

2. Building a campaign network

Being part of the global CMC coalition can help to amplify your voice, and give you the support you need to meet your campaign goals. In your own country you can also join up with other campaigners, campaigns or organisations to make your voice stronger and be heard loud and clear.

Coalition

Network

Alliance

Partnership

Union

Work together to achieve change

Forming a coalition representing people or organisations from different sectors and/or perspectives on a particular issue is a powerful way to campaign. Coalitions and networks are formed around a common interest or problem for the purpose of strengthening a voice, uniting resources, increasing reach and demonstrating broad support for your aims in order to achieve a common goal.

There is no doubt that your voice will be heard louder when there are more of you advocating for a change in policy, attitude or practice by decision makers. We know now that the Convention on Cluster Munitions could not have been achieved without the power of the united voice and coordinated actions of the Cluster Munition Coalition.

Locally, nationally, or regionally you might consider a short-term, informal alliance or a longer-term, more formal coalition structure of like-minded NGOs and organisations. You might also want to reach out to individuals, celebrities or the media to work together in partnership. Before you get started, check the [CMC website](#) to see if there is already a network of Cluster Munition Coalition campaign members in your country or region.

Things to consider when deciding to collaborate

Before you make any decision to engage with other groups, organisations or people, you should ensure you can clearly describe your campaign objectives, goals and “asks”. Also take time to think about the decision makers and groups you need to influence, as this will help you to identify a list of people and groups you can work with, which may have influence on these targets already. Consider your current strengths and weaknesses, so that you can fill gaps that might exist. Think about how you want to work - so that your potential coalition members or partners can have a clear idea of your expectations. It can be useful to draft your initial campaign strategy before forming your coalition, but of course it is important to work with your coalition partners to develop and refine it together.

Habbouba Aoun,

Landmines Resource Centre for Lebanon:

“Partner with everyone who shows interest, starting with survivors, affected families, and affected communities.”



Handicap International's Ban Advocates at the 4MSP in Lusaka



Celebration of the third anniversary of the entry into force of the CCM in the YYGM office in Ethiopia © Bekele Gonfa



Launch of Philippine Campaign against Cluster Munitions (PCCM) ©PCCM

Who to collaborate with

When building your target list, you may initially have some ideas about individuals and organisations you already work with, or that already have a reputation for working on similar issues. As you reach out to potential partners, further recommendations will arise, and as you build your campaign, others with similar agendas will approach you seeking to collaborate. It is worth spending some time researching the background of the organisations you want to work with, or that approach you, to ensure that your campaign reputation and integrity are not at risk.

- **Organisations:** This could be any organisation with a link to your campaign goals and objectives. It could be organisations similar to your own or ones that work on the different thematic areas related to cluster munitions (e.g. disarmament, victim assistance/disability rights/survivor networks, clearance, arms monitoring and research) or related treaties such as the Mine Ban Treaty, the Arms Trade Treaty, the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities and other International Human Rights or Humanitarian Law. You can also cast the net wider and think about organisations working on development, children's rights, women's rights, post-conflict issues, human rights, peace and security, and faith issues for example. Also consider working with youth organisations and universities. Take a look at your country report in the [Cluster Munition Monitor](#) to see which groups are already engaged in work on the different thematic areas of the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

- **Individuals:** People don't have to be part of an organisation to have great ideas and be motivated to act for your cause. Depending on your campaign tactics and who you want to influence, you may want to engage individuals as members in your network so that you can call on them to mobilise large numbers to support your campaign actions.

Think about other individuals you may wish to work with such as journalists, parliamentarians, civil servants and celebrities. Research who is talking about this issue or similar issues in the media, in academia, via social media (such as Twitter) and in policy fora for example. Depending on your structure (be it a membership structure, loose coalition, or supporter base) you may prefer to work with these individuals in collaboration but not as members.

Survivor participation

A key principle of the Convention on Cluster Munitions is consultation with and involvement of cluster munition victims and organisations working on this issue. Cluster munition victims include all persons directly impacted by cluster munitions as well as their affected families and communities. If you live in a country that has suffered contamination by cluster munitions, ensure you involve people directly affected – this could be survivor networks/individuals, community groups, or disability organisations for example. If your country is not affected by cluster munitions or other Unexploded Ordnance (UXO), try to consult with others in affected countries to give your campaign a stronger voice and ensure it is representative.

Sulaiman Aminy, Afghan Landmine Survivors

Organization (ALSO), Afghanistan:

“Establish a kind of campaign coalition or advocacy committee to strengthen your impact. Collective advocacy is more powerful than individual advocacy. Identify organisations and individuals with whom you share common goals, as well as survivors and other people with disabilities.”

When to collaborate

Collaborating on advocacy initiatives generally greatly enhances the impact of your actions. However, you should always ask yourself the following questions before you start your collaboration:

- What can be gained from joining with others at this time? Is it a “tipping point” moment for the campaign?
- What are the potential disadvantages or risks of collaborating at this time, if any?
- Are there any safety or security concerns to consider? (For example an unstable political situation, or members that could be compromised by speaking out).
- Will the advantages outweigh the disadvantages?
- If we initiate a coalition or a network, what are we promising to members? Can we deliver? Can we service and support a network?
- What are we expecting of our members and are our expectations realistic?
- What other campaigns are on the agenda – is there room for us to compete for policy makers' time?

Options for structuring your collaboration

Depending on the goals you are trying to achieve, there are several options for structuring your collaboration with others:

- Forming a **temporary alliance** to work together on a specific time-bound event or time period.
- Forming a **network of individual and organisational volunteers** that you can call on to participate in campaign actions such as letter-writing campaigns, petitions, public stunts and fundraising activities.
- Forming your coalition as a **new, distinct entity** that serves as a formal umbrella over your organisation and your member organisations for the work you will do on this issue. These coalitions are typically managed by a secretariat (volunteer or paid staff in a new separate entity or as an in-kind contribution of a member) that coordinates joint work on the campaign goals and communicates to members. These types of coalitions can be (a) legally registered as their own NGO or (b) informally housed in a member organisation under their legal registration.

(a) Registering and complying with legal requirements as a completely independent organisation can be a timely and costly process - so you need to consider if it is worth the time and effort for the change you want to affect. It can bring advantages in terms of fundraising and independence.

(b) Alternatively, you might want to establish an informal coalition, which gives you the benefits of bringing together different organisations without having to deal with legally registering. It is important to establish the goals and objectives together with all coalition members, to ensure you are all on the same page. Also, decide your timeline together and decide how long the informal coalition will exist (1 year? 2 years? When the objective has been achieved?).

Getting started

Although you should already have drafted your campaign strategy before you decide to engage widely with others, when you recruit your members, it is also important to build a shared vision of what you are doing. Make sure everyone is on the same page and that your strategy maximises the skills, knowledge, expertise and connections of all your group members. Other tips for starting to work with your network or coalition include:

- **Define the roles and responsibilities of members including:**
 - The amount of time group members can realistically commit to the group.
 - The relevant skills, expertise and experiences that members bring to the group.
 - The resources that are readily available to group members.
 - The relevant interests of group members.
 - Who will be responsible for the secretariat (including meeting agendas and recording meeting discussions and decisions) and will there be paid staff?
 - Whether one individual or an organisation will be assigned as chair of the coalition.
 - Whether the chair will be elected or assigned, and the length of term of the chair.
 - Any other roles that need to be fulfilled (for example a treasurer or volunteer coordinator).

Ensure everyone knows what their individual roles are. This is important for creating a unified and motivated campaign group.

Nadira Mallik,

Gono Kalyan Shanstha (GKS), Bangladesh:

“You can partner with organisations already working for peace and security, or working with disabled people - it is easy to make partnerships. And it is also easy to use their existing facilities like meeting rooms and facilities to support your campaign work.”

- **Get clear commitments and expectations of members, such as:**

- Each individual or organisation must be committed to the problem and its solutions.
- Each individual or organisation must be committed to coordinating resources and efforts to solve the problem.
- Each individual or organisation must be committed to the belief that every other organisation has the right to be involved and have their say.
- Each individual or organisation must be committed to open communication.
- Each individual or organisation must be committed to the recognition of the coalition or network, not the individual contributions.

**Margaret Arach Orech,
Uganda Landmines Survivors Association:**

“Identify and build relationship with allies.
It makes the process of influencing policy makers a little easier.”

- **Decide how the group will operate, including:**

- How will the group make decisions (e.g. consensus, voting by majority, or designated lead(s))?
- Who will communicate on behalf of the group to external stakeholders and any protocol for communications (e.g. use of group or members' logos, approval process for external messages, etc.)?
- What are the ground rules for how the group will handle conflict and differences of opinion?
- How and when will the group evaluate progress towards campaign goals and the effectiveness of its operations?
- How and when will leadership of the group change?
- Will you have members, partners, subscribers, advocates, associates, and/or supporters?
- Will you be called a network, a coalition, a group, a partnership or a national campaign?
- How will you co-opt new members?
Will you have a formal application process and/or a loose mailing list?
Will you have a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) or a Membership Pledge for example?
- How will you fund/resource your group, and how will you allocate funds/resources?



The CMC delegation at the 4MSP in Lusaka



CMC campaigners Frederick Sadomba and Bekele Gonfa



CMC campaigners from Latin America

Best practices for collaborating

- Create an atmosphere that encourages participation - an environment that is relaxed, friendly, and unhurried.
- Act as if you expect everyone to participate and allow members to express their thoughts.
- Look for and facilitate opportunities to include as many people as possible in discussions.
- Encourage passive or quiet members to speak up and don't allow a few to dominate the discussion.
- Be sure that there is respect for differences of opinions and value differences as a means to develop creative solutions.
- Don't allow an individual to be harassed or embarrassed.
- Be sure credit is given where it is deserved.
- Do regular skill inventories and check-ins to make sure you are using the group's full talents and expertise.
- Allow conflict and difference of opinion, but always maintain the focus on issues and not personalities in a way that encourages group problem solving.
- Create transparent working practices to maintain trust and ensure wide ownership of the issue.

More resources:

- [Existing Cluster Munition Coalition campaign members](#)
- [Building a campaign strategy](#)
- [2014 Cluster Munition Coalition Campaign Action Plan](#)
- Related coalitions working on disarmament and disability issues: [Control Arms](#), [International Disability Alliance](#), [International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons \(ICAN\)](#)



ICBL-CMC coalition structure:

The Cluster Munition Coalition (CMC) formed in 2003, was initially hosted by UK NGO Landmine Action (now AOA), and operates as a membership campaign comprised of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) worldwide. Following a merger with the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) in 2011, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines and Cluster Munition Coalition (ICBL-CMC) operate a joint campaign membership. No joining fee or annual subscription is required, rather applicants are requested to: (1) Endorse the calls to action by the CMC and ICBL; (2) Agree to abide by the ICBL-CMC Membership Pledge; and (3) Submit a completed application form. A team of staff service the campaigns and provide administrative, media, finance, logistical, and policy support. A Governance Board oversees the work of both the ICBL and CMC. Alongside campaign members, the CMC works in partnership with the UN, ICRC, states, media and other stakeholders. Individuals are also encouraged to support the campaign via member organisations and via newsletter and social media sign up. In some countries campaign members have formed a national coalition, in others NGOs operate independently but collaboratively as ICBL-CMC members.



CMC director Sarah Blakemore gives a statement at the 4MSP



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