



Linkages Guide

Creating Alliances for Reducing Harmful Work for Children and Adults

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Primary Audience

Management-level staff that lead strategy, program development, and oversight for Women’s Economic Empowerment (WEE) Actors. WEE Actors are entities or individuals that support the development or expansion of women’s businesses, provide livelihood or financial services, and/or support women (globally) in efforts to increase their access to economic opportunities, especially those living in developing economies.

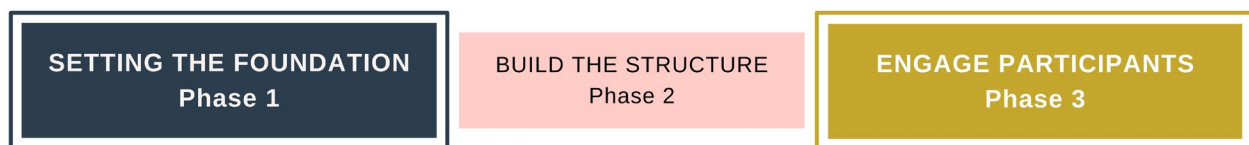
Goal

Enable WEE, child protection, and other actors to collaboratively provide participants with a comprehensive, holistic package of services that will increase their ability to address issues of harmful work for children and adults and strengthen their livelihoods.

Objectives

Through the use of this guide, WEE Actor management-level staff will have:

- Identified emergency and external support service providers that can provide immediate or long-term child protection support to participants, children, and other workers that WEE Actors cannot provide.
- Assessed organizational capacity to meet participant needs.
- Identified appropriate linkages with other internal departments or external service providers.
- Formalized partnership agreements.



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About the RICHES Project

Few would expect that investments in women’s enterprises are increasing the risk or incidence of harmful work for children (child labor) or adults. However, [research](#) conducted by the *Reducing Incidence of Child Labor and Harmful Conditions of Work in Economic Strengthening Initiatives* (RICHES) project unveiled that as women entrepreneurs struggle to manage the labor burdens of their businesses along with household tasks and child care many are turning to those closest in reach for help—their children.

Grameen Foundation, in partnership with the American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative and funded by the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor and Human Trafficking (OCFT), launched the RICHES project with the goals of supporting women’s enterprises responsibly, and mitigating the risk of harmful work for children and adults or the use of other negative coping strategies. To achieve this goal, RICHES has developed a toolkit for Women’s Economic Empowerment (WEE) Actors to equip them with practical ideas and tools to integrate and assess child protection and safe business practices throughout their work. For the purposes of the RICHES project, WEE Actors are any entity or individual that supports the development or expansion of women’s businesses, provides livelihood or financial services, and/or supports women (globally) in efforts to increase their access to economic opportunities, especially those living in developing economies.

The RICHES toolkit is organized in three phases (see Figure 1 below).

Phase 1 represents a **minimum set of practices** and related tools that all WEE Actors should have on hand and use to promote child protection and safe and healthy business practices within women’s economic initiatives and/or businesses. Phase 1 covers:

1. Building awareness of the risks to children and women’s health and safety when supporting women’s businesses or WEE activities;
2. Assessing the risks and identifying situations of harmful work for children and adults and how to remedy these issues;
3. Committing to Do No Harm principles when developing and/or implementing women’s economic initiatives; and
4. Knowing where to go for help and where to find resources.

Phases 2 and 3 offer a more comprehensive approach to child protection and health and safe business practices through market research, training and assessments at the organizational level, direct participant training, product development, and monitoring and evaluation.



Figure 1: RICHES Toolkit for WEE Actors



Toolkit for WEE Actors

SETTING THE FOUNDATION Phase 1

Start here: Use these tools to build **management-level** awareness and understanding of organizational and program risks of harmful work for children and adults.

- **Making the Case Presentation**
- **Risk Assessments**
- **Social Performance Management (SPM) Guide** (SPM Assessment Only)
- **Understanding Harmful Work Training** (with Management Only)
- **Linkages Guide** (Emergency and External Support Contact List Only)
-
- **Investor’s Guide** (For Investors Only)

BUILD THE STRUCTURE Phase 2

Use these tools to build **frontline staff-level** awareness and prioritize new or improved products and services.

- **Social Performance Management (SPM) Guide** (All tools)
- **Understanding Harmful Work Training** (with All Staff)
- **Market Research Guide**
- **Financial Services Guide**
- **Design Workshop**

ENGAGE PARTICIPANTS Phase 3

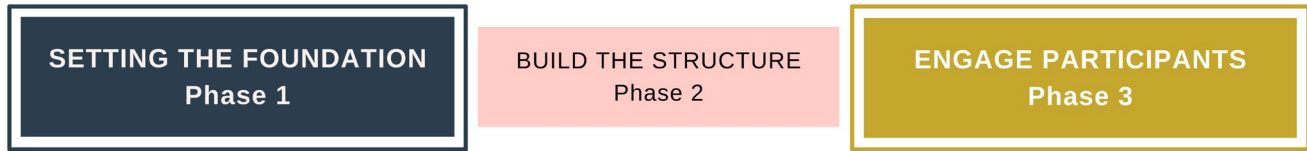
Use these tools to build **participant-level** awareness and support their needs.

- **Linkages Guide** (All tools)
- **Business Diagnostics Guide** (Paper + Digital Versions)
- **Intra-Household Dialogue Guide**
- **Risky Business Curriculum** (Paper + Digital Versions)
- **Monitoring and Evaluation Guide**

To access the full toolkit, please consult <https://grameenfoundation.org/riches>.



How to Use the Linkages Guide



The Linkages Guide is designed to be part of two Phases of the RICHES Toolkit: **Phase 1: Setting the Foundation** and **Phase 3: Engage Participants**.

Women’s Economic Empowerment (WEE) Actors, such as entities or individuals that support the development or expansion of women’s businesses, provide livelihood or financial services, and/or support women (globally) in efforts to increase their access to economic opportunities, especially those living in developing economies. While this covers a broad set of support activities and actors, WEE Actors cannot meet all the needs women have for a) starting and growing a business, b) caring for their children, c) fully avoiding the need to engage their children in economic or caretaking activities, among others. WEE Actors may not be capable of directly providing emergency support to children in cases of harmful child work (child labor) or may not be able to support a household’s caretaking, educational, or health needs if they fall outside a WEE Actor’s scope of work. In these cases, it is recommended that WEE Actors form linkages or alliances with other organizations who specialize in providing other services so that WEE Actors can stay core to their strategy.

Process Description: There are 5 steps that should be completed in sequence presented in the Linkages Guide with their related tools. These are described in full under each step later in the guide:

The step and related tool in **Phase 1: Setting the Foundation**, includes:

- **Step 1: Develop an Emergency and External Support Contact List of Local Providers**
 - **Tool 1:** Emergency and External Support Contact List
 - **Tool 2:** Resources for Locating International, National, and Local Support Services

The steps and related tools in **Phase 3: Engage Participants** include:

- **Step 2: Assessing Organizational Capacity to Meet Participant Needs**
Tool 3: Organizational Capacity Assessment to Address Participant Needs
- **Step 3: Identify the Appropriate Linkage**
Tool 4: Expanded Emergency and External Support Contact List
- **Step 4: Formalize the Linkage**
Tool 5: Sample Communication Letter for Potential Partners
Tool 6: Sample MOU for formal partnerships
- **Step 5: Managing the Linkage**

Materials Needed: All materials needed to conduct all four steps are provided in this guide, unless noted otherwise.

Time Needed: The development of the Emergency and External Support Contact List (Step 1) should only take a few hours to complete as long as local organizations and their contact information are readily available online or are well known. The time needed to review participant needs, map out potential partners, and initiate and formalize an alliance with a partner (Steps 2-5) may take about 1-3 months depending on



the complexity of the partnership.

Adaptations Needed:

- While **this tool is primarily targeted to WEE Actors** who are seeking to forge linkages to support participants in addressing harmful work for children and adults, it may also be used as a guide for forming linkages with other agencies for other purposes, such as education needs, health needs, housing needs, among others. The steps for developing a linkage to a partner organization would be very similar while the impetus for the goals of the linkage may vary.
- The Linkages Guide uses the words “program participants” or “participants” to describe a service provider’s beneficiaries or female entrepreneurs. These terms can be modified as appropriate for the type of service provider that will be using the tool. For example, “program participants” or “participants” can be replaced with client, beneficiary, or other meaningful words prior to filling this out.
- All guides and training materials within the RICHES Toolkit have been designed to ensure their accessibility, particularly for differently-abled individuals. For this reason, this tool has been developed in Microsoft Word, using at a minimum 12-point font, and graphics and tables have been labeled with alternative text. You may wish to adjust the sizes of the tables to allow for notetaking or adjust the font size if printing out for your specific use.

Cost Drivers in Use of Tool: The primary cost driver from use of this tool is management-level staff time, transport to conduct face-to-face meetings with potential partners, and notarial services for partnership agreements.

Risks to Consider: When developing linkages to services or products for women, the quality of service provided can both positively or negatively affect their experience or perception of the referring agent. While most linkages will result in improved outcomes for participants, there is always the risk that a partner will deliver sub-standard services, resulting in dissatisfaction with both the partner and the WEE Actor. It is therefore important to conduct sufficient due diligence at the beginning of your engagement when developing a partnership and to monitor partner services to ensure participants have a continued positive experience and that their needs are met.

Languages: This guide is available in English, Spanish, and French.



Steps in Establishing Linkages

Phase 1: Setting the Foundation

Step 1: Develop an Emergency and External Support Contact List of Local Providers

There are two tools provided in this Guide to help complete Step 1:

- **Tool 1:** Emergency and External Support Contact List
- **Tool 2:** Resources for Locating International, National, and Local Support Services

Background: During Phase 1, all WEE Actors should develop an **Emergency and External Support Contact List** (“**Contact List**”) of local and/or regional- and national-level providers that can provide immediate support to WEE Actors (and their beneficiaries) in the case that a child or other worker is in immediate danger or needs immediate social support. Emergency contacts are the priority for Phase 1 and the remaining suggested actors can be identified over time, as relevant.

Process Description: This **Contact List** can be filled out over time as needs are identified that a WEE Actor cannot directly provide. Both an internet search/desk review and/or consultations with local authorities will be required to complete the **Contact List**. While the primary purpose of this tool is to assist a WEE Actor in identifying child protection services, it also provides ideas for other relevant services providers that may need to be consulted, depending on the nature of the WEE Actor. For example, although Financial Service Providers (FSPs) are considered a WEE Actor, they are also listed as a category in case other WEE Actors do not provide financial services and determine that developing a relationship with an FSP would make sense for their programming.

To help complete Tool 1, **Tool 2: Resources for Locating International, National, and Local Support Services**, provided in this guide, can be consulted to help identify the possible contacts.

It is recommended that prior to disseminating the Contact List with other management and frontline-level staff, the [RICHS Understanding Harmful Work Training](#) should be completed to ensure an understanding of the relevance of the **Contact List** in their work and why they would consult it.

The **Contact List** should be updated at least once a year to ensure contact information is current.



Tool 1: Emergency and External Support Contact List

Organization	Contact	Address/Website	Phone Number	Services Offered
Emergency Contacts				
Child protection services or harmful child work (child labor) support				
National				
Regional/State				
Local				
Other				
Police/local authorities				
Emergency Phone Numbers (“911”)				
Human Trafficking or Forced Labor Hotlines				
Occupational Safety and Health and Labor Abuse				
General Support				
Health/Psychosocial support				
Local clinic				
Hospital				
Legal Support				
Services for Youth (after-school programs, youth support programs)				
Government Cash Transfer/Government Social Protection Programs				



Organization	Contact	Address/Website	Phone Number	Services Offered
Financial Services				
Insurance Providers				
Other Women's Support Services				
Other				



Tool 2: Resources for Locating International, National, and Local Support Services

Emergency	
Child Protection Services or Harmful Child Work (Child Labor) Resources	
Local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Local child protection committees (at village or district level for example) ● Orphanages or foster parent networks ● Local women’s shelters
Regional/State/ District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Regional/State/District child protection committees
National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ministries of Labor and Employment ● Ministries of children affairs / women’s affairs / social affairs ● National police and/or Ministries of Justice ● National child protection network ● Occupational Health and Safety ● Ministries of Education/Youth Services ● Ministries of commerce with youth programs that might also target adolescent girls of working age. ● Ministries of Faith
International	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● United States Department of Labor (USDOL): https://www.dol.gov/; Also see the USDOL Sweat and Toil app for the country: https://www.dol.gov/general/apps/ilab ● International Labour Organization (ILO): http://www.ilo.org ● United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF): http://www.unicef.org/ ● United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR): http://www.unhcr.org ● United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women): https://www.unwomen.org/en ● CPC Network: http://www.cpcnetwork.org/ ● Save the Children: https://www.savethechildren.org/ ● World Vision: https://www.worldvision.org/ ● International Committee of the Red Cross: https://www.icrc.org/ ● Interpol (human trafficking): www.interpol.int ● UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC): http://www.unodc.org
Other	



Police/Local Authorities	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Local Police ● Local chiefs ● Traditional and religious leaders
Emergency Phone Numbers	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “911” Wikipedia Global Emergency Numbers: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_emergency_telephone_numbers ● Hotlines for reporting child abuse, domestic violence, labor violations etc.
Human Trafficking or Forced Labor	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Polaris Project: https://polarisproject.org/responding-to-human-trafficking/ ● U.S. State Department list of global human trafficking hotlines: https://2009-2017.state.gov/j/tip/rls/other/2009/121161.htm (This list is as of 2009. Verify locally.) ● See also services mentioned on child protection above.
Occupational Safety and Health	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● International Trade Union Confederation: https://www.ituc-csi.org/ ● Occupational Health and Safety departments or organizations ● Ministries of Labor and Employment ● Labor Inspectorates/Officers
General Support	
Health/Psychosocial Support	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ministry of health: nurses, doctors, etc. ● Social workers ● Local clinics ● Local hospitals ● Health extension agents
Legal Support	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● International Bar Association: https://www.ibanet.org/ ● American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative: https://www.americanbar.org/advocacy/rule_of_law/
Services for Youth (after-school programs, youth support programs)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ministry of education: schools, teachers, etc.



Government Cash Transfer/Government Programs	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Better than Cash Alliance has guidance on how to identify cash transfer candidates, such as Ministries of Social Welfare
Financial Services	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mix Market Data on the World Bank Database: https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/mix-market • Major international microfinance networks: Grameen Foundation, Finca, Women’s World Banking, Accion, BRAC, Aga Khan, CARE, World Vision • Smart Campaign: https://www.smartcampaign.org/ • Social Performance Task Force: https://sptf.info/about-us/membership-list
Insurance Providers	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MicroEnsure: https://microensure.com/ • Bima: https://bimamobile.com/ • Impact Insurance of the ILO: http://www.impactinsurance.org/
Other Women’s Support Organizations	



Phase 3: Engage Participants

Step 2: Assess Organizational Capacity to Meet Participant Needs

There is one tool provided in this Guide to help complete **Step 2**:

- **Tool 3:** Organizational Capacity Assessment to Address Participant Needs

Background: When assessing how the organization wants to approach addressing child protection needs, there are three approaches to integration¹:

- **Option 1: The Unified Approach.** The unified approach uses the same staff person to provide multiple services. For example, a credit officer or savings group facilitator will continue to offer their credit and savings services but will begin to offer insurance services or will facilitate the [RICHES Risky Business Curriculum](#) sessions during group meetings to raise awareness about harmful work for children and adults. Service providers might choose the unified approach 1) due to the lack of availability of other services in their area, 2) because it provides an advantage over the competition, or 3) because it is the most cost-effective manner to address participant needs.
- **Option 2: The Parallel Approach.** The parallel approach uses two different staff people who are part of the same organization. For example, a financial services provider (FSP) may have an NGO arm that fulfills the corporate social responsibility (CSR) goals of FSP. In such an arrangement, the credit officer or savings group facilitator will continue to offer their credit and savings services, but a colleague from the NGO will offer access the insurance services or facilitate the [RICHES Risky Business Curriculum](#) sessions (either during existing meetings or separate ones). Similarly, an NGO that runs a livelihoods program and a child protection program might collaborate in such a way that colleagues from different units provide their unique services to the same participants in a coordinated manner. Service providers might choose the parallel approach because the needs can still be met internally, but there is an advantage of having specialized skills and availability of specialized units.
- **Option 3: The Linked Approach.** The linked approach uses staff from two entirely different organizations. For example, a financial services provider (FSP) might develop a partnership with a local child protection NGO or with a government program. In such an arrangement, an FSP may desire to stay core to its primary mission (financial services) but want to see participants' needs met. The credit officer or savings group facilitator will continue to offer their credit and savings services but will invite the child protection NGO or the government program to market and provide their

¹ Dunford C. (2001) Building Better Lives: Sustainable linkage of microcredit and education in health, family planning and HIV/AIDS prevention for the poorest entrepreneurs, Paper prepared for the Microcredit Summit Campaign, Washington, DC.



services (or deliver the [RICHES Risky Business Curriculum](#) sessions) directly to the FSP beneficiaries in a coordinated manner. Service providers might choose the linked approach when there is availability of other service providers in their area that are also interested in collaborating to meet mutually-beneficial goals.

Parallel and Linked partnerships can be one-way or two-way. A one-way partnership may be preferred if both organizations do not see a clear benefit of providing their services to the other service provider. An example of a one-way partnership is an FSP promoting the services of a child protection NGO but where the NGO does not see a clear case to promote FSP services to its own participants. A two-way partnership may be preferred if there is a clear benefit of providing each other's services to their respective participants. An example of a two-way partnership is an FSP promoting the services of a child protection NGO to its participants and the NGO promoting FSP services to its participants.

Process Description: After identifying and documenting the emergency or external support contacts in Phase 1, the next step a WEE Actor should pursue in developing linkages is to identify the causes of harmful work for children and adults, particularly among women's enterprises, that a WEE Actor can or cannot respond to with their existing programming. It is expected by Step 2 of the Linkages Guide that a WEE Actor will have already:

- a) identified these causes through market research conducted in Phase 2 through the use of the [RICHES Market Research Guide](#) and
- b) considered their response (revisions to existing or new programming) by processing market research results in the [RICHES Design Workshop](#).

Using Tool 3 found in this Guide, outline the causes of harmful work for children and adults and the associated products or services needed to address those needs. The causes and the needs can be derived the market research and design workshop (as documented above) or from other business intelligence or research sources.

Tick *Yes* or *No* in the table to identify a) whether the organization is currently providing a program, product or service to address the need or that it can better address the need, which represents the ***Unified Approach***, and IF NOT, b) whether a different department/unit within the same organization can address the need, which represents the ***Parallel Approach***, and IF NOT, c) whether a different organization that operates locally can address the need, which represents the ***Linked Approach***.

If *No* was selected for all three questions related to a need, it may be necessary to deprioritize addressing the participants' need or conduct additional research on availability of other service providers that can respond to the need.

If the Unified Approach is selected, consider the use of other Phase 3 tools: the [RICHES Risky Business Curriculum](#), the [RICHES Intra-household Dialogue Guide](#), or the [RICHES Business Diagnostics Guide](#).

If the Parallel or Linked Approaches are selected, proceed to Step 3.



Tool 3: Organizational Capacity Assessment to Address Participant Needs

Causes/ Factors Contributing to Harmful Work for Children and Adults	Services Needed to Address Causes of Harmful Work for Children and Adults	Does Your Organization/ Department Currently Provide or Could It Provide This Service? (Unified)		Do Other Departments Within Your Organization Provide This Service? (Parallel)		Are there Other Organizations That Can Provide This Service? (Linked)	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No



Step 3: Identify the Appropriate Linkage

There is one tool provided in this Guide to help complete Step 3:

- **Tool 4:** Expanded Emergency and External Support Contact List

Background: The kind of linkages that can be forged with other departments/units or external organizations will vary depending on participants’ needs. They can range from:

- Raising awareness for existing child protection programs and services
- Referrals and facilitating access to available child protection programs and services
- Creation of a new program/service that can be jointly implemented by both departments/organizations
- Advocating or lobbying for quality child protection programs and services and service delivery.

When partnering with external organizations, there are three broad possibilities:

- **Public sector linkages:** Collaboration with government institutions can include raising awareness for existing government programs and services, program referrals, and facilitating access to available programs and services at the local level. Governments sometimes have dedicated harmful child work, child protection, and/or labor committee representatives at the district level that should be consulted when discussing labor-related issues. These types of committees are generally good gateways to community actions around not just solving labor-related issues but can be a conduit for an array of services related to understanding the complexities and barriers that women may face when starting or growing their businesses. For example, a Child Protection Unit may coordinate efforts with local police, the local governing body (Mayor, Traditional Leader), and with other civil society actors that are invested in child protection, women, and economic and employment services.
- **Private or business linkages:** Linkages with businesses and the private sector will often occur through their CSR programs. Another option for a linkage with this sector could look like purchasing goods or services that the business offers at a reduced cost. A business may provide a budget to the WEE Actor to reach a certain population or participants to achieve their CSR goals. They may not be as involved in the design of the products and services but will be more focused on achievement of their CSR goals.
- **Civil society linkages:** These are linkages with non-profit, non-governmental, or civil society organizations (CSOs). CSOs may provide services that can help address some of the root causes of harmful child work including education support, trainings, nutrition support, livelihoods, etc. When working with CSOs, it is important to understand that due to their non-profit nature, these linkages may not involve a budget exchange and in several cases, it may also be necessary to fundraise for the linkage. In these linkages, organizations may decide to exchange in-kind resources or promote each other’s services among participants that can be done at a low cost. Another option is to joint fundraise and develop a project that a donor would finance.



Process Description: If in Step 2 it was determined that a different department/unit within an organization (Parallel Approach) or another organization entirely (Linked Approach) is needed to meet participants' needs regarding child protection, the next step is to outline the characteristics of the services that could be provided by the other department/unit or service provider. **Tool 4: Expanded Emergency and External Support Contact List** can assist with documenting the characteristics of potential service provider partners. Tool 4 builds off **Tool 1: Emergency and External Support Contact List** (found in this Guide). If this was developed in Phase 1, it can be consulted to complete Tool 4. Also, if not already applied, the **Interview Guide with Child Protection Service Providers** within the [RICHES Market Research Guide](#) could be used to gather information on the services a Child Protection Actor provides.

To complete Tool 4, the following new information on the service provider will be needed:

- **Location:** Where does the service provider operate and provide its programs, products, and services? Is there a geographic overlap with your organization?
- **Services Offered:** While the types of products, services, programs maybe have already been documented when filling out Tool 1, additional details about those services may be needed.
- **Target Participants:** What are the characteristics of the typical participant already served by the service provider? Is there an overlap in target participants? Would the other service provider's target population be consistent with your approach? If not, is there a clear motivation to make the case for the other service provider to serve your participants or vice versa?
- **Requirements to access service:** Are the services provided for free? Are there fee-based services? Does a participant have to qualify (for example, they would have to meet the criteria to receive government support)?
- **Potential benefits to organization:** What would be the positive outcomes for your participants if they received the partner products or services? How would your organization benefit? For example, would caretaking needs be met? Would access to business investment increase?
- **Potential risks to organization:** What might be the unintended or negative consequences of partnering? A key concern is that the other service provider provides low quality services which may reflect poorly on your own organization. For example, if another service provider commits to reduced-cost daycare but then the daycare is never open, this may cause dissatisfaction with your own organization's image.

Tool 4 names various service providers that may be considered in the rows, but not all information must be filled out. Need-driven services providers should be prioritized. If there are clear opportunities to pursue a linkage, proceed to Step 4: Formalize the Linkage.



Tool 4: Expanded Emergency and External Support Contact List

Participant Needs Identified	Name of Service Provider and Contact Information	Type of Provider (Government, Private Sector, NGO)	Location	Services Offered	Target Participants	Requirements to Access Service	Potential Benefits to Organization	Potential Risks to Organization
Child Protection Services or Harmful Child Work (Child Labor) Support								
Police/Local Authorities								
Emergency Phone Numbers (“911”)								
Human Trafficking or Forced Labor Hotlines								
Occupational Safety and Health and Labor Abuse								
Health/Psychosocial Support								
Services for Youth (after-school programs, youth support programs)								



Government Cash Transfer/Government Social Protection Programs								
Financial Services								
Insurance Providers								
Other Women's Support Services								
Other								



Step 4: Formalize the Linkage

There are two tools provided in this Guide to help complete Step 4:

1. **Tool 5:** Sample Communication Letter for Potential Partners
2. **Tool 6:** Sample MOU for Formal Partnerships

Background: By Step 4, your organization has identified some service providers through which you would like to explore some sort of linkage or formal partnership to better meet your participants' child protection needs. There are two ways to approach a possible linkage:

- **Formal Linkages.** Formal agreements are particularly important when an exchange in funds, people, or knowledge/ideas is involved, when a formal network/ system will be established, or when services are directly provided to target participants. In this case, memoranda of understanding (MOU), partnership agreements, or contracts (a more legally binding document) should be signed by both parties.
- **Informal Linkages.** Informal partnerships do not require a formal written contract or partnership agreement. Informal linkages can be done verbally for simple, one-time service provision or activities that are largely dependent on voluntary work, provision of in-kind support, and informal exchange of knowledge, information, and experiences.

It is important to note that the process of engaging and establishing the linkage with potential partners can take some. This phase needs patience and attention to detail. It is also important to recognize that it is at this phase where both organizations are getting to know each other. During this process, it is crucial to learn, and understand their processes, terminology, and assumptions.

Process Description:

1. **Introduce your interest to partner:** If in Step 3 a potential linkage partner was not contacted, adapt **Tool 5: Sample Communication Letter for Potential Partners**, found in this Guide, to introduce your interest in exploring a partnership.
2. **Set up a meeting to discuss the opportunity to partner.** If both organizations agree to explore such a partnership, set up a meeting with the prospective partner. The goal of the exploratory meeting is your chance to demonstrate to the prospective partner, how your goals, roles, or needs, are aligned with theirs. Demonstrating that the collaboration can be a win-win situation for both parties, and more importantly, for the women entrepreneurs and their children and families. Emphasize how working together and leveraging each other's strengths and resources will not only help both partners achieve your goals more efficiently but will also expand the impact of both your programs/ services.

The preliminary meeting provides an opportunity to build trust and encourage cooperation and shared action. Maximize this meeting to also discuss expectations and concerns and collect more information about the organization and their programs and services to help you assess the type



of linkage you can make with them. Update your information you gather from your initial meetings.

Here is an example of a discussion flow for the introductory meetings. Some important things to ask when identifying the specifics of the partnership:

- What are your shared goals?
- What will be the roles and responsibilities of each partner?
- Will there be resource/fund sharing involved?
- How will the linkage be monitored and reported?
- What are the implementation timelines?
- How are we going to monitor the linkage?
- How are we going to get feedback from the target participants?
- Who will be the point of contact at each organization?
- Who will draft the memorandum of agreement?
- Who will be involved in approving and/or signing the alliance?
- Do we need a launch event or to have the teams meet beforehand?
- How will respective management and frontline-level staff members be equipped to support the linkage activities?

3. **Clearly articulate the foundation of the partnership.** Lay down clear and concise goals and objectives of the partnership and clarify roles and responsibilities of each organization in realizing these. Partners can have their own motivations and agendas. Having a shared understanding of the partnership’s purpose and objectives facilitates a smoother flow of coordination of efforts and service delivery. Formal agreements are particularly important when an exchange in funds, people, or knowledge/ideas is involved, when a formal network/ system will be established, or when services are directly provided to target participants. In this case, a memorandum of understanding (MOU), partnership agreements, or contracts (a more legally binding document) are common mechanisms to formalize the agreement. Both parties should agree to all terms outlined in the agreement and signed by both parties. These agreements can be referenced when disputes arise. **Tool 6: Sample MOU for Formal Partnerships** is a template that can be consulted for the basics of such a formal arrangement.

At a minimum, the MOU should include the following components:

- a description of each entity involved in the linkage
- the purpose of the linkage
- the scope, goals, and objectives
- the roles and responsibilities of each party
- the points of contact for each party
- the implementing framework for the linkage, including evaluation of the partnership
- a dispute resolution process



- guidelines for termination of the linkage if it becomes necessary
- signatures of all binding parties.

If a more formal agreement is needed, such as for a contract, a detailed Terms of Reference should be prepared, and should include:

- a rationale and description of the linkage
- roles of each party in implementing the linkage
- a work plan detailing the tasks, responsible actors, and target outputs
- resources to be shared/ committed by each partner
- accountability and reporting system and schedule
- a system for participant feedback and response mechanism
- financial management (if needed)
- provisions for evaluation and review
- timeframe
- budget.

4. **Communicate the Newly-Established Partnership:** Once a formal or informal agreement is made, share information with a variety of stakeholders regarding the alliance. Prepare in advance all necessary communication materials to explain the alliance and provide details as to what the goal of the partnership is, with all levels of appropriate staff. Prepare information, education, and communication (IEC) materials and conduct an information drive about the partnership and the programs/ services that will be implemented for participants to encourage uptake of services.
5. **Train staff, if necessary.** If there are new processes related to equipping frontline-level or management-level staff with how to link participants from one organization to the other, determine how this training will be conducted, when, and by whom.



Tool 5: Sample Communication Letter for Potential Partners

Insert Date

Name of contact person of potential partner organization

Title/ Position

Organization

Address

Dear _____,

Warm greetings!

(Briefly introduce your organization, your mission, vision and overall goal, and a profile of your women participants.)

As women entrepreneurs struggle to manage the additional labor burden of bigger businesses alongside their household tasks and unpaid care work, they are turning for help to those closest in reach – their children. As their enterprises expand, they and their household, including their children, may be exposed to working conditions that endanger their health or safety. While our organization is striving to provide [ADD LIST OF SERVICES HERE, ex. financial products and services, business training, etc.] to help them grow their businesses in a manner that is healthy and safe for them and their families, we acknowledge that we cannot meet all of their needs on our own. Our goal is to help bridge these gaps by linking with other organizations who can provide the quality services they need.

As part of this effort, we are currently conducting a mapping of programs and services in our community that our participants can access. We have identified your organization as a great potential partner.

We would like to request a meeting and interview with you on _____ at your most convenient time to learn more about your organization and your programs and services, and to explore ways for our organizations to collaborate to better support women entrepreneurs, their children, and their families.

We look forward to your positive response. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me through any of my contact details below.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

RICHES Linkages Guide



Name and Signature of WEE Actor Representative

Title/ Position

Organization

Contact Number | Email Address



Tool 6: Sample Memorandum of Understanding

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This agreement is made and entered this ____ day of _____ at _____ by and between:

(WEE Actor), (insert brief description of organization), with principal office address at _____, represented herein by its (Title of Representative of WEE Actor), (Name of Representative),

and

(Service provider), (insert brief description of organization), with principal office address at _____, represented herein by its (Title of Representative of WEE Actor), (Name of Representative),

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual promises set forth herein, the Parties agree as follows:

1. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding is to forge a strategic partnership between the Parties for the purpose of providing (support/ access to capacity building, technical assistance, educational services, financial services, etc.) to women entrepreneurs supported by _____ (name of WEE Actor).

(Describe the areas of collaboration between the Parties)

2. Roles and Responsibilities

A. WEE Actor Responsibilities

- List roles and responsibilities

B. Service Provider Responsibilities

- List roles and responsibilities

3. Points of contact

The Contact Persons for the Parties for the purposes of this MOU at the time of signature are listed below. A Party may change its Contact Person through written notification to the other Parties at any time:



WEE Actor:

Name of Principal Contact: _____
Title/ Position: _____
Address: _____
Contact Number: _____
Email address: _____

Service Provider:

Name of Principal Contact: _____
Title/ Position: _____
Address: _____
Contact Number: _____
Email address: _____

The Contact Persons shall meet as necessary to review the areas of collaboration and agreed activities and joint projects and to exchange views and reports on accomplishment with regard to this MOU. The Contact Persons may be changed in writing by their respective Parties.

4. Intellectual Property and Data

The Parties agree that any intellectual property, which is jointly development through activities covered under this MOU can be used by either Party for _____ purposes without consent from the other and without any need to account to the other.

All other intellectual property used in the implementation of the MOU will remain the property of the Party that provided it. This property can be used by either party for purposes covered by the MOU but consent will be obtained from the owner of the property before using it for purposes not covered by the MOU.

5. Effectivity and Amendment

This MOU shall take effect upon signature by the Parties and shall remain in force for a period of ____ from the commencement date unless earlier terminated. The MOU may be renewed at the end of this period by mutual written agreement by both Parties.

The provisions of this MOU may only be amended or waived by mutual written agreement of the Parties. Unless otherwise agreed, amendments may apply only to agreed activities and joint projects which have not yet been implemented. Amendments to the present MOU will become an integral part thereof.



6. Settlement of Disputes

Any dispute arising out of this MOU shall be resolved in good faith by direct negotiations between the Parties. Where no definitive resolution can be reached within sixty (60) days from the date any Party has notified the other Party of the nature of the dispute, the Parties shall refer the matter to mediation, if Parties can agree on a mediator. The costs of mediation shall be shared equally by the Parties. Neither Party waives its legal rights to adjudicate this MOU in a legal forum.

7. Termination

This MOU can be terminated at any time by any Party following a consultation period of _____ or such period as agreed otherwise between the parties and thereafter giving thirty (30) calendar days written notice of termination to other Party. Without prejudice to the foregoing, steps shall be taken to ensure that termination of participation in this MOU shall not be prejudicial to any agreed activities or joint projects undertaken within the framework of the MOU or to the completion of tasks for which binding obligations exist.

IN WITNESS HEREOF, the parties hereto have signed this MOU on _____ at _____.

For WEE Actor:

For service provider:

Signed in the presence of:



Step 5: Manage the Linkage

There are no specific tools provided in this Guide to help complete Step 5; however, a brief case study is provided to highlight what a linkage might look like when integrating the efforts of a WEE and child protection Actor.

Background: Managing a linkage can be a difficult task as each service provider can have a different agenda and expectation of their involvement. Especially at the beginning of the alliance, it is key to have a monitoring plan in place and to clarify the role that each organization will play. Remember, both organizations are still getting to know each other and here is where the rubber hits the road when the implementation begins.

Process Description: Managing a formal linkage is a continuous process and involves building and strengthening relationships, reflection/ evaluation, re-calibration, and adaptation.

Here are four simple tips to manage a linkage:

1. **Communicate regularly.** Consistently communicate with the partner and agree to meet regularly (either monthly, quarterly), or in more practical terms, have regular emails, Skype calls or phone calls, to share project updates and reports on accomplishments towards goals and objectives set. Establish an open and transparent communication plan that allows both organizations to share issues and challenges, find solutions to issues together, and celebrate small and big successes.
2. **Consult partners in key decisions.** When critical actions and issues need resolution, involve the partner in the process of finding answers and making decisions. Present issues clearly and discuss potential solutions together. Solicit their ideas, opinions, and insights.
3. **Conduct periodic evaluation of the linkage.** Organize regular (quarterly or semi-annual) consultations or focus group discussions with participants to gather their experience, level of satisfaction, other feedback and recommendations with the services and the service delivery. Once a year, bring partners and key implementing personnel together to reflect on the alliance’s results, share experiences, identify successes, good practices, challenges, and lessons learned, and plan for the next 6 months or 1 year. Periodic evaluation of partnerships will help in identifying critical issues and problems early on so these can be addressed as soon as possible.
4. **Know when to terminate a linkage.** There are many reasons why a linkage can be terminated, including: the objectives have already been achieved; organizational changes lead to a misalignment of mission, goals, and objectives; added value of the partnership has diminished; one or both parties fail to effectively carry out the project/initiative; there has been a breach in contract/MOU. Decisions to exit a partnership should be consultative and agreed upon by both organizations, taking into consideration the possible impact this will have for both organizations and their participants.



Linkage Case Study: WEE Actor Linkage to Government Programming

World Vision, an international NGO with programming in WEE, poverty alleviation and child protection in the Philippines, saw the financial vulnerability of households working in the sugarcane sector and decided to organize community-based savings groups to provide them with a safe and easy opportunity to save cash in affordable amounts, obtain small loans for necessities, and access microinsurance through the group's social fund. The saving groups became a jumping-off point not only for financial literacy and asset-building but also for income generation. Through various trainings, the groups were encouraged to venture into small group enterprises using their own savings and business start-up kits from the project. Nonetheless, diversifying and growing their businesses continued to be a challenge for many households because of limited capital.

At the onset, the project mapped and engaged government stakeholders who were directly involved in providing services for child laborers and their families. MOUs were signed with these agencies, and they became part of the project's Advisory Committee. The committee met on a regular basis to provide feedback on project implementation and discussed ways of collaborating to further support the needs of project participants.

To further support the enterprising groups, the project leveraged its partnerships with government partners to help the savings groups avail of business services and access government funds. Through the project's technical assistance, the savings groups were formally registered as people's organizations and/or were linked with the barangay local government units which enabled them to access over PhP 31 million (\$620,000) from two government-funded livelihood programs: the Integrated Livelihood and Emergency Employment Program of the Philippine Department of Labor and Employment and the Sustainable Livelihoods Program of the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

The partnerships forged by World Vision with these government agencies proved that working together can be a win-win for all parties involved. For World Vision, collaborating with partners who had similar programs and objectives ensured that additional resources needed to jumpstart, improve, or expand project participants' businesses were made available and accessible. It also provided an opportunity for local government units to support constituents who were in need. Likewise, the partnership also helped government agencies prepare and reach their target beneficiaries.

In the end, working together helped households diversify and increase their income sources so they would no longer need to resort to harmful child work (child labor).



Annexes

Acronyms and Glossary of Terms

Acronym	Definition
ABA ROLI	American Bar Association - Rule of Law Initiative
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
FSP	Financial Service Provider
ILAB	Bureau of International Labor Affairs (U.S. Department of Labor)
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OCFT	Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking
RICHES	Reducing Incidences of Child Labor and Harmful Conditions of Work in Economic Strengthening Initiatives
UN	United Nations
USDOL	U.S. Department of Labor
WEE	Women’s Economic Empowerment

Term	Definition
Children at Risk of Engaging in Harmful Child Work	<p>A child at risk of engaging in harmful child work is one who meets one or more of the following conditions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Living in an area where child labor is prevalent; 2) Living in poverty (as defined by national standards); 3) Of school age, but not attending school; 4) Having one or more siblings engaged in child labor; 5) Orphaned; 6) The head of a household; 7) Affected by a disability; 8) Living in an area with low school enrollment or high dropout rates
Child Work	Household chores and forms of legal work, including light work. This type of work does not interfere with schooling. According to international standards, the minimum age for work is 14 or 15, depending on the country, as some developing countries have lower minimum ages for work.
Frontline-level Staff	Frontline-level staff refers to WEE Actor staff who work directly with women to help achieve WEE objectives and are primarily based at the field-level. Frontline-level staff may be trainers, community agents, credit officers, social workers, agricultural extension agents, among others.



<p>Harmful Child Work (Child Labor)</p>	<p>Harmful work for children, or child labor, is any work that hinders a child’s development and work that is: a) physically, mentally, or morally dangerous and harmful for children; and b) interfering with a child’s schooling. The term harmful child work is also used interchangeably with harmful work for children or child labor. The RICHES Toolkit also identifies harmful child work as any child work that is Difficult, Dangerous, or Dirty (also known as the 3 Ds).</p>
<p>Harmful Work for Adults (Unacceptable Conditions of Work or UACW)</p>	<p>Any conditions of work that are considered to be detrimental, such as wages that do not provide for a decent living for workers and their families, hours of work that exceed eight hours a day/48 hours per week, and poor occupational health and safety conditions. Harmful working conditions are most present in the informal sector, where many female-run enterprises are run, vulnerable work, such as contract work and work in environments that lack or have limited legal protections, in forced labor, which is the most egregious form of work and is particularly common in domestic work, construction, and manufacturing, agriculture, horticulture, and in the hospitality and sex industries, or precarious work, which includes unstable work situations such as temporary and/or informal work such as the domestic care work sector, the cleaning sector, kitchen work, market work, and manufacturing.</p>
<p>Light Work</p>	<p>Child work that is limited in hours, does not harm a child’s health, safety, or school attendance and achievement. Light work can be household chores that are age appropriate, such as making one’s bed, doing dishes, occasional babysitting, etc. According to international standards, the minimum age for light work is 12 or 13, depending on the country, as some developing countries have lower minimum ages for work.</p>
<p>Management-level Staff</p>	<p>Management-level staff refers to WEE Actor staff who are primarily based at the headquarters level of the organization and lead strategy and program development and oversight.</p>
<p>Participants</p>	<p>Participants refer to women receiving services provided by WEE Actors. Participants can be women living in developing economies that own businesses, engage in livelihood activities, are clients of financial service providers, or participate in trainings to increase their access to economic opportunities. Depending on the WEE Actor, they can also be referred to as clients, beneficiaries, or members.</p>



<p>RICHEs Toolkit</p>	<p>A collection of tools that seek to assess the risks of, raise awareness about, and mitigate the risks of harmful work for children and adults among women’s economic empowerment (WEE) Actors and their participants. The RICHEs toolkit includes: an online portal for accessing the toolkit, risk assessments and diagnostics for assessing risks of harmful child work, market research and monitoring and evaluation tools, paper-based and video-based dialogue-based curriculum, management and frontline staff training, guides for linking out to child protection organizations and facilitating intra-household and community dialogues.</p>
<p>Women’s Economic Empowerment (WEE)</p>	<p>Women’s economic empowerment is a process by which women increase their power to succeed as equal and active participants in the economy. This includes women’s enhanced access to and control of human, economic, and social resources (power over); individual agency to make independent decisions that benefit themselves, their families, communities, and nations (power to); personal assets, including knowledge, skills, self-confidence, resilience, and ability to take and manage risk (power within); and collective assets, such as support services and networks (power with). Women’s economic empowerment is critical to achieving gender equality, poverty reduction, economic growth, and other sustainable development goals.</p>
<p>Women’s Economic Empowerment (WEE) Actor or Initiatives</p>	<p>Broadly refers to entities or individuals that support the development or expansion of women’s businesses, provide livelihood or financial services and/or support women (globally) in efforts to increase their access to economic opportunities, especially those living in developing economies. WEE Actors can be microfinance institutions, savings group support organizations, non-governmental organizations, donors, investors, or government programs.</p>



Additional Resources

The **RICHES Linkages Guide** has been developed through adapting the following resources:

- Allen R. (2011). Local Partnerships: A guide for partnering with civil society, business and government groups. <https://www.mercycorps.org/sites/default/files/2020-01/mclocalpartnershipsguide.pdf>
- Chandler C. (2010). Developing Linkages with Health Providers: A Technical Guide for MFIs. Freedom from Hunger. <https://www.freedomfromhunger.org/sites/default/files/MAHP.HealthProviderLinkagesTechnicalGuide.pdf>
- Chandler C and Metcalfe M. (2014). Developing Linkages with Health Providers: A Guide for Field Staff CA: Freedom from Hunger. https://www.freedomfromhunger.org/sites/default/files/documents/Developing_Linkages_With_Health_Providers_A_Guide_for_Field_Staff_4-28-14_ENG.pdf



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