

Minutes of Steering committee meeting

Date : 23/10/2018

Time: 6.45- 8pm

Venue: Vishwa Yuva Kendra, New Delhi

SC Members present:

- Renu Khanna
- Nilangi Sardeshpande
- Subashri B
- Alka Barua
- Bhuvaneswari Sunil
- Sanjeeta Gawri
- Rajdev Chaturvedi
- Bijayalaxmi Rautaray
- Souvik Pyne
- Pawan kumar Sheokhand

The meeting began by introducing Swati as CH coordinator to the SC members and welcoming her in the CH and congratulating Bhuvana for submitting her Phd thesis successfully. Following this, below agenda was listed down for discussion:

1. Planning for IWHC project
2. Planning for tool development meeting
3. Reporting on progress of ARROW project
4. Checking call for proposals
- 5 CommonHealth retreat plan
6. Guidelines for prevention of sexual harassment for CH members
7. CH Membership issues

Nilangi began by informing that the funds for the IWHC project have been received (29 Lakh approximately). This is higher than the original budget submitted due to the appreciation value of Indian rupee vs dollar rates. She informed that we need to plan for this project and take it ahead, which involves meeting for tool development and finalizing dates for the meeting. She further also wanted the group to decide the potential invitees from our side for the tool development workshop.

Subashri shared the status and update of the previous tool development workshop held in Chennai. The draft RH monitoring tool framework has been developed by Bharti Sharma, Sundari and Leila Varkey. (SC members who had queries on the tool were

asked to read the report of the tool development workshop, available in our website). The entire process as part of IWHc has three objectives. One is qualitative monitoring of groups, second one is coming up with health system stories - what are the services being provided, challenges, demand and supply issues and third one being the policy analysis which is more of a desk review. The framework is still in the draft stage, and following the upcoming tools development core group meeting, the tool should be finalised.

As far as for the qualitative part- it has been budgeted for 6 groups , 3 groups in 2 different geographical areas. Financially, we have a budget of Rs 50,000 for travel and data collection at each site. (total 3 lakhs)

The discussion ahead was about the groups that we need to engage with for this project. We wish to do this with different marginalized groups such as HIV positive women, tribal women, dalit groups etc. Nilangi informed that she has spoken to Nidhi Goyal about women with disabilities. Rahi has also expressed interest and wants to do this research with the nomadic groups, Anita Rego wants to work with young people and dalit women in urban slums, Bijaylaxmi (SC member) expressed working with a group of migrant workers.

There was a common agreement that we should invite more relevant people for the first tool development workshop and take a call in for the consecutive meetings if we need to expand the group. The emphasis was also about keeping the objective of the research central and that the tool should be context specific. There was a discussion about whether we could come up with a generic tool which is then taken to other groups and adapted for further use.

Nilangi emphasized that learning from the past issues that came up in data collection, suggested that one SC member should oversee the training and data collection with each group so that we avoid errors and issues related to data collection and management.

Discussion over selection of marginalised groups

Alka asked in order to select the groups, shall we look at the proportion of population with which the member organisations are working. She said we need to prioritize that for the purpose of advocacy. She further added that that having said that, doesn't mean we leave or exclude small groups altogether. This means if we have limited resources , we need to prioritise larger groups as first step and include other groups consecutively to leverage the research findings for advocacy.

Nilangi pointed out that we can set up a criterion for selection of the marginalized groups for the study such as location, population proportion, status- migrant, dalit etc. Yet another criterion should be those members/organisations who have attended the earlier meeting and expressed interest in doing research with their marginal population in their area. For example: RUWSEC with Dalit and young women groups, Positive women networks and HIV groups suggested by Kousalya, Sex workers group in Pune suggested by Tejaswini. Several other groups could be added in the second round of expansion, after initial rounds.

Souvik informed that RUWSEC if is working with young people in southern states , YP can work in northern states such as Bihar, we can use it as a platform for young people to engage, whoever wants to engage with policy.

Bhuvana suggested the need and importance of documenting the process and experience of data collection by the partners as it would give useful insights for the study.

Regarding the list of invitees, Renu suggested representatives from groups such as Dalit, migrant, positive women, women sex workers, tribals should represent preferably.

Additionally those who have some tool development skills should be considered, suggested Leela visaria, Alka, Sundari, Madhumita Das (CREA) should be invited. Leela varkey can bring in health system perspective. Also there were suggestions that Kaushalya from Positive women network, Manjula from dalit womens group , Balu from RUWSEC, Mandakini and Tejaswini representing organisation working with sex workers' and Satish representing tribal group should be invited for the tool development meeting in November 2018. There was also discussion about whether to invite Meena's group and also that if migrant group is included then Bijaylaxmi needs to take the responsibility of the same. For each of the groups one of the SC members should take the responsibility in overseeing the progress, was emphasised by Nilangi.

2. Planning for tool development meeting:

Possible dates for this meeting were finalized as 14th , 15th, 16th Dec 2018 as it's a weekend and the meeting can be concluded on Sunday afternoon till. 3pm.

It was decided that Renu will ask Madhumita about her availability for the meeting, similarly Alka will ask Leelaben, Bhuvana will ask Balu, Subashri will ask Sundari, Nilangi to ask Mandakini, Sanjeeta to ask Leela varkey and Satish.

Venue for the tool development meeting could be VYK Delhi or Saint Pius, Mumbai. Subashri, Souvik and Sanjeeta take responsibility to finalise the venue.

Subashri talked about the PMNCHA meeting in Delhi and that it is a global partners' exclusive meeting. There was a discussion around attending the meeting. SC members thought although that is not CH space but it is important to be part of this in order to know what's happening in other such macro spaces.

3. Arrow Project Reporting:

- Nilangi informed that data collection has been done in Tamilnadu and Bihar. In Tamilnadu, secondary data is not available. However secondary data for Bihar is not available. The team's are writing the research report. Balu from RUWSEC had already sent the narrative report by email (need to check if ths has been sent to ARROW). The deadline is October and we would finish the report by then and advocacy meeting would be planned in Nov 2018. There was a question raised as to how the report will be done when the government health system data is not available. The call shall be taken by Balu, Padma deosthali and Sundari and also accordingly will finalize the report.

- Nilangi highlighted some of the issues that came up working with the member organisations in Bihar. She told that the organisation has expectations in terms of finances. She told that CH's and their expectations are not matching and thus there is some discontent. She told that the researchers who conducted the study thought they didn't get enough support from the organisation for the study. Given these experiences issues need to be sorted out urgently.

- Renu shared her concern saying this has implications for our future work, as CH we can only offer token reimbursement for the contribution the members. So SC members have to make it very clear, and have to set clear expectations at the beginning. She expressed feeling bad about it.

- Subhasri said, first in the PHA, those teams are coming together, secondly they are working out an advocacy plan of the project, 3rd they have to do advocacy at some point in TN and Bihar so they have to be prepared. She said they were planning advocacy meeting, and suggested they shouldn't do state level meeting.

- Renu suggested that it's important to disseminate information in respective states where the study was conducted. In principle there should be a small dissemination meeting. Nilangi said dissemination is one part and advocacy is another.

- Souvik told that since YP foundation is working in Bihar and since it is matter of 4 yrs, he has to draw a clear terms of reference working as associated to YP foundation and as a CH member. Renu suggested that we have to pool together all the resources.

- Nilangi informed that as part of Equal measures she had attended meeting in Bihar and suggested we will have a bigger group there and that we will not rely on existing members alone. We need to take a call how to take this process ahead. A SC member said first the report needs to be written and completed. Renu said we can ask the ARROW team about what their ideas are on this.

- There was also a talk on whether there is a need to look at the members in Jharkhand and there is a feminist group there.

4. Call for proposals:

- Joycelyn sent two Call for proposals, Comic relief and girls first global JNU proposal . There is need to read the proposal and check if can fit our work and can we propose something.

- One or two members were requested to take responsibility for checking out the call for proposals.

- Sanjeeta accepted to check - girls first global JNU proposal- read and sent a summary mail including information such as time, eligibility criteria etc. Alka agreed to look at the Comic Relief proposal and share a mail.

- Renu informed about the upcoming COPASAH conference in Nov 2019 and that CH has been invited to be part of Indian organising committee, and told that they have been calling Subashri. She said they should send email to cmnhsa and we need to write to COPASAH that that they should communicate on cmnhsa mail id. This is a good way to increase visibility of CH.

- There was a discussion on who will go to Copasah from CH? Members asked how frequently one needs to attend such meetings. Renu informed that there are several committees been set up such as the programme committee, participant committee, virtual meetings also and asked, 'does anyone want to volunteer?' Further she informed meetings are not very frequent. A CH member asked if they can read through the minutes of the earlier COPASAH meetings. Renu suggested, 'why doesn't Nilangi, as chairperson, take this communication ahead' and suggested to write them an email requesting them to address all communication to cmnhsa account and also apologize saying we couldn't come for regular meetings in the past. Also request them to send us minutes of last meetings and inform that CH will be happy to be on the committee.

- She said we have to decide who will be the representative from the CH. Members that are Delhi based should ideally be doing this for the convenience of attending the meetings. Sanjeeta volunteered since she is in Delhi. It was decided that Nilangi will send mail and cc it to Sanjeeta and SC members.

5. CommonHealth Retreat:

CH members discussed about the possible venues we could explore for the retreat in Mumbai (Mud island), Pune (Lonavla or other resorts in Pune) and Chennai (Dakshin Chitra). The possible dates were decided to be 25/26/27 January 2019. Nilangi said she will share information about the budget. We can ask Priya to check Mumbai venue and Bhuvana to check the rates of the venues. Further this, the discussion was postponed.

6. Sexual harassment at workplace/ethics:

Discussion began by exploring whether to have specific discussion or generic. The discussion went as follows:

- If we can adapt POSH guidelines as it is?
- CH members opined that Sahaj shouldn't be involved in this and there should be an independent committee formed believing this is a 'good practise' adopted by CH.
- There were views that we should form a committee and have an external and internal member.
- Who should be a member for this committee?
- Members opined that we could have Sunil Kaul on this committee
- Alka asked if we need to form a committee different from the present SC committee as the institutional accountability comes in? What if there is a complaint against some SC member itself? Alka asked isn't SC committee empowered to take the decision
- Subashri said as a good practise we should have it and adopt a standard way as legality is involved. To this Alka asked that means we should ideally also have an ethics committee for our projects. Further there was a discussion on if SAHAJ can review as external ethics committee. Nilangi said because we believe in ethical issues, we don't want committee to just to do it for namesake. It was decided that we should have a panel and 2 external ethics reviewers and any research going through CH can be reviewed by that panel.
- Nilangi, Subashri and Pawan to work on guidelines on prevention of sexual harassment, identify and set up a mechanism by Nov 15. Swati to follow up the same with members. SC members should acknowledge mails and stick to deadlines.

7. CH membership issues

- Is it possible to shift membership account from RUWSEC to SAHAJ accounts? RUWSEC doesn't have enough manpower to carry on this work so what should be done?
- Subashri told: RUWSEC Memberships are in an LC account. It may be good to have Bhavika for this particular conversation. If SAHAJ is okay with this decision of shifting the account, we can proceed, there is no administrative hassles from RUWSEC's side. Now both the organizations have to put forth their resolutions regarding this.

S.No	Tasks to be done	Person responsible	Deadline
1	Checking dates for tool development meeting-14 to 16 Dec 2018	Renu will ask Madhumita, Alka will ask Leelaben, Bhuvana will ask Balu, Subashri will ask Sundari, Nilangi to ask Mandakini, Sanjeeta to ask Leela varkey and Satish.	
2	Finalize the venue for the tool development meeting	Subashri, Sanjeeta and Souyik	
3	Call for proposal	Sanjeeta to check girls first global JNU proposal and share a summary mail	31 st Dec deadline for

		Alka to check comic relief proposal and share a summary mail	submission 7th Dec deadline for submission
4	COPASAH conference	Nilangi to send mail to COPASAH [cc it to SC members] inform CH accepts to be part of the committee and ask for minutes of pervious meeting Sanjeeta to represent CH and attend COPASAH meetings	
5	CH retreat	Nilangi to share mail regarding available budgets with SC members Priya to check Mumbai venue for retreat [somebody needs to communicate with Priya] Bhuvana to check rates of listed venues	
6	Work on guidelines on prevention of sexual harassmt , identify and set up a mechanism	Nilangi, Subashri and Pawan	15 Nov 2018

[Note: Compiled by Swati Shinde with the feedback from SC members]