for other grants but is still waiting for a response, the approval of the emergency fund can be evaluated if it can work as a temporary measure to sustain the person in the meantime.

Is the applicant in a situation of temporarily homelessness?	**Yes**	**No**
Does the applicant have a stable/formal job that is not a risk in the present situation?	**Yes**	**No**
If not, is the applicant able to earn money through an informal/unstable occupation that can continue also in the present situation?	**Yes**	**No**
Does the applicant have some personal/family resources that can be mobilized for the current situation?	**Yes**	**No**
Is the applicant receiving other government funds/grants securing a stream of income (student, social grants, etc)?	**Yes**	**No**

Having all considered is the applicant unable to access other resources to face the situation?	**Yes**	**No**

Vulnerability assessment

Vulnerability is important to adequately evaluate the risk. The same situation can result as a very different risk depending on the subjective situation of the applicant. The answers shall be used to determine the urgency of the intervention and the priority among different applications presented at the same time or in case of scarcity of funds.

Does the applicant have some specific subjective characteristics that increase/determine the level/impact of the risk? (e.g.: health conditions, pregnancy, age, previous trauma, permanent homelessness, disability, etc)	**Yes**		**No**
If yes, specify:			
Is the applicant facing a situation of poverty/financial instability?	**Yes**		**No**
Is the applicant under criminal investigation?	**Yes**		**No**
Is the applicant facing a serious smear campaign?	**Yes**		**No**
Is the applicant facing marginalization and discrimination from the family or community that is undermining any kind of possible support?	**Yes**		**No**
Is the applicant facing mental health conditions, depression, suicidal impulses?	**Yes**		**No**
Is the applicant a community member without a well-known record as activist who cannot count on relationships at international level?	**Yes**		**No**
Other vulnerabilities? Please specify:			
Having all considered, the level of urgency and priority is:	**High**	**Medium**	**Low**

6. Evaluation Report

LGBTI Organisation submitting the case:		
Case number/ID:		
Members of the Crisis Task Team participating to the evaluation session. (*Minimum Three*)		
Date and place of the evaluation:		
Did any member raise a conflict situation with the applicant?	**Yes**	**No**
If YES, please indicated which member has been exempted from the evaluation or replaced by a substitute member		
Result of evaluation process		
Is the applicant considered eligible for the funding?	**Yes**	**No**
If YES, please specify		

Nature of the risk:		Psychological trauma
		Injury/physical trauma
		Unlawful arrest
		Harassment

		Death		
		Temporary homeless		
		Lack of food/clothes/basic surviving means		
		Interruption of chronic medications		
		Other		
Level of risk:		**High**	**Medium**	**Low**
Specify additional vulnerabilities				
Level of urgency in disbursing the funds		**High** **(24 hours)**	**Medium** **(3-7 days)**	**Low** **(2 weeks)**
If NOT, specify the reasons:		Lack of an effective/actual risk. Explain:		
		Absence of specific vulnerability features. Explain:		
		Inconsistency of the personal history. Explain:		
		Other reasons (specify):		
Nature of the grant				
What is recommended to be granted:		Food		
		Clothes		
		Rent of house/room (specify if for temporary relocation or temporary homelessness):		
		Travel costs (specify for):		

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="8"></td><td></td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">Medical services (specify):</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">Medical therapy (specify):</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">Physiological or counselling service (specify):</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">Police or Lawyers’ fees (specify for what):</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">Passport renewal/Visa and/or residence permit fees (why?):</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">Communication costs (specify if data, internet, phone cards, mobiles, etc.):</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">Other (specify):</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">How long shall be the person assisted by the funding program? (Max 3 months):</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Any other recommendations?</td><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Date</td><td colspan="2">Signature chairperson</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2"></td><td colspan="2">Signature secretary</td></tr>
</table>

7. Final Report

LGBTQI+ Organisation submitting the case	
Case number/ID	
Date of evaluation report	
Duration of the support	
Amount of funds spent	
Summary of actions undertaken with the provided grant:	
Situation of the beneficiary at conclusion of the assistance:	
Service Provider CSO Reference Person	
Name and Surname	
Date	
Signature	
Crisis Task Team Chairperson	
Name and Surname	
Date	
Signature	

8. Letter or Agreement

Between

The Service Provider CSO (office, legal representative, contact references)

____

And

The CSO supporting the case management (office, legal representative, contact references)

____

All hereinafter referred collectively as the "Partners"

Given that

(Name CSO) ______________ is managing an Emergency Fund financed by_____ (name of donor)

The Emergency Fund is regulated by technical and administrative Guidelines in the annex. A Crisis Task Team is in charge of the cases approval and oversight.

The beneficiary of the funds, case number…………………………………………………., live far from … (CSO managing the fund) Office, in the city of………………………………., District……………………………………………. and do not have bank account into which the approved funds can be transferred.

……………………………….. (name partner CSO) has office in (address) ……………………………………………………………………………………………., close to the location of the beneficiary.

The Partners have agreed as follows:

Article 1: Subject of the Agreement

This is a solidarity and voluntary agreement, and it does not entail any kind of service contract or payment against the service offered.

The agreement covers the availability of (name partner CSO) ……………………………………….to receive and disburse the funds to the victim of case number …..…………………………………….

The partner………………….…… (name of the CSO) will also facilitate the collection of the original receipts, invoices and supporting documents from the victim and guarantee that the same are properly filled in all their parts.

Article 2: Entry into force and duration of the Agreement

This Agreement shall entry into force from the date of disbursement of the funds by the Service Provider CSO**.** It shall remain in force not only till the closing of the assisted case but until the partner has transmitted the Delivery Note duly signed by the beneficiary and all the receipts and supporting administrative documents as indicated in the annex, that shall be considered an integral part of the present agreement.

No Party shall be in breach of this Agreement if such breach is caused by Force Majeure. Each Partner will notify the other of any Force Majeure as soon as possible.

An early termination shall not affect any rights or obligations of a Party leaving the Partnership incurred prior to the date of termination. This includes the obligation to provide all input, deliverables and documents for the period of its participation.

Article 3: Obligations of the partnership

(Name CSO) ……………..….. will disburse the funds to the beneficiary utilizing the bank account of……………………….. ……... (…………….name CSO), with the following bank details:

The CSO managing the fund will make sure that the partner (…………….name CSO) has understood the administrative requirements as set in the Emergency Fund Guidelines.

The partner organization (…………………….name CSO) will disburse the fund to the beneficiary after their receipt in the bank account and will submit to the CSO managing the fund the proof of transfer and delivery note duly co-signed by the beneficiary.

The partner (name CSO) will also collect the receipts, invoices and any other supporting document from the beneficiary and will transmit them to the CSO managing the fund by 1 week from the closing of the case.

Article 4. Article Damage caused to third parties

Each Partner shall be solely liable for any loss, damage or injury to third parties resulting from the performance of the said Partner's obligations under this Partnership Agreement, or from its use of Foreground or Background.

Article 5: Confidentiality

The Partners agree that any information that they obtain or exchange during the execution of this Agreement is confidential.

Each Partner shall promptly advise the other Partner in writing of any unauthorized disclosure, misappropriation or misuse by any person of Confidential Information as soon as practicable after it becomes aware of such unauthorized disclosure, misappropriation or misuse.

If any Partner becomes aware that it will be required, or is likely to be required, to disclose confidential information in order to comply with applicable laws or regulations or with a court or administrative order, it shall, to the extent it is lawfully able to do so, prior to any such disclosure

- notify the Disclosing Partner, and
- comply with the Disclosing Partner's reasonable instructions to protect the confidentiality of the information.

Article 6: Annexes

The following documents are annexed to the Agreement:

ANNEX 1 – Emergency Fund Guidelines, including its Annex 6, 7 and 8 on Check list and administrative reporting.

Signed on the ………………………………..

Service Provider CSO (name)	CSO entering in the agreement (name)
Director	Director
______________________________	__________________________

9. Administrative forms

1) CHECK LIST

=> Indicate the quantity and frequency needed for the granted beneficiary

Reference/ID of the Case:			**Date**	
		Max cost	**Freq.**	**Quantity**
Food	Month			
Clothing / blankets	Unit			
Rent of House or Room	Month			
Medical Services	Month			
Medical therapy / counselling	Month			
Travel expenses	Month			
Unlawful arrests	Unit			
Communication expenses	Month			

Prepared by Finance officer
Signature

Validated by the Programme officer
Signature

2) DELIVERY NOTE

Reference/ID of the Case:

Reference/ID of the Case:		**Date**	
Description		**Unit**	**Quantity**

Delivered by:
Signature
Date

Received by:
Signature
Date

3) LIST OF COSTS

Good or service	Unit	Quantity	Frequency	Unit cost (currency)	Maximum total cost (currency)	Description (what it is)	Source of verification	Justification (how it has been calculated)

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TREAT

ESWATINI

NYASA RAINBOW ALLIANCE

CCPR Centre for Civil and Political Rights