

tool 19 Participation in a MRM Country Task Force?

Guiding questions

Country Task Forces on Monitoring and Reporting (CTFMR) are responsible for the implementation of the MRM at country level. CTFMRs are co-chaired by the highest UN authority in the country and UNICEF (and possibly a third co-chair), and include representatives of all other relevant UN entities. Membership may be extended to other parties, such as national or international NGOs, provided they are neutral, impartial and independent. Governments are not part of CTFMRs.

CTFMRs collect and analyze information on grave violations, report it to the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, follow up on Security Council recommendations, engage parties to the conflict to support the preparation and implementation of Action Plans and work to ensure adequate referral and response mechanisms are in place to assist victims. CTFMR members play a pivotal role for the MRM at country level.

The following facts may need to be taken into account by an NGO considering joining a CTFMR:

- Membership of a CTFMR requires financial and time investment.
- Membership of a CTFMR comes with a certain degree of visibility. While this may strengthen public advocacy and fundraising capacity, it may also increase security risks, especially if the organization has ongoing activities and presence in conflict-affected areas.
- As in any group structure, actions and strategies in a CTFMR are adopted collegially; this requires flexibility and a willingness to find compromises in the event of a disagreement.
- CTFMRs handle sensitive information, therefore members are bound by confidentiality rules.

With this in mind, there are a number of issues that NGOs may want to discuss both internally and with the UN. Some issues may need to be clarified prior to a decision to join a CTFMR, while others may be addressed at a later stage when discussing the Terms of Reference and work plan of the CTFMR.

Some key issues to discuss with the UN:




- What is the added value of our participation in the CTFMR?
- What financial and time investment (technical and senior level) would be expected of my organization if it joins the CTFMR?
- How can we tailor our role in the CTFMR to capitalize as much as possible on our existing capacity and expertise?
- For tasks in the CTFMR work plan that require dedicated funding (e.g., Action Plan monitoring), would CTFMR members raise and use funds collectively or would each member be responsible for financing their respective tasks?
- Aside from individual case information, how far do confidentiality rules extend within the CTFMR? Would my organization be able to take public positions on issues relating to children and armed conflict outside the framework of the CTFMR?
- As the MRM is a UN-led mechanism, do NGOs have equal weight to UN members within the CTFMR, as far as decision-making is concerned? If not, what type of decisions would remain the prerogative of the UN?
- Are there any actual or potential limits to our participation in the CTFMR as members?

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Some key issues to discuss internally:

- What is the added value of our participation in the CTFMR and what do we expect from it?
- Do we have (or can we obtain) the necessary financial and human resources to join the CTFMR? What existing capacity and expertise could be used to support our role in the CTFMR?
- Are any of our current donors among the members of the CTFMR? If so, could this affect our role and the dynamic within the group, in particular in the event of a disagreement?
- Are any past or potential donors among the members of the CTFMR? If so, would we still seek or accept funding from them? If we would not seek or accept funding from them, could this affect the financial viability of our current or future programs?
- How could additional security risks brought by a visible association with the MRM and the CTFMR affect our ongoing programs? What measures can we put in place to mitigate these risks?
- Do these risks outweigh the potential gains of a formal participation in the CTFMR?
- Could membership of the CTFMR negatively affect our relationship with the government? If so, what measures could we take to prevent this?
- Do we have (or could we build) a confidence-based relationship with all other members of the CTFMR?

related tools

-  [tool 20](#) – Case study ‘NGO participation in the MRM Task Force in Colombia’
-  [tool 15](#) – Matrix ‘Options for NGO participation in the MRM’
-  [tool 16](#) – Factsheet ‘NGO participation in the MRM: potential challenges and limitations’