

Arukah Network's

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# CLUSTER HANDBOOK

A companion as you work to  
create community-led change

 **ARUKAH NETWORK**

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# Part 1: Introduction

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Get to know our network of Clusters, and find out what a Cluster might help you achieve in your community.



# WHAT IS ARUKAH NETWORK?

‘Arukah’ is a Hebrew word. It means health, healing, wholeness and restoration. It can be physical, mental and spiritual. And it can be social and environmental too.

But Arukah is not only our name - it’s also our aim. We’re a global network of local people who work to bring ‘Arukah’ into the places we live. We do this in three ways:

## 1. CONNECT

We support people to form 'Clusters'. These are local, collaborative groups that build relationships with each other, share their strengths and weaknesses, and carry out activities that serve their community.



## 2. INFORM

We capture and share learning and stories from around our network and beyond, in order to improve access to training and information, and to help our Clusters and members grow.

## 3. INFLUENCE

Clusters work together to create positive change in their community and beyond. They have improved access to food, sanitation and healthcare. They've promoted justice and inclusion. And they've nurture award-winning leaders. They also share their experiences to help others do the same.



## WHAT IS A CLUSTER?

Clusters are the foundation of our network. They are groups of local people who do good things where they live, and who choose to come together to build relationships, share skills and resources, and form partnerships that increase their impact.

A Cluster member can be any local person or organisation. They might be a health or development worker. They might be an entrepreneur or a farmer. They might be an artist, teacher or a government representative. But they have chosen to come together because they see that if they build local relationships, support one another, share in training and form partnerships,

then they can increase the health, wellbeing and happiness of their communities.

Through our global network a Cluster can access: facilitators to help them launch and grow; training to support their learning; and like-minded advisers and friends.

A Cluster normally begins when a small group of people hear about Arukah, and start to imagine what a Cluster could help them achieve. With the support of Arukah Network, this group is then supported to work through twelve steps which are covered in detail in the rest of this handbook. See page 17 for an overview of these steps.



# WHY DO PEOPLE JOIN A CLUSTER?

Below are six of the most common reasons members tell us they join a Cluster.

## 1. TO LEARN NEW SKILLS

Cluster members sometimes organise training events to benefit their members. Depending on the topic, these events might last for two hours or even two days. They are normally led by an expert in a subject that other members want to learn about. The trainer can be someone from the Cluster, or outside of it. Either way, the event can benefit individual Cluster members and the organisations they represent. Members can also access training through Arukah Network, on our website and from other Clusters.



"Cluster meetings teach me business skills and motivate me to be a better person."

**CHRISTINE, BUSINESS OWNER**

## 2. TO RAISE THEIR VOICE

When you work in a small organisation, it can be difficult to get people to listen when you have something important to say. You might be trying to speak to your community. Or to funders. Or to policy makers. Or perhaps the media. In a Cluster you can connect with people who care about the same things as you, and you can then speak together as one. Whether by running an event together, speaking to the local media, or visiting people in your community, the Cluster can help its members, and their organisations, to gain more recognition, credibility and respect.

## 3. TO ACCESS MORE RESOURCES

Members often share resources in order to achieve something locally. For example, in Zambia's Chabbs Cluster, members share mechanical equipment, livestock and food. In doing so, they've created job opportunities for young people and helped keep hundreds of schoolchildren fed during a drought. Without sharing, these things would not have happened. Members saved time, effort and money in the process.



“By coming together people can raise their voice, claim their rights ... and increase their confidence.”

**MADHU, LOCAL LEADER**



“By networking, we share resources. And if we share resources, we don't have to compete. We cut our costs.”

**SEDEVI, HOSPITAL DIRECTOR**

#### **4. TO CREATE NEW PARTNERSHIPS**

It is sometimes tempting to compete with people and groups who do the same work as you. But in a Cluster, when members do similar work, they often forge partnerships to support each other, and to make sure their work doesn't overlap. This can mean that the service they offer is more comprehensive, and has more impact - which can increase cost-effectiveness too.

#### **5. TO MAKE NEW FRIENDS**

Clusters are made up of lots of different people. But they're also often like-minded people with the same values at heart. And so a Cluster can be a great place to make new friends.

#### **6. TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY HEALTH AND HAPPINESS**

By bringing local people together and building a culture of friendship, support and collaboration, the wider community will benefit in different ways. This is most visible when Cluster members run local projects together. For example, India's North East Cluster organised a retreat for children with disabilities and their families to relax, have fun, and break down stigma about disability.



"Sarah supports me so much ... we work in partnership too. When she runs events in schools, I go with her."

**LINDA, SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR**



"I've made friendships in the Cluster that have lasted a decade."

**JUBIN, DISABILITY WORKER**



"This Cluster project provides a new way for us all to think about disability."

**ATAN, HEALTH WORKER**



## WHAT MAKES US DISTINCTIVE?

We are not unique - other organisations work in a similar way and believe in similar things. However, what we do is very different to how some NGOs have often operated, and we think it's important to explain how...

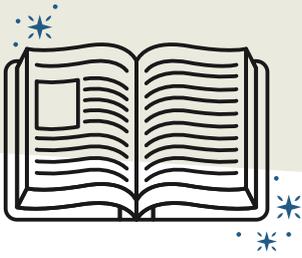
'International development' has a messy history. It's ended diseases and reduced poverty. But it's caused harm too, often due to its habit of naming a community's 'problems', and then getting outsiders to try and solve them. And efforts that sometimes end when donor budgets run dry or priorities change.

Our members tell stories of how this

has defined local people as incapable, or ignores their prior achievements, and discouraged their future initiative. And when this happens, it can leave a community worse off than it was before.

We flip this approach on its head. We celebrate local strengths rather than identify weaknesses. And we recognise that we all have something to offer to build happy, healthy communities. Development should not be about 'donors & beneficiaries', 'haves & have-nots', or 'us & them'. In Arukah Network, there's simply 'us'.

We also see the strength of our network in its quality, not quantity. We're more concerned with growing relationships and strengths in our existing Clusters, and helping them to ripple out their work and impact. This can lead to new Clusters - it's an organic process!



# THE STORY OF THE FIRST CLUSTER

In the north Indian state of Uttarakhand, the source of the famous River Ganges is found. But this river is not the only good thing to start its life there - it's where our network began too.

Uttarakhand is a mountainous region in northern India. The cool air, clear water and rich soil make it a good place to raise crops and animals. But living there is not always easy: the high peaks and steep ravines combine to isolate many villages from each other. They also separate rural life from urban centres, which can mean many people struggle to reach a doctor or health facility when they need it.

It was in this region that some years ago, two friends met for a chat. One of them, Ted, was a family doctor

from the UK. The other, Nathan, was a doctor from Australia. Both had lived and worked in Uttarakhand for a number of years. Both wanted healthcare to be within reach of local families. And both saw the need for two changes in order to do this...

Firstly, for people to see their community as the hub of healthcare, rather than a distant hospital. And secondly, for healthcare to be shaped more by partnerships of local people, and less by foreign aid agencies, with their tendency to impose services that can shut down when funding dries up.

Ted and Nathan had seen encouraging progress. Regional health centres had been built and community health enterprises had been launched – both of which they had supported local people to develop.

However, over time they noticed that these centres didn't have much contact with each other. Many were just a few miles apart, but worked in isolation. Many performed similar roles, but worked in competition. Most did not ask locally for help, because they didn't think they'd find it. And most did not ask nationally for help, because they didn't think they'd be heard. And so each one struggled on alone, serving their community with the limitations of their own resources.



(Nathan Grills)

## THE FIRST MEETING

Ted and Nathan began to wonder, what if these groups got together? What if they learned to be honest with each other? What if they were truthful about their strengths and successes, and honest about their weaknesses and challenges? What if they focussed less on their lack of resources, lack of voice and distance from decision-makers, and more on

their collective abundance and the potential of their shared voice? What if they sought guidance from NGOs and outsiders only when they could not do something themselves? And what impact might all of this have upon their community's health and wellbeing?

In 2008, they invited these health workers together to discuss these questions. Fifteen health workers from fifteen organisations gathered together, and over the course of three days, they discussed challenges, shared strengths, formed relationships, and started to make plans.

Nothing that happened in this first meeting was grand. It wasn't complex either. In fact it was the opposite: small connections were made and simple ideas took root. People discovered that each could do something the other could not. They began to think that if they started to connect with one another on a more regular basis, if they were to inform each other with training that each could offer, and if they were to speak with one voice, then they'd all have more impact in their work. And their communities would be healthier. So this is what they did. And so Uttarakhand Cluster began.

## TEN YEARS LATER

Those original fifteen members has become fifty (see below). But the Cluster's impact has far exceeded its size. They've won government contracts and trained hundreds of health workers. They've changed attitudes and opportunities around disability through groundbreaking social enterprise. They've done what international NGOs could not, when – during extreme floods in 2013 – they were able to provide aid to hundreds of families in some of the region's most isolated villages. They've launched scholarships to fund the health education of young people. They've designed and conducted community health training courses. They've launched anti-tobacco campaigns across the region. And they've made churches more disability-inclusive by training ministers and staff.

All of this has taken place in addition to the daily work of each member organisation, work which is enriched by the training, support and even love, that the Cluster provides. The Cluster was much greater than the sum of its parts.



(Ted Lankester)

## THE CLUSTER IDEA SPREADS

Like the River Ganges, the Cluster idea could not be contained by a state border. From the mountains of northern India, and with the guidance of team members like Elizabeth, Robins, Jake and others, Clusters have now taken root in the tea plantations of West Kenya, the plains of rural Zambia, and the Tanzanian shores of Lake Victoria. At the time of writing there are nine Clusters. But more are forming. And their goals now go beyond healthcare. Youth mentoring, resilient farming, social enterprise, reconciliation and integrity in leadership. All factors that work 'upstream' to contribute to the health, wellbeing and happiness of any community.





## WHY NOW?

We think that an effective Cluster is in an excellent position to help respond to some of the biggest global challenges of our time. Here are some examples...

### THE CLIMATE CRISIS

This will increasingly impact all areas of our lives, whether it be health, education or the economy.

Responding to such diverse challenges demands collaboration between people with different experiences in different fields of work. Clusters are in a great position to do this because they often contain such diverse membership - these members can work together to share expertise.

### THE SDGs

The UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals outline the joint efforts needed

to improve the health of both people and planet. These goals are a helpful guide to our collaborative efforts and can help Clusters align with government priorities.

Read about the SDGs here:  
[www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment](http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment)

### CORONAVIRUS

The pandemic shows the importance of community resilience. We have seen that often the most important work - awareness, healthcare, relief - happens within these communities. This is the kind of work that Clusters do best, because Clusters are built on local relationships, and they have the flexibility to respond quickly to urgent needs. In turn, our wider network can offer encouragement and access to information through weekly network-wide video calls and our Cluster seed fund.



"Our response to Covid-19 has been great. Our members have reached so many families, and the government recognises our efforts."

**SUSHMA,  
UTTARAKHAND CLUSTER**

## **DONOR DEPENDENCY**

This is the culture of local people and organisations relying on people and funds from outside of a community to fund and deliver development work. It can lead to projects that are designed based on what the donor wants rather than what the community needs. It also means funding might disappear, leaving the community unable to continue the work.

But no-one knows better what a community needs than the people living in it. And if they can direct their own "development" work, they can use local skills in a sustainable way. They are able to listen and respond to local strengths and needs. They can set up or reform local initiatives.

Arukah Network is not a funding agency, and we do not micro-manage Clusters. Rather, we accompany Clusters to identify and mobilise their gifts and strengths, and create positive change. We are working to connect these Clusters together globally, so that the collaborative approach can inform and create ripple effects locally and globally.

Of course, we all sometimes do need help from others, if expertise or resources aren't available locally. We encourage members to look to our wider network to find support for their plans, if they cannot find what they need locally.



"Normally an NGO comes here with a project. They pay local people to attend meetings and get involved. And it's brainwashed many people to the point where they don't think they have the ability to change their situation without first receiving money from outsiders."

**ROBINS, KERICHO CLUSTER**



# BEFORE YOU START

Whether you are thinking of starting a Cluster, or growing your Cluster, or simply exploring community development, then this handbook is for you.

We hope that this first section has given you a good introduction to our global network of local people. The next section will take you through the 12-step process of forming and running a Cluster. To help you make the most of it, here's some important things we want you to know before you start.

## **THE 12 STEPS ARE NOT A 'BLUEPRINT'**

We like to think of this handbook as a companion, not a blueprint. It is a record of the lessons we have learned

over the years, and it is an effort to share tools, tips and ideas to support you in your work. It is a collaborative document, and will evolve over time to reflect our learning together.

## **YOU DON'T NEED TO FOLLOW STEPS 1-12 IN ORDER**

Some sections might be more valuable to you than others. For example, you may not need to read our advice for how, where and when Clusters can meet. You might simply want to use our tools for goal-setting, or for using the "SALT" listening technique.

## **THIS HANDBOOK IS A UNIQUE KIND OF 'PROJECT CYCLE'**

Some of you will know what a 'Project Cycle' is. It's a tool used by many organisations to help turn an idea into reality. The steps outlined in this handbook loosely follow the idea of a

project cycle, but we have used the experience of the communities we have worked with to build in more emphasis on local conversations, strengths and stories.

## **YOUR CONTEXT IS KEY**

The steps outlined in this handbook will look a bit different in every community. But whatever your unique community looks like, the steps will work best when they are embedded in and owned by the entire community.

They should not be dependent on one

person, or a few people. Everyone can contribute to the vision and success of their community, when processes and tools become habit and mindset.

## **WE DON'T PROVIDE FUNDING**

We offer advice, tools, mentoring and connections. But we do not offer funding. If you become an Arukah Network Cluster, we may be able to provide support with your own fundraising efforts, and Clusters may be eligible for our 'Seed Fund', but communities should not be reliant on Arukah Network for funding.



# Part 12: The 12 Steps

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A step-by-step guide to launching and nurturing a Cluster, with case studies to help you learn and a checklists to help you plan

# START

1

TELL  
PEOPLE  
ABOUT IT



2

FORM  
A CORE  
TEAM



3

HOST  
A  
LAUNCH



4

AGREE  
YOUR  
VISION



12

CELEBRATE  
AND  
REPEAT!



11

SHARE  
YOUR  
STORIES



10

BUILD  
YOUR  
NETWORK



9

PUT THE  
PLAN IN  
ACTION



8

CREATE  
A  
PLAN



7

MAP  
LOCAL  
CHALLENGES



6

MAP  
LOCAL  
STRENGTHS



5

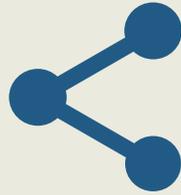
LOCAL  
LISTENING  
WITH 'SALT'

## THE 12 STEPS

IN SUMMARY



- CONNECT
- INFORM
- INFLUENCE



## STEPS 1-5: CONNECT

A healthy Cluster is one that has healthy relationships between its members and with its community. Steps 1-5 are all about connecting with people and building those relationships.

"Mankind's greatest achievements have come about by talking, and its greatest failures by not talking."

**PROF. STEPHEN HAWKING**



# STEP 1: TELL PEOPLE ABOUT IT

If you like the idea of starting a Cluster, then the first step is simple: tell people about it!

Your aim at this point is simply to see how others in your community respond. Who is attracted to the idea? What excites them about it? What questions do they ask? As you start to have these conversations, you will start to see whether there might be a desire for a Cluster, and who might become a core member of your Cluster. Here are some suggestions for getting started.

## GET TO KNOW ARUKAH

The best place to start is to explore our website [www.arukahnetwork.org](http://www.arukahnetwork.org). There you can read stories from our network, along with our manifesto. You can also contact us for a chat so

we can get to know each other and find the best ways to support you.

## DECIDE WHO TO TELL

Anyone locally might be interested and have something valuable to offer. For example, Cluster members in our network include mechanics, policeman, football coaches, farmers, nurses and students. The most important thing is that they live locally (ideally in the same town or community) and care deeply about their community.

## TELL SOME ARUKAH STORIES

When you look at our website, you will find stories about Clusters that inspire you. Why not tell these stories to people locally to see if it has the same impact on them? See how they respond, and try to answer their questions. But don't worry if you don't have all the answers.

## ENCOURAGE THEM TO LEARN MORE

If any people are interested in learning more then encourage them to visit our website, where they can read the blog, listen to the podcast (our online radio show) and sign up to our newsletter.



### CASE STUDY: HORMIS IN RWANDA

Hormis works for an NGO in Rwanda. When he heard about Arukah Network, he liked the sound of it. He travelled to join an Arukah Forum in Kenya, where he met others from our network and learned more. He then returned to Rwanda where he started to speak with friends, neighbours and colleagues about the idea of a Cluster in Rwanda.

He says "I shared highlights from my Kenya visit like the idea that we can have a great impact without lots of funding, and that listening to the community through SALT will help this happen. 12 people from 6 organisations decided to get involved as a result".

## KEEP IN TOUCH WITH PEOPLE WHO ARE INTERESTED

You might like to start a Whatsapp group to keep them informed of plans. Or you might just want to keep their contact information for when you next would like to speak with them.

### STEP 1 CHECKLIST

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Visit our website to understand the basics of how we work

Contact us for a chat, so we can support you

Write a list of people you would like to speak with about the idea

Speak with them informally - share stories and answer their questions

If they are interested, encourage them to visit our website to learn more

Hold a small local meeting to discuss the idea in more detail and answer people's questions (optional)



## STEP 2: FORM A CORE TEAM

Once you have found that there are enough people interested in the Cluster idea, you need to build a small, committed team to help you move forward. You can't do it on your own!

They might be friends. They might be colleagues. They might be neighbours. Whoever they are, there should be at least 2-3 others who have a basic understanding of Arukah Network and the Cluster idea. Like you, they should be committed to serving their community. And they should choose to get involve because they believe in the idea. As you start to build this small team, here are some things that you might like to consider.

### GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER

It is very important that you have



"A small like-minded team is sometimes all you need. Size doesn't matter... so long as you understand the Cluster concept and build relationships with one another."

**ROBINS, CLUSTER MOBILISER**

shared values and a shared passion for your community. You might like to gather together with your potential core team and simply ask each other some 'big questions'. For example:

- What do we most care about changing in your community?
- What skills, strengths and stories can we offer to make it happen?
- What might motivate other local people to join us?

## SET EXPECTATIONS

It is important that your team has an understanding of the amount of time and effort they will be expected to give to the Cluster. It might only be 3-4 hours a month, but it can be helpful to have these shared expectations agreed right from the beginning.

## FINALISE YOUR TEAM

It's important that each member of your team commits to playing a part in the life of the Cluster. It can help if each member takes responsibility for something. Take a look at our Cluster Leadership Guidelines (in the appendices/at the end of this document) for more details on this. You don't need to sign a contract, but it's important that each member of your team commits to playing a part in the life of the Cluster. It can help if each member takes responsibility for something. For example, one person might be in charge of Cluster communications. Another might take charge of finance.

## APPOINT A MOBILISER

One of you should be the 'Cluster Mobiliser'. This is often the person whose idea it was to start a Cluster. They will act as a point of contact between Arukah Network and the Cluster. They might coordinate meetings, ensure appropriate follow-up, and act as a Cluster representative when needed.

## AGREE HOW TO COMMUNICATE

Most Clusters have a Whatsapp group, but then you might also want to keep in touch in other ways - with regular meetings at an agreed location, or via email, or on Zoom.

## GOT QUESTIONS?

If you want to chat about this stage with us, then do send us an email: [team@arukahnetwork.org](mailto:team@arukahnetwork.org)

### STEP 2 CHECKLIST

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Hold a discussion with possible core team members

Discuss your hopes and values together

Discuss what time commitments you will expect of each other

Agree who will be in the core team

Agree who will be Cluster Mobiliser

Agree how you will communicate with each other



## STEP 3: HOST A LAUNCH

A launch event is a great way to state your hopes for the Cluster, to celebrate the good things in your community, to attract members, and to start to build momentum.

Before you plan a launch, get in touch with us. If we are able, we will send someone from elsewhere in our network to attend and support the event. We will also help you plan the event and if needed we can provide some funds to cover the simple costs of a venue and refreshments. The most important thing is that the launch is a simple event where your core team, new members, and other interested local people can attend.

We will now explain some of the things you should consider when hosting a launch.

### THE EVENT

Here are some key things to cover at the launch:

- Tell people why you're starting a Cluster
- Explain why the Cluster is different to how people might have worked in the past
- Introduce Arukah and share stories from other Clusters
- Celebrate the successes and strengths in your community
- Celebrate the Cluster as a way to connect and empower your community
- Start to have conversation about Step 4 - your Cluster's Identity.
- Be ready to answer people's questions and listen to their ideas

### PLANNING

The first step is to arrange a venue to host the launch. It could be a village

hall, an organisation's meeting room, under a tree, or anywhere central that people can access. You should also arrange some simple refreshments if desired (tea, soda, snacks)

## ADVERTISING

Make sure you invite the key people - your core team and local people. But you might also like to advertise it in your community so that any other interested people can come along and get involved. Advertise with local organisations, community leaders, decision-makers and others.

## NEXT STEPS

At the launch, decide on some next steps and a timeline for these next steps, to keep momentum up. For example, you should agree when and where the next meeting will take place. And before the event ends, take time to appreciate and thank everyone who attended.

## EXPLAIN WHY A CLUSTER IS DIFFERENT

You should make it clear that this is not another 'outside project' that will

give people money or a free lunch. Explain that it is the start of a long-term, community-led process, which will have the support of a nurturing, international network. It will require time, effort and commitment.

### STEP 3 CHECKLIST

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- Find a venue
- Advertise the event and invite people
- Provide simple refreshments
- Share why you are starting a Cluster
- Celebrate the good things in your community
- Facilitate a discussion on your vision, values and next steps
- Appreciate and thank everyone who attends



# CLUSTER LAUNCH: A CASE STUDY FROM INDIA

In 2018, India's North East Cluster held a 3-day launch event. Here's some key information about it.

## VENUE

A meeting room at a local hospital which is run by the Cluster Mobiliser

## IN ATTENDANCE

Thirty people representing local healthcare organisations, and three members of India's Uttarakhand Cluster who helped to facilitate the event.

## DAY 1

Arukah representatives introduced the Cluster idea. Everyone present introduced their own work and shared stories of what they do. People then started conversations about how they might collaborate.

## DAY 2

They looked more closely at how

Cluster members could work together, and to decide their priority areas. Then they came up with the number of areas they thought they would be able to work together on.

## DAY 3

They created an action plan and appointed a committee to help the plan go forward and continue meeting.

## WHAT PEOPLE SAID

"We noticed right away that a lot of people were feeling the benefit of just coming together - because there's so much to gain just by being in the same room and hearing about different people's work." - NATHAN, ARUKAH NETWORK

"The people who came all have ideas, thoughts and experiences, from which we all want to learn. There was a lot of openness, and they all realised that there is something that they can contribute. So it was a very good start." - SEDEVI, CLUSTER MOBILISER



## STEP 4: EXPLORE YOUR IDENTITY

You and your new Cluster members should discuss your identity: your vision for your community, your shared and also some practical ideas of how you will work together.

Your launch might be a good time to do this. However, we think that this step should be an ongoing conversation - a topic you can return to in future as well. To get started, here's some talking points for you and your Cluster:

### VISION

A Cluster should have a sense of why it is starting. Without this clear vision, people can lose their passion, and the Cluster might lose momentum. Our Clusters often have quite different purposes (see the box right).

### OUR CLUSTER'S DIFFERENT REASONS FOR EXISTING

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**MARA CLUSTER, TANZANIA**  
Human Rights & Women's Empowerment

**KERICHO CLUSTER, KENYA**  
Youth and Enterprise

**UTTARAKHAND CLUSTER, INDIA**  
Pioneering Disability Inclusion

**NORTH EAST CLUSTER, INDIA**  
Collaborative Healthcare

Read about them in more detail at [www.arukahnetwork.org/clusters](http://www.arukahnetwork.org/clusters)

As well as spending time talking about the strengths, gifts and

passions present within a group, it can also be helpful and motivating to talk about what we hope for, and what we dream of. This vision will help you keep going and stay focused.

## **GROUND RULES**

You should agree some basic rules as to how you will work together. This can provide a helpful foundation for how you will work together in future. These rules might include respect, listening, creativity, and so on.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

A Cluster works best when it starts with members who are all 'local'. If members are too widespread, it can be hard to find common goals and make arrangements for meetings and shared work. The most effective Clusters are those located close to each other - or within a short journey



"We met together twice to think about our vision. We decided to focus on vulnerable people. We want to support their health, provide training, and give small grants to start small businesses."

**HORMIS FROM RWANDA,  
ON STARTING HIS CLUSTER**

- and close to the people they serve.

## **MEETINGS**

Cluster members are often busy people, and so you should discuss how often you plan to meet and where you will meet. It is often helpful if meetings take place close to people's home and work. Some of you may wish to meet online using Zoom or similar. And some Clusters meet briefly every month., while others host big multi-day meetings twice a year, which also include training.

## **GIFTS, SKILLS AND ASSETS**

Together, start to list all the unique skills, gifts and assets that exist within your Cluster. These should be both the 'hard' skills (e.g. nursing or carpentry) and 'soft' skills (e.g. hospitality, inclusiveness, or good listening skills). The list will be big! If there is a particular area of expertise or way of working that emerges in a Cluster, we encourage you to share this with other Clusters in our network so they can benefit and skills can be shared internationally.

## **SIZE**

A Cluster should be a manageable size. If it becomes larger than about 30, it might be helpful to break down into

smaller working groups within a Cluster. For example, Zambia's Chabbs Cluster is made up of 28 members, but there are 'sub-groups' that take the lead on the Cluster's three priority areas (maternal health, youth development, and sanitation).

## **FAITH**

Most of our Clusters are united by a common Christian faith, but your Cluster should discuss this together. For example, is it a requirement to be a Christian to join the Cluster? If not, how will the faith of some members be respected and harnessed, whilst also allowing inclusive membership? We encourage Clusters to work with those of any faith or no faith, as collaboration is essential when tackling local health and development issues.

### **STEP 4 CHECKLIST**

\_\_\_\_\_

Ask each member to share their hopes for the Cluster

Get together to agree a vision for the Cluster

Agree some basic rules as to how members should behave

Plan how often you will meet, and how you will communicate with each other



# STEP 5: LOCAL LISTENING USING 'SALT'

SALT is a way to have good, meaningful conversations with local people and groups. It is a very simple idea, but its impact in a community can be huge.

The letters S-A-L-T represent different words:

- S: Stories, Strengths
- A: Appreciate, Affirm
- L: Learn, Listen
- T: Transfer, Transform

The best way to explain SALT is to describe how it works in practice, through what we call a "SALT visit".

## THE SALT VISIT

A SALT visit is when a group of two or three people who care about their community, visit a local household or organisation. They might go with a

specific aim (e.g. to learn about people's health) or they might go simply to better understand their community and build relationships.

Either way, the intention is to go and meet their host(s) for an hour or two, to ask questions about their life or work, to understand and appreciate the host's strengths, to affirm the good things they are doing, and to hear stories and learn about their lives.

After the visit, the small group will spend some time together to reflect on what they learned.

Through this process, the group learns more about the community and builds relationships, and the people who are visited by the group become more able to recognise their own strengths and abilities, and begin to see that other people can benefit when they share their stories.

Over time, with more SALT visits to other families and organisations, this process can build trust and relationships locally. In turn, the community starts to grow in confidence, and local people start to learn and share more with each other.

## **HOW TO DO A SALT VISIT**

On the next page you can read a story of how one Cluster has used SALT in its community. But first of all, we will explain how you and your Cluster can start to do your own SALT visits, in six stages.

### **1. INFORM YOUR MEMBERS**

Firstly, ask your core team and other Cluster members to read this chapter. We can also offer you some online or in-person SALT training. Once your members feel well informed, find out who among you would like to make a SALT visit.

### **2. PLAN A VISIT**

If only two or three of you want to make a visit, that's fine. If there's lots of you, that's great! But you should consider splitting into groups and planning separate visits (you can arrange to meet together after the visit, to share with each other what you learned). You should then decide who to visit. You might like to plan a

visit based on your Cluster focus areas. For example, if disability is a priority for your Cluster, you could visit a family with a child who has a disability, or a disability rehabilitation centre. Whoever it is, contact them in advance to ask if they might host you for an hour or two. Tell them who you are and that you would simply like to learn more about their lives / work.

### **3. MEET BEFOREHAND**

On the day of the visit, your team should gather in an agreed location where you can take some time to remind yourselves of the purpose of your visit. You can then travel together to the people you are visiting.

### **4. GO ON THE VISIT**

When you meet with your hosts, ask open-ended questions that focus on their strengths and their stories. This could take several forms. For example, in Zambia, a SALT group asks the question “what do you do to stay healthy?”. A friend of our network in India simply asks “how are you?”. Don't take notes - simply ask questions and listen. Encourage them in the good things they do. Be curious, and listen deeply to their answers. After the visit, thank your hosts, then return with your team to where you met them before the visit.

## 5. REFLECT

Share with each other what you noticed and learned during the visit. What surprised you? What encouraged you? What did you learn that you could put into practice in your own life? What should the Cluster know about?

When it is convenient to do so, you should also share something about what you learned with the rest of the Cluster, whether in person or via email or Whatsapp. All of this can contribute to the community mapping processes of the Cluster journey (steps 7-8).

## 6. REPEAT THE PROCESS

If you commit to regular SALT visits to different people and groups locally, here are some things that will start to happen:

- Listening skills are deepened
- Relationships, trust and understanding is built in communities
- Good ideas and solutions are shared
- Challenges are uncovered
- Resources and strengths can be identified and matched with needs
- Communities feel heard and empowered, and able to be active 'change agents'.



"SALT is everything for our Cluster. There is no single instance where it doesn't apply ... If you don't know about SALT, you should find out."

**ROBINS, CLUSTER MOBILISER**

## SALT STORIES

Turn to the next page for a story of how SALT works and listen to this story: [arukahnetwork.org/post/080818](http://arukahnetwork.org/post/080818)

## STEP 5 CHECKLIST

- 
- Make sure your core team knows the basics of SALT
  - Ask Arukah Network about SALT training
  - Plan a SALT visit, in line with your Cluster's priority areas
  - After the visit, share what you learn with the wider Cluster
  - Discuss amongst yourselves how often it is realistic for you to make SALT visits

# SALT: A CASE STUDY FROM ZAMBIA

In 2017, Cluster member **MATHEWS MONDE** was named one of Zambia's "most innovative health workers" by the Ministry of Health. Here, he explains how SALT led him to win this award.

I'm a Community Health Worker in Zambia's rural south. And I am also the Mobiliser of Chabbs Cluster. In both of these roles, I helped with a sanitation project, but each project achieved very different results.

## THE GOVERNMENT'S PROJECT

At the Ministry of Health, I was tasked with distributing concrete latrine bases to communities that did not have toilets. These bases are very simple: a big hole is dug in the ground, and the latrine base covers the hole.

I delivered them to one community for people to take and use as they

please. It was free. It was done with good intentions. But it failed. Few people used them. This was not just because these latrines are dark and uncomfortable places, but also because they sometimes collapse into the hole - they are not safe.



(Mathews Monde)

## THE CLUSTER'S PROJECT

Later, our Cluster began its own sanitation scheme. But ours was different. No construction took place. No building materials were provided. And no training was given. Instead, we visited homes in small groups to do SALT. We asked people "what do you do to stay healthy?". And we listened.

This led to some great conversations.

During one SALT visit, a family showed us a latrine they'd built themselves. It was made by weaving local wood into a honeycomb shape and lowering it into the ground. On top of this was placed a wooden base. It was cheap, renewable and strong. The family offered to share the idea with others in the community. With the Cluster's support, that's what they did, and people loved it.

### **HOW IT GREW**

There are now about one hundred and fifty of these latrines in use locally. Local health centres have since reported a decline in diarrheal disease.

The Ministry of Health project had a big budget, while our Cluster project had none. And I think the Cluster

succeeded where the government failed for one reason: we listened.

And it's not simply that this local solution was as good as the government one. No, it was superior: it was a stronger structure, it used renewable materials, and it was also better ventilated, and more pleasant to use.

### **CONCLUSION**

This experience taught me that SALT, and the act of listening to your community, is not simply a nice thing to do. Rather, it's taught me that it is essential if we want to build healthy and happy communities. It's taught me that if we really care about our communities, then SALT is a good place to start.



## STEPS 6-8: INFORM

These stages are about learning together as a Cluster - learning about your community, its strengths and its challenges, you can use this information to create a plan for what your Cluster will work on together.

"If I think about what things would be like here if we had not started the Cluster: people would be keeping a lot of important knowledge and skills to themselves. ."

**MADHU, UTTARAKHAND CLUSTER**



## STEPS 6-7: MAP STRENGTHS & MAP CHALLENGES

Gathering as a Cluster to map the strengths and challenges in your community will help you spot opportunities.

'Community mapping' is a great way for you and your Cluster to share information about your community identify local strengths, to identify local challenges, and to think of ways to use the strengths to address the challenges. Here's a step-by-step guide:

### STEP ONE

Gather as a Cluster, and bring some flip chart paper and marker pens.

### STEP TWO

Give each person a pen, and together start to draw a simple map of your

community. You could all work on one big picture, or you can split into small groups and each focus on one area. The picture could include:

- homes and shops
- water sources and trees
- schools and places of worship
- organisations
- government buildings
- farms
- anything else you notice!

There is a basic example on the next page, but your map can be much more detailed).

### STEP 4

Compare and discuss all the things that you have drawn. What strengths stand out? What challenges need to be tackled?

## STEP 5

Now use the map to think of any activities or projects you can work on together. Focus on using the strengths to meet the challenges. For example, you might note on your map that you have lots of local businesses, and also lots of unemployed youth. One idea could be for businesses to offer internships or mentoring to the youth. Someone might like to take notes, so you can put these ideas into your Cluster plan.



"With its proximity to both the railway line and main road, in the past Chisekesi has been a well-known transport hub for livestock and agriculture ... we have a health clinic, primary school, two high schools, a police station, several church denominations, and two guesthouses."

### CASE STUDY: CHISEKESI CLUSTER, ZAMBIA



## STEP 5 CHECKLIST

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Buy flip chart paper and pens

Gather Cluster members

Start to draw a map of your community

Add strengths

Add gaps and challenges too

Discuss opportunities together



## STEP 8: CREATE A PLAN

By this point you will have discussed the overall vision for your Cluster. Now it is time to break down this vision into smaller, achievable goals, and to create an action plan that you can work on together.

Your Cluster's vision might be exciting and inspiring, but without simple Cluster goals and actions, it will be hard to make progress towards your vision. We will now show you how together you can decide what these goals and actions should be, and put them into a plan.

### LIST YOUR GOALS

Within your Cluster, try to break down your vision in to some individual goals. Remember that these goals should be "SMART":

- **SPECIFIC:** they should be clearly

identified

- **MEASURABLE:** you should be able to tell how well you are doing
- **ACHIEVABLE:** you should be able to know you have the strengths and resources to achieve them
- **REALISTIC:** they should be meaningful and motivating
- **TIMELY:** they should have a finishing date

We suggest that the goals you set are relevant to the strengths and energy in your Cluster. For example, you would not start a training course for mechanics if no one in your Cluster or community is a mechanic! Turn the page for an example of the kind of goals a Cluster might set.



(A Cluster reviewing its goals)

## LIST YOUR ACTIONS

How will you achieve your goals? Beneath each goal, you should start to list the actions you will need to do in order to achieve them. These actions should also be 'SMART'. On the next page we have created a template for how you can do this. We've filled in part of it as an example. For each action, you might like to decide which Cluster member will be responsible for each action, and what the deadline will be.

## KEEP A RECORD

Make sure someone keeps a record of your goals and plans so you can see how you're progressing and make changes as you progress. This also means you can update people who are interested in your work.

## STEP 8 CHECKLIST

---

- Gather Cluster members
- List your goals and decide which to prioritise
- List some actions underneath these goals
- Decide who will be responsible and set deadlines
- Agree when to review actions

GOAL	ACTION	WHO'S RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE	NOTES
1. Source bicycles so Community Health Workers can visit more patients	Research cost of bikes with puncture - resistant tyres	Peter	July 30th (next meeting)	The neighbouring village bought bikes last year – speak to them
	Set up online crowdfund and share widely to raise funds	Sarah	July 30th (next meeting)	
	Arrange bicycle maintenance training for CHWs	Mathews	After bicycles purchased	See if the local mechanic can help
2. Continue....				

(Image: An simple example of an action plan)



## STEPS 9-12: INFLUENCE

These final stages are about making sure the Cluster positively impacts its community, and taking time to record and reflect on that impact.

"The Cluster has helped me see ways to create change and hope."

**DOROTHY, SHIRATI CLUSTER**



## STEP 9: PUT THE PLAN INTO ACTION

As you start to put your plan into action, you will begin to see the fruits of your efforts. But don't worry if some things don't go to plan! Here are some things to consider as you start to take action.

### ASK FOR GUIDANCE

Whatever your project, there is likely be people in our network who have done something similar in the past. If you would like to ask for guidance from someone outside of your Cluster, get in touch with us. Here's an example from Nasilele in Zambia's Monze Cluster >>>



"Our Cluster wanted to repair a local road. We had not done this before, so Arukah connected us with someone from Sierra Leone who led a similar project. He shared so much wisdom with us, and now we have our own scheme.

**NASILELE, MONZE CLUSTER**

## "LINK 2 LEARN"

Some Clusters hold training events so members can learn about a topic that is in line with the Cluster's aims. The training might be led by a member, or by someone outside the Cluster. India's Uttarakhand Cluster holds these events 3 times a year, and calls them 'Linking to Learn' (L2L) sessions. Turn to page 47 to read a case study. And here, Cluster member Madhu describes one of the challenges >>>



"A lot of people attend our L2L trainings, but we've noticed it's the workers from organisations who come, not the leaders. Leaders sometimes feel too busy. We want to change that – it's important that leaders get involved too."

**MADHU. UTTARAKHAND CLUSTER**

## LEARN FROM FAILURE

Some of your plans will succeed. Some will not. That's ok! When things don't go to plan, it can be a great opportunity to learn. Take time to reflect together on what did not work and why, and discuss as a Cluster how you can use this learning in future. Sedevi from India's North East Cluster thinks this is important >>>



"Not being afraid to fail and being willing to try out new things helps people gain confidence."

**SEDEVI, N.E. CLUSTER**

## CONSIDER WHO SHOULD LEAD A PROJECT

Someone from the Cluster might like to take the lead on a project. This is an especially good idea if the project is related to their work. Look at page 45 to see how this has worked elsewhere, and read this advice from JP Singh of India's Uttarakhand Cluster >>>



"The objective is always to involve as many members as possible, even when resources are limited."

**J.P SINGH ON LEADING A CLUSTER PROJECT**

## STEP 9 CHECKLIST

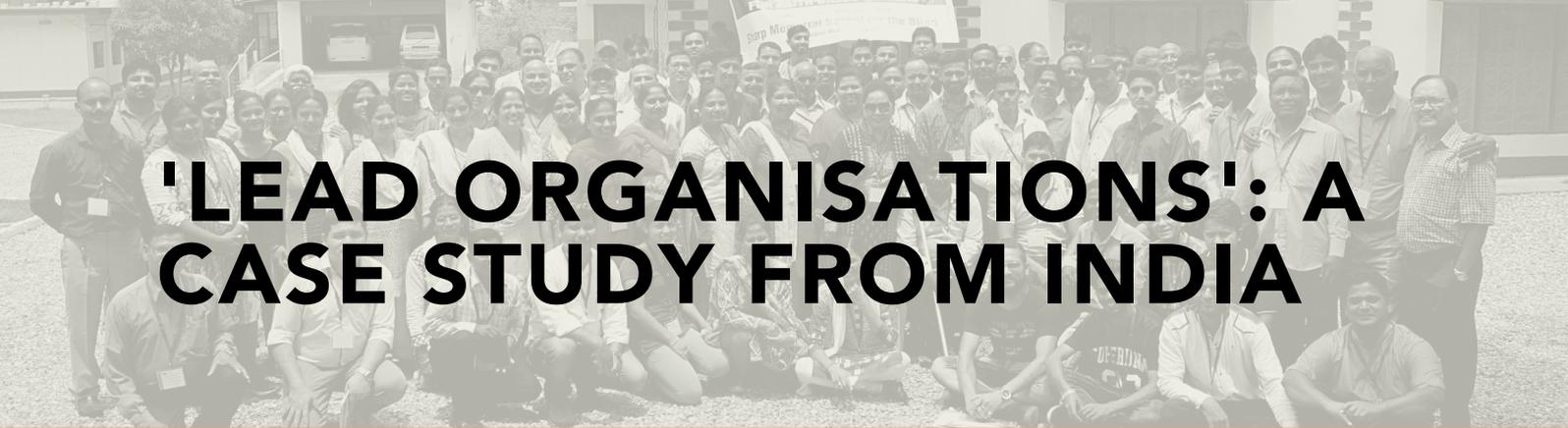
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Ask for guidance if you feel stuck

Consider whether to make L2Ls part of your work

Don't be afraid to fail!

Consider if someone should take the lead on a project



# 'LEAD ORGANISATIONS': A CASE STUDY FROM INDIA

India's Uttarakhand Cluster has fifty member organisations. Often one member will act as 'lead organisation' on a Cluster project. Here we explain how the Cluster used a lead organisation in its response to the Coronavirus pandemic.

## **WEEK 1**

As COVID-19 started to spread around India, the country went into a lockdown. The Cluster's core team had an informal chat about how they could respond to this crisis. They first asked all of their members on the Whatsapp group to share what relief work they had planned, and any other relevant information or concerns.

## **WEEK 2**

Most member organisations began their relief work. The Cluster Mobiliser started to take notes of: 1)

what they were doing, 2) where the most needs were, and 3) where there were resources. Through this, informal sharing of relief activities began to take place. They also notified the government of their work. And they encouraged one another through their Whatsapp group.

## **WEEK 3**

The core team secured some funding to co-ordinate its response. One Cluster member, the children's charity 'KHW India' was appointed by the core team to be the 'lead organisation'. This was because they had a background in disaster relief and a long history in the Cluster. Their job would be to administer the funds, co-ordinate a collaborative response, and give support and advice to smaller groups.

## **WEEK 4**

KHW-India invited Cluster members to submit proposals for their relief work, stating that a priority would be given to proposals that involved Cluster members working together.

## WEEK 5

Six proposals were approved by the Cluster Board. KHW-India distributed the funds to the groups. They also provided guidance and support to the smaller organisations as they prepared to implement their relief work. The wider Cluster provided encouragement and prayer through the Whatsapp group and on Zoom.

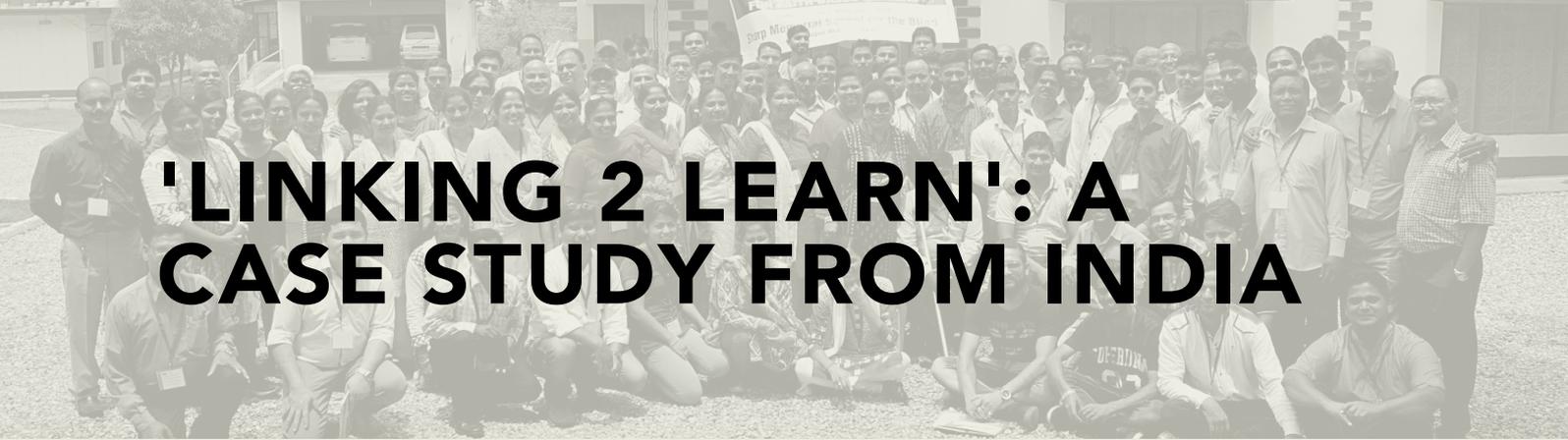
## WEEK 6

The first relief activity under Cluster's collective response took place. The Cluster was able to reach hundreds of families in some of the remotest areas.



"Any collaborative action involving a diverse group is challenging. But I try to engage other Cluster members with expertise to help out. I certainly enjoy the work, but it requires tons of patience and empathy."

**J.P. SINGH, KHW-INDIA**



# 'LINKING 2 LEARN': A CASE STUDY FROM INDIA

India's Uttarakhand Cluster comes together 2-3 times a year for for an 'L2L'. These 'Linking 2 Learn' sessions are a space for members to learn practical knowledge and skills to support them in their work. Here, Cluster member RAJ KUMAR explains how it works.

## **How does an "L2L" work?**

We as members suggest topics in advance - topics we would like to learn about. Based on this, the core team will decide what subject to focus on at the next session. They will then organise an event that might last 2 days. We will have expert speakers who will teach us, and we will have discussion too.

## **Where do these experts come from?**

Often they are from inside the Cluster - there are many experts inside our Cluster. But we also have outside experts visit us as well. These have included medical professionals, social workers and pastors. It is always a valuable opportunity to learn from them - in fact it is crucial to our Cluster and to my work.

## **What topics have you learned in these L2Ls?**

In previous years we have learned about tobacco control, spiritual growth, social inclusion, disability. And when I first got connected to the Cluster I learned about how to run health programmes as well: how to bring awareness to people on issues like TB or tobacco, clean water, health and hygiene.



# STEP 10: GROW YOUR NETWORK

As your Cluster grows, the opportunities to have influence will grow too! Here are some ways you might choose to grow your network - locally, nationally and globally.

## GROW YOUR OWN CLUSTER

A Cluster should help support new and existing members. Cluster members could link up with community health initiatives working in areas where there is no regular internet or phone usage, and invite them to join the Cluster. For those unable to attend a gathering, one member might pass on the ideas and resources shared, thereby 'rippling out' the Cluster impact.

## SUPPORT A NEW CLUSTER

Sometimes a person hears about a Cluster in their region, and wants to start a Cluster of their own. When this happens, Cluster members might go and speak with the person and find ways to support them in the idea.



"I was there to support the launch of the North East Cluster. I shared lessons from my own Cluster, about things to do and things not to do. And it enthused me too ... it helped me remember the passion and excitement when our Cluster first began."

**JUBIN, UTTARAKHAND CLUSTER**

## SHARE YOUR STORIES AND WISDOM GLOBALLY

Here is how we can help you do this:

- **DO AN INTERVIEW WITH US**  
We could share a story of a Cluster initiative, or we could ask you about your work. We would then share this on our website, either as a written article or an audio interview. Many others can then learn about your work.
- **JOIN AN ONLINE DISCUSSION**  
You could join one of our network-wide Zoom calls to share your stories and experiences with other Cluster members
- **SHARE YOUR STORY WITH ANOTHER ORGANISATION**  
We can help capture your stories and experiences to share them with a like-minded organisation. Read the case study opposite to see how this could work.
- **ATTEND AN ARUKAH FORUM**  
You could travel to join one of our in-person forums which we aim to host every 1-2 years.
- **PARTNER WITH AN INSTITUTION**  
In the past, university researchers have visited a Cluster to study its impact. This research has been

published in global academic journals - helping the Cluster model spread around the world!

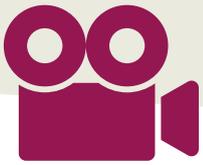


### CASE STUDY

VALERIAN is a Cluster member in Tanzania who works as a campaigner against FGM. He has a lot of stories and experience to share, and so our network worked with him to help write an article which was published on the website of the global anti-FGM group '28 Too Many'. You can read it here: <http://bit.ly/arukahvalerian>

### STEP 10 CHECKLIST

- Share stories and wisdom on the Arukah website
- Share stories and wisdom in an Arukah online discussion
- Send representatives to an Arukah forum
- Look for new partnerships and new members locally



# STEP 11: DOCUMENT YOUR WORK

Documenting your Cluster's work can help you to see the impact you are having. And it can help you discover ways to have even more impact in future.

There are lots of ways to document your work. We will now share with you some of them that you can try in your Cluster.

## TELL A STORY

Visit [www.arukahnetwork/tools](http://www.arukahnetwork/tools) to find a free tool called 'Storytelling Made Simple'. It shows an easy way to capture and tell a story about your

work. You can then tell the story to others, whether in a report, social media post, email or by telling people in person!



"There's nothing better than sharing your stories. You never know who will listen, and what it might attract in your direction."

**ROBINS, CLUSTER MOBILISER**

## SHARE ON WHATSAPP

Use your mobile phone to capture videos and photos of your work, and then share it on your Cluster Whatsapp group and with others. This can help you gain supporters and encouragement.

## SPEAK TO LOCAL MEDIA

Clusters often tell local media about their work. This can help promote the Cluster and its aims in your community. For example, India's North East Cluster hosted a retreat for families of children with disabilities. They invited a local journalist as well, who wrote a report in the newspaper about the project.



"We learn so much in our work. If we document it, then we can capture knowledge and we inspire others."

**SUSHMA, CLUSTER MEMBER**

## ATTEND AN ONLINE FORUM

If you are a Cluster member, then Arukah's Wednesday Zoom calls are a good opportunity to discuss your work with others in our network. You can get advice and guidance, but you can also encourage and inspire them at the same time!

## CONDUCT A SURVEY

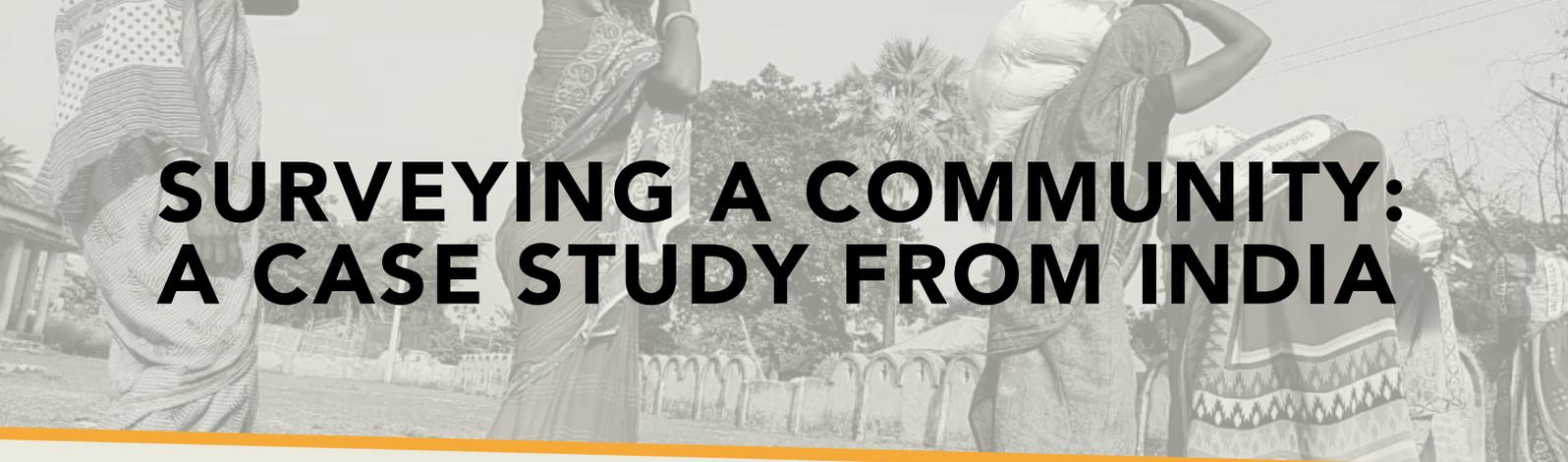
A survey can be a great way to understand the impact of your work in your community. Look at the next page for an example of how a Cluster has conducted a survey.

## RECORD AN INTERVIEW

Some Cluster members have interviewed different people in their community. You could do this by recording a video on your phone, or taking notes, or simply having a conversation.

### STEP 11 CHECKLIST

- Explore different ways to tell your stories
- Share news, pictures and videos on Whatsapp
- Tell local media about your successes
- Attend an online Arukah forum
- Record an interview using your phone



# SURVEYING A COMMUNITY: A CASE STUDY FROM INDIA

During the COVID-19 pandemic, India's Bihar Cluster conducted a huge survey in their region to understand a growing migrant crisis, and to learn how they could help. This is how it worked.

## THE SITUATION

There are not enough jobs in Bihar, and so each year many people leave to find work elsewhere in the country. When the government imposed a lockdown, these people had to return to Bihar. But when they returned they were unemployed, hungry, and stigmatised for spreading the virus.

## THE TASK

The Cluster wanted to understand what life was like for these people when they got back home, so they could find the best ways to support them in the long-term. Following a meeting, the Cluster decided to

conduct a survey of the people. They would use the survey findings to help design a Cluster response, and to advocate for government support.

## THE ACTION

They created the survey using the free, simple online tool 'Google Forms'. They wrote questions about food security, access to government relief, options for work, resources, aspirations, and health status. Cluster members then administered the survey in their workplaces, and collected 1200 responses in 2 weeks.

## THE RESULT

The survey showed that the number of these people who eat three meals a day had halved since the lockdown began. It also shows that three quarters of returnees are unskilled, only 1% have had formal skills training, and less than 1% are benefiting from the government's job guarantee programme. At the time of writing this, the Cluster was designing projects to respond.



## **STEP 12: CELEBRATE, REFLECT, ADAPT**

It's important to take time to celebrate, reflect and adapt what you have done so far. Don't miss this step!

The 12 steps are a circular process, not a linear one. During the journey, we will probably make mistakes, have success, and learn a lot. We want to take some time to think about this -- about where we've been, and where we're heading. Here are some ideas for how you can do that.

### **RECOGNISE ACHIEVEMENTS**

Coming together to work on a shared vision is an achievement on its own. Celebrate this! Share a meal, throw a party, or find another way to reflect on the work you've done, to share stories, and to recognise the change-makers in your Cluster!

### **LEARN LESSONS**

The scientist Albert Einstein said “the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.” If we want to see new results, or increase our impact, we need to stop and reflect, and make changes and improvements as we continue. Where you see opportunity for learning and improvement, it's important to acknowledge that, too. This is not failure - it's wisdom.

### **MAKE NEW GOALS**

Review the progress and plans you have made so far. As you achieve your goals, new goals will emerge. Documenting the process is important – it helps us to keep track of our

goals, and reflect on the journey.

### ASK FOR HELP

If you need help reviewing your journey so far, and planning ahead, please get in touch with Arukah Network, as we may be able to support you.

### KEEP GOING!

Revisit the handbook steps that you want to focus on. Or with new goals, go back and do steps 6-9 again. Remember, this is an ongoing Cluster-led journey. Keep acting, learning, documenting, communicating and evolving!



"Even though we have made big progress in our sanitation project, our biggest achievement is coming together as a community to share resources in the smallest and simplest of ways, and to understand our common desires and concerns."

**MATHEWS, CHABBS CLUSTER**

### STEP 12 CHECKLIST

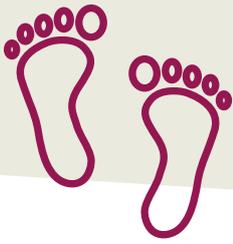
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Hold a celebration to recognise your achievements

Reflect together on lessons you have learned

Make some new goals, or adapt existing ones

Ask for help



# SO NOW YOU'VE READ THE HANDBOOK... WHAT'S NEXT?

Here are some options for what you can do next...

## **IF YOU'RE READY TO START THE 12 STEPS...**

Go for it! We are available to help you when you need it.

## **IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS...**

Get in touch with us. We'd be happy to answer your questions and support you through your journey. Just email [team@arukahnetwork.org](mailto:team@arukahnetwork.org).

## **IF YOU WANT TO LEARN MORE...**

At our website [arukahnetwork.org](http://arukahnetwork.org) you can read more Cluster stories, access free tools and training, and listen to inspiring stories on our podcast.

## **IF YOU'RE A CLUSTER MEMBER...**

Please share with us your feedback or other experiences that you think should be included in a future edition of this handbook. Also visit the members area of our website - [arukahnetwork.org/members](http://arukahnetwork.org/members) - where you can download the latest edition of this handbook, see details of our network-wide Zoom calls for learning and encouragement, see details of our Cluster seed fund, and access our Cluster directory.



# CLUSTER LEADERSHIP GUIDELINES

Clusters are the foundation of our Network. They are groups of local people who do good things where they live, and who choose to come together to build relationships, share skills and resources, and form partnerships that increase their impact.

Just like a house needs walls, every Cluster needs a basic set of structures in order to function effectively. This document provides a model for a leadership structure to help Clusters function, based on experience across the Network.

Each Cluster is considered a member of the Arukah Network family. By becoming members of the Cluster, your members become a part of the global network too. Strong, well-run Clusters enhance our members' experiences and deliver valuable service to our communities.





## **REGISTRATION**

We recommend that every Cluster register as a legal organisation with their government, choosing the appropriate structure for your Cluster. We also recommend that your Cluster has a registered bank account with a minimum of two signatories, which is managed by your Cluster treasurer.

## **LEADERSHIP TEAM**

We recommend a Cluster appoints a number of people with specific roles to create a team which serves and facilitates the work of the Cluster. You may choose to have more roles than we include here, your legal structure may also require more. The three below are the essential ones for any Cluster anywhere in the world. Below you can find some other roles which have been helpful in other Clusters.

In outlining roles for volunteers, it is helpful to be clear from the start what the role involves (and doesn't involve!), what skills are needed, what training and support are available, and the length of commitment expected. We have provided a suggestion for these below, please feel free to adapt as necessary for your Cluster.



## CLUSTER MOBILIZER

Role	As a leader, you serve and motivate your cluster by providing leadership, making sure that cluster members feel valuable, inspired, and connected to each other.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Arrange and lead Cluster and facilitators/leadership team meetings</li><li>• Lead the goal setting process</li><li>• Help the treasurer in creating a budget</li><li>• Develop a safe environment for all participants</li><li>• Work with your facilitation team to spearhead cluster operations</li><li>• Creating a culture that welcomes new members</li></ul>
Accountable to	Cluster Leadership Team and Cluster Members
Training & Support available	Coaching offered by Arukah Network Coaching Team. Support offered by Cluster Support Lead.
Role Term	Two years (or as decided by Leadership Team)

## SECRETARY

Role	As cluster secretary you help your cluster run smoothly and effectively by leading the administration tasks on behalf of the Leadership/Facilitation Team.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maintain and distribute minutes of leadership and Cluster meetings</li><li>• Support the Cluster Mobiliser in arranging meetings.</li><li>• Encourage membership to complete membership agreements and review data in partnership with the Support Team.</li><li>• Ensure Cluster maintains any administration required for non-profit recognition</li></ul>
Accountable to	Cluster Leadership Team and Cluster Members
Training & Support available	Support offered by Cluster Mobiliser/Leader/Chair. Coaching offered by Arukah Network Coaching Team. Support offered by Cluster Support Lead.
Role Term	Two years (or as decided by Leadership Team)

## TREASURER

Role	Maintaining transparent financing and records, leading the Cluster in good stewardship.
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Receive and distribute funds as appropriate.</li><li>• Maintain records of accounts and of all transactions into and out of the Cluster account.</li><li>• Work with the Cluster Mobiliser/Leader/Chair to create a budget based on Cluster aims.</li><li>• Arrange the annual audit of accounts.</li><li>• Provide regular reports on finance to the Cluster Leadership/Facilitation Team</li></ul>
Accountable to	Cluster Leadership Team and Cluster Members
Training & Support available	Support offered by Cluster Mobiliser/Leader/Chair. Coaching offered by Arukah Network Coaching Team. Support offered by Cluster Support Lead.
Role Term	Two years (or as decided by Leadership Team)

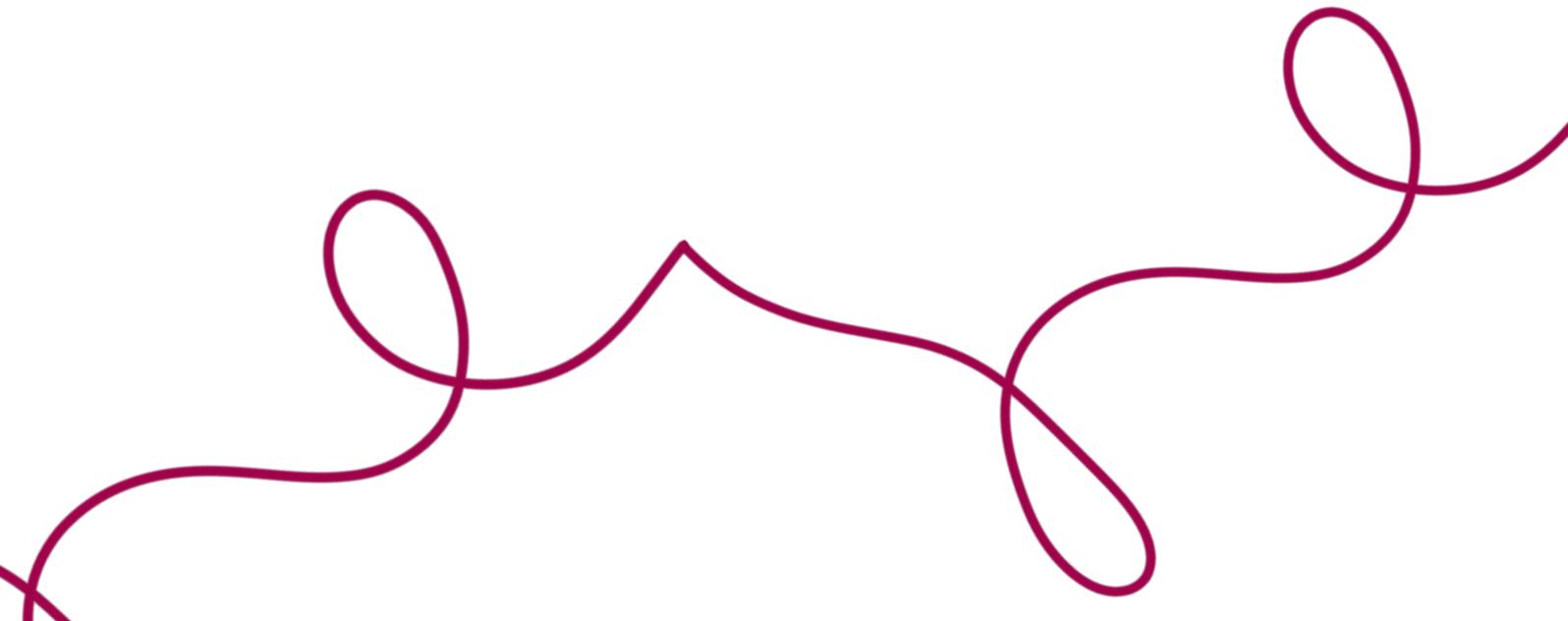


## OTHER ROLES

Here are some examples of other roles which have been helpful in other Clusters:

- Resource mobilisation\fundraising
- Income generation activities
- Event\programme management
- Communications coordinator
- Assistant/deputy Mobiliser/leader/chair.

The Support Team can help create role descriptions for these roles if needed.





**THANK YOU FOR WHAT YOU DO!**

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 **ARUKAH NETWORK**