

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS IN SYRIA

FINANCIAL PLANNING AND REPORTING

As part of the Empowering Civil Society Organizations Program, the Center for Civil Society and Democracy (CCSD) has provided thirty local civil society organizations with workshops on financial planning and reporting. Based on those workshops, we realized there was a gap in information to ensure that there is equal access for all Syrians. CCSD has created this guide with seven essential steps to build and create healthy finances within civil society organizations which are fully supportive for all men and women. CCSD provides comprehensive support to civil society organizations, integrating the financial management pillars of planning, controlling, and monitoring for each step.



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1. Policies and Procedures

Have financial policies and detailed procedures, which govern financial activities and also ensure compliance with regulations. Include in the financial policies and procedures the principles of financial management for financial decision-making and operational standards such as transparency, accountability, fair and inclusive access to finances by all including women.

2. Human Resources

To focus on empowering a diverse and inclusive team and to have quarterly capacity building sessions on financial planning and reporting which guarantees that women and men have equal access to the training and resources, and opportunities and also work with the finance team to ensure unbiased financial decision-making in all aspects of the organizations. It is essential to ensure that the finance team is diverse and women play key roles in taking the finance decisions in the organization. Additionally, you have to be aware of Conflicts of Interest. Have a clear No Conflict of Interest statement which states clearly that there is no conflict of interest related to the organizations' work and there should be an annual declaration to ensure decision makers and the executive team separate personal and organizational finances.

3. Impact of Data

Have separate programmatic and financial data which is able to give insights on the impact on women and men, in order to make the right and fair financial analysis, planning, and decision to address any upcoming disparities. Fund female-led programs and projects through dedicating funds to women-led initiatives and initiatives empowering marginalized groups including women.

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4. Budget

Have clear steps in preparing your budget, be aware of the different types of budgets such as, operation budget, cash flow budget and master budget. It is important to have a clear budget preparation cycle, which ensures the involvement of both women and men in financial planning discussions to represent varied perspectives and needs. Develop a budget that lists all sources of income and expenses, including fixed costs and all other costs such as rent. Ensure that there is a dedicated budget in each project to address specific needs for women and to promote equality. Review your budget on a monthly basis to reflect any changes and the current states.

5. Financial Statements and Cash Flow Management

Prepare comprehensive financial statements for accounting codes, ledgers, and required financial documentation to ensure the implementation of accounting foundations and standards. Take all the necessary steps to prepare, record the trial balance, revenue and expenditure accounts supported by documents. It is important that your data is organized in a way that you can easily get results on how fair the access to resources between men and women in your programming is. Have a periodic cash flow budget and review them on a monthly basis, which is a good practice for small-medium size organizations which helps the organizations manage its finances and its debts well. Cash flow ensures that you have enough money to develop your programming. Include in your cash flow all your income subtracted from your expenses. Keep cash reserved for any unexpected expenses or revenue gaps.

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6. Financial Risk Management and Contingency Plan

A periodic analysis should be conducted of the financial risks that the project may face, such as a lack of funding or rising prices of basic material. All financial transactions must be compliant with international standards to ensure the proper use of resources. Develop alternative emergency plans that include reallocating resources or seeking additional funding sources to prevent disruption of humanitarian activities. It is essential to ensure equal access to the emergency fund for women and men.

7. Continuous Monitoring and Adaptation

Ensure a daily, weekly and monthly monitoring for the finances and review decisions, statements on monthly, quarterly, yearly basis for making any needed adjustments. Having equal access to resources between women and men is part of your monitoring process and adapt your work to bridge any existing gap.



If you are interested in learning more or want to collaborate with the Center for Civil Society and Democracy (CCSD), contact us via email at **info@ccsd.ngo**.



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