Community Resource Exchange
Survey and consultations feedback

The Community Resource Exchange (CRE) is a system to facilitate collaborations and co-develop strategies with and among communities defending their rights, in the context of international investments and development projects.
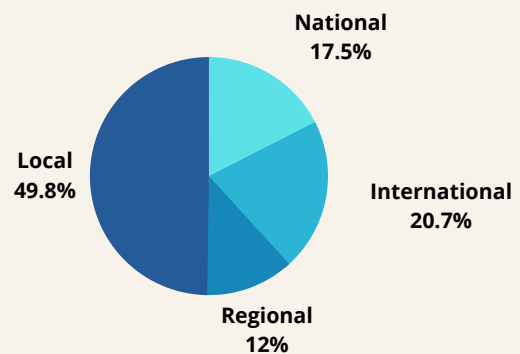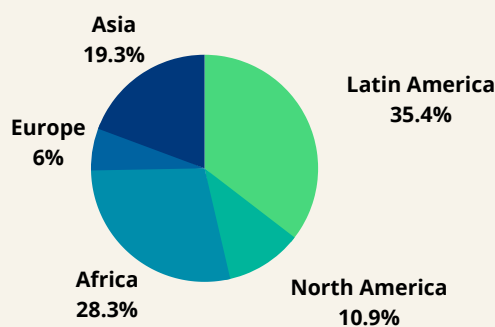
The CRE was developed through a 2.5-year participatory process.

1 Preliminary discussions raised the need for a more systematic way to **facilitate collaborations** to advance **community-led struggles**.

2 **In-depth consultations** (through two rounds of online surveys, several interviews and focus groups) were carried out with around **400 participants.**

3 The results of these consultations have driven the design of a **3-year pilot**, which seeks to build on the overall positive feedback received and address the concerns raised. The pilot will be hosted by the Coalition for Human Rights in Development.

Who participated in the second round consultations to design the CRE?

81 people participated in interviews and focus groups in Guatemala, Uganda and the Philippines.

107 people from around the world submitted an online survey.

Asia 19.3%
Europe 6%
Africa 28.3%
North America 10.9%
Latin America 35.4%

National 17.5%
International 20.7%
Regional 12%
Local 49.8%

Overall feedback

Interest and excitement about its potential
Fills a gap and meets real needs
Communities at the centre
Democratic and participatory
Focuses on collective action
Brings together diverse groups
Enables implementation of different strategies
Innovative idea, mission and principles

Might divert funds and duplicate existing efforts
Might not reach those with greatest needs
Concerns about accountability to communities
Top-down, complex, and bureaucratic structure
Concentration at international and regional level
Unclear additionality

Key principles

Inclusive
Build capacity
Collaboration
Diverse
Committed to security
Transparent
Linking
Flexible
Collective power
Accessible
Accountability
Effective
Facilitation
Community-led
No duplication
Participatory

Key changes to the CRE design

- simplified and clarified the language;
- reflected a more horizontal relationship among all collaborators;
- defined the scope of the system to international investment and development activities;
- identified several ways to ground the system in the national context;
- streamlined the types of facilitation offered.

For further info: rightsindevelopment.org/community-resource-exchange

How will the CRE pilot be implemented?

The **Coalition for Human Rights in Development** will host the CRE pilot. The Coalition is governed by a Steering Committee whose members serve for two-year renewable terms. The majority of the members of the Steering Committee are from the Global South.

The **CRE Coordinator** and the **CRE Regional Facilitators** will be hosted by existing networks and organizations.

In addition, an **Advisory Committee** will be established to provide input on the implementation of the pilot and participate in its review at the end of the three-year period.

The Coalition's existing Community Engagement Partnership Working Group will serve as the **Grant Working Group** initially. It will be expanded and restructured to create three regional working groups.

How was the feedback received incorporated?

	Feedback	Changes to the CRE design	CRE pilot: implementation and outstanding questions
Overall approach	Strong support for the community-centered approach. Suggestions to include principles related to accessibility, transparency, and simplicity. Concerns about implementation and risks of a top-down approach.	Descriptions were clarified and language was simplified. Principles around community leadership were emphasized. The facilitative role of CRE was stressed. Clarified that expertise is not limited to formal professionals; indeed community expertise is highly valued and sought after. A principle on accessibility, simplicity and transparency was added.	Are these principles actually being used in decision-making and evaluation activities? What kinds of public materials can be produced to show accountability to these principles? Are these the right principles? Is there something missing?
Structure and roles	72% of the respondents liked the proposed structure, recognizing: • good collaboration from local to international, and across different regions; • decentralized and bottom-up approach; • simple, clear and logical structure; • having regional staff to ensure strategic collaborations. However, many respondents also had concerns and suggestions, such as: • the structure might be too complex, bureaucratic, and centralized; • unable to respond to urgent requests; • needs presence at the national level; • communities should be considered as experts and collaborators; • ensuring horizontal exchanges and facilitating spaces for co-creation or use of existing community methods of collaboration; • ensuring funding and resources.	All participants are referred to as collaborators. CRE staff will identify and engage national nodes, who could help review requests, identify collaborators, assist in due diligence and serve on the Regional Grant Working Groups. Renamed the International Focal Point as "CRE Coordinator" and the Regional Focal Points as "Regional Facilitators" to indicate they play a facilitation role with a decentralized and participatory approach. Added Regional Grant Working Groups, composed of national and local groups in each region, that will make funding decisions.	Is the Coalition the appropriate network to continue to host the CRE? Is the Advisory Committee able to provide accountability to collaborators and the broader civil society community? How will the community engagement grant working groups be composed and how will they function? How many national nodes can be identified for a three-year period? Do additional resources need to be mobilized to support the role of national nodes? Is the national node sufficient? Does there need to be a more substantial national role?

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Prioritization of requests	The following criteria for prioritization of requests were raised: • imminence or severity of harm or impact; • requests by grassroots and vulnerable communities or their local partner groups, who have not received previous support, lack other options, or are unconnected to allies; • potential for broader impact or likelihood of success.	Requests for linkages will be processed on an on-going basis. Regional Grant Working Groups will publish application requirements, deadlines, and priorities for funding requests.	During the pilot, because of the budget, grants will only be made in regular calls for applications. Is there a need to develop a matrix to help prioritize among requests that do not need funding? i.e. if there are too many requests to handle in a timely way?
Accountability	Need to verify that the collaborator is eligible and legitimate, but also ensuring the CRE can act quickly while maintaining the requester's security. Most respondents said the secretariat should triangulate information with national and sub-regional groups or require an endorsement from trusted 3rd parties.	CRE staff will triangulate and verify key information with trusted national and sub-regional groups and individuals.	What will the detailed procedures be for vetting requests for facilitated collaborations? How is it different for self-funded versus those requesting financing? What is the role of the national node in vetting requests?
Collaborators	Collaborators need to commit to CRE principles and value local knowledge, approaches, realities and timelines, listening to the community rather than coming with readymade solutions.	The database will only be accessible to Regional Facilitators and national nodes, given the sometimes sensitive information it might contain.	Is it possible to safely make parts of the database public? Is it possible to make an online form for collaborators to update their information?
Connections	The majority of respondents agreed with thinking about different tiers of connection ranging from simple information requests to sustained facilitation of collaborations with significant financial grants. It is important for community collaborators to have space to reflect on the quality/type of collaboration that can best meet their needs. However, many also raised concerns if the system was too complex and not reflective of reality. Some community members and local and national groups identified the need for space for intercultural dialogue, discussion, reflection, exchange, and co-creation.	Collaborators will co-create a plan of action. No formal Memorandum of Understanding will be required but the regional focal points will ensure that roles, activities, and budgets are clarified and documented. Internally, connections will be classified in three categories: • information requests (tier 1); • facilitated collaborations (tier 2); • facilitated collaborations that require substantial coordination and financing (tier 3). The regional grant working groups may identify their own specific priorities. There will be systematization of procedures across different grant working groups. All grants will prioritize collective requests (except for human rights defenders) and capacity building elements.	The pilot will not have the ability to entertain requests for cases requiring substantial funds to implement strategies. The pilot will consider: Is there a way for the CRE to document where the biggest gaps are in terms of capacity so that this information can be shared with funders? Is it possible/desirable to compile a roster of funders that collaborators could be referred to if additional funding is necessary? What role will the regional facilitators play in clarifying the parameters of the collaboration?
Disagreement	Most respondents supported the idea that the Secretariat should have some role in conflict resolution.	Collaborators will agree at the beginning of the collaboration how they would like to resolve disputes should they arise.	Would it be useful to establish a dedicated structure to address disagreements?

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Capacity building	Capacity building was overwhelmingly recognized as a key goal. Ideas for capacity building included: • knowledge exchange between all participants • in-person and online training • identifying capacity gaps • publishing materials on CRE's cases developing an accessible database. Respondents from communities and local and national groups suggested: • creating national resource centers; • community grievance reporting committees or community monitors; • peer to peer mentoring.	There is a wealth of ideas here. Some of them are dependent on additional funding, and much of it is demand related. One important piece will be to make sure that all facilitated collaborations and grants include some capacity building rather than pure service delivery.	How will capacity building be advanced, monitored, evaluated and reported on? Whose responsibility will it be to propose ways to enhance capacity building throughout the CRE's operations?
Guidance	The consultation revealed that the CRE could support collaborators who might not know what strategy or connection they seek. This could be done in several ways, including by CRE coordinator or regional facilitators; national and local experts; other collaborators; communities facing similar struggles.	CRE staff will work with communities and other collaborators to help identify what support to request as part of the intake process.	Would it be possible to develop a diagnostic tool, either a general one or tailored to the region, that helps communities understand what types of strategies are available? Or a module that could be used in community workshops? Can the national node assist with this?
Eligibility on requests	70 % of survey respondents recommended accepting requests regarding any type of international investments, and not limiting it to development financing. A simple majority of all participants indicated the CRE could accept requests from individuals rather than solely from collectives.	There will be no restrictions on who can request information, reports, etc. Requests for facilitated collaborations can relate to any international investment or development activity (including projects financed by national development banks). Requests for facilitated collaborations would have to demonstrate support from affected communities. For substantial financial support, priority to those who can demonstrate the support of a collective.	Given funder priorities, is it necessary to restrict or prioritize funding to requests involving DFIs? Given many requesters will lack information about the actors involved in the project affecting them, what kind of capacity is needed to fill that gap? It would be useful to track how many requests require and/or are benefited by corporate and financial research prior to a collaboration. The Advisory Committee should consider what metrics to track including requests of different kinds. Revisit eligibility criteria, mid-way through the pilot.
Governance	Support for a governance structure with clear but flexible roles, rules and decision-making. Governance could also come from a collaborative / participative approach; regular (in-person/ offline) discussions and consultations between everyone engaging in the CRE, especially communities.	Annual reporting of requests received, collaborations facilitated, and budget spent.	How will collaborators contribute to the evaluations of the CRE? And what will be reported back to them? What other materials can be produced to be transparent about the CRE's operations and budget?

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