



Purpose of the Tool

A critical step of the transition process is to put in place a written agreement that clearly outlines the commitments, expectations, and conditions of the partnership. The agreement is signed by the following stakeholders:

- Director of the institution
- Principal donor of the institution
- Agency providing technical support for transition

Implementation of the Tool

A partnership agreement is typically signed after successful completion of the onboarding process. It formalizes the decision of key stakeholders to transition and should not be done before ample time and opportunity have been provided to secure buy-in. The agreement can be reviewed periodically throughout the course of transition to ensure ongoing consensus amongst all parties and to respond accordingly in situations where stakeholders may not be upholding their agreed commitments.

PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND SHARED GOALS

- We believe in a child's right to family and that it is in families that children best grow, develop, and thrive.
- We support the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, including the rights of children to live with their parents and/or grow up in a family environment, therefore supporting and prioritizing family preservation and the prevention of family breakdown.
- Where alternative care is genuinely needed, we support and uphold the UN Guidelines for Alternative Care, which gives preference to family-based care options for children.
- We believe that everyone has a critical role to play in upholding a child's right to grow up in a family. We believe that all stakeholders, including project management and staff, case workers, residential care facility directors, donors and supporters, relevant government agencies and

their representatives, and overseas organizations can work together in a collaborative and transparent way for this purpose.

- We desire to see children safely reintegrated, families strengthened, and communities supported. We agree to partner to work towards achieving these goals.

COMMITMENTS

Commitments of Kinnected Myanmar

As a member of this partnership, we will:

- Work alongside and support directors and donors through the process of transitioning away from residential care facilities;
- Provide ample opportunity for directors and donors to ask questions, input into, and raise concerns about the partnership and program;
- Provide information and written resources explaining the importance of family for the healthy development of children, the harmful effects of institutional care on children's development, and other relevant information regarding alternative care and reintegration;
- Facilitate discussions with directors to explore alternatives to residential care facilities;
- Provide training to directors on child protection principles and responses;
- Provide guidance and support in responses to any child protection issues that may emerge from residential care facilities;
- Take primary responsibility for recruitment, training, and ongoing supervision of case workers tasked with reintegration;
- Facilitate the reintegration of children into family and community-based care through robust and ethical social work procedures;
- Communicate with directors about the ongoing social work process, including plans for meeting with children and families, and coordinating summer holiday visits;
- Lead discussions to decide whether children who are related to, fostered, or adopted by directors, either informally or legally, will be included in the reintegration caseload;
- Develop agreements with directors following outcomes of these discussions and follow up on case progress;
- Provide ongoing communications to donors regarding individual progress of residential care facilities they support;
- Provide guidance and written resources to donors engaging in advocacy with other donors; and
- Communicate openly with all partners regarding any concerns or challenges that may emerge throughout the partnership.

Commitments of the Residential Care Facility Director

As a member of this partnership, I will:

- Actively work towards the implementation of National Minimum Standards and the UN Guidelines on Alternative Care in my residential care facility, with priority given to standards concerning child protection and appropriate carer/child ratios;
- Ensure that priority will be given to family-based alternative care options for children who cannot be reintegrated into birth families or placed into kinship care;
- Agree not to accept any new children into my residential care facility while the reintegration process is underway;
- Alert KM and donors within 24 hours if children are referred to my residential care facility, with the aim of accessing support for gatekeeping procedures and short-term interventions to prevent family separation where possible and necessary;
- Alert KM and donors within 24 hours if any children or young people enter or leave my facility for any reason, and immediately if they are missing;
- Work in a way that ensures case workers are able to safely and effectively facilitate the reintegration of children;
- Provide ample opportunity for KM case workers to meet with and assess children in privacy, in recognition that my presence as an authority figure may influence what children choose to discuss with case workers;
- Collaborate with KM case workers to arrange family visits for children during summer holidays, in recognition that this is a critical stage of the family reconnection process;
- Disclose at the start of the partnership the nature of the relationships I have with children in my facility whom are related to me, fostered, or adopted, either informally or legally;
- Disclose to my donors and KM other donors of my facility and their contact information;
- Attend and participate in working group meetings;
- Refrain from receiving groups of non-stakeholder volunteers, visitors, voluntourists, or short-term missions teams in my facility;
- Sign and adhere to the KM Child Protection Policy; and
- Communicate openly with all partners regarding any concerns or challenges as they emerge throughout the partnership.

Commitments of the Donor/Supporting Agencies

As a member of this partnership, we will:

- Support and encourage directors through the process of transitioning out of institutional care;
- Agree to fund our partner residential care facilities throughout the transition on a conditional basis of cooperation and ongoing participation from directors;
- Acknowledge the influential nature of our relationship with directors and that in many cases funding may be driving programming;
- Make funding decisions as donors and partners;

- Ensure that KM case workers are able to work effectively with children without involvement from directors that may undermine the reintegration process and place children at harm;
- Provide input into the program and partnership through ongoing communications with KM;
- Refrain from sending voluntourists or short-term missions teams to facilities we support;
- Sign and adhere to the KM Child Protection Policy; and
- Communicate openly with all partners regarding any concerns or challenges as they emerge throughout the partnership.

We commit to work towards achievement of this Partnership Agreement. We understand that in the event of a failure to uphold the terms of this partnership, we may be compromising Kinnected Myanmar’s ability to safely reintegrate children and inadvertently placing children at harm. We understand that this may result in a discussion with partners about ongoing alignment with the program and its goals.

Signed

Name: _____
Position: National Director
For: Kinnected Myanmar
Date: _____

Signed

Name: _____
Position: Director
For: Residential Care Facility
Date: _____

Signed

Name: _____
Position: _____
For: Donor/Supporting Agency
Date: _____

CONTACT US

If you have any questions about the intended purpose or implementation of this agreement, please contact us at km@kinnectedmyanmar.org.