Guide to the Preparation of Project Documents

Introduction

An application for a development project must be prepared according to the application forms available on the Danida/Ministry of Foreign Affairs' website for each of the particular facilities/schemes.

A project document should specify the purpose, the strategy, and the activities of the project in a more comprehensive manner than the brief outline presented in the application form. However, the project document should **not exceed 15 pages**.

The Danish organisation(s) – possibly in collaboration with one or more partners in developing countries (depending on the particular facility's requirements) – are (jointly) responsible for formulating the project and preparing the project document. It should therefore clearly state how the project will be managed and implemented.

The project document should be regarded as a **management tool**. It should document the conclusions from the preparation/decisions made with regard to the design of the project. Moreover, the project document should be written in a language understood by all partner organisations – in Danish or English.

The format for the project document may follow the **outline below, but it is not a requirement** as long as the document covers the required content – in particular a clear description of objectives and indicators/expected outputs, cf. the annex on "Results Framework and formulation of outputs & indicators". The below described project outline largely corresponds with the content required in the application form, which furthermore includes guiding questions useful for preparation of the project document.

Outline of project document

- Executive summary
- Introduction

- Part A: National context and problem analysis
  - ❖ National context
  - ❖ Problem analysis

- Part B: Description of the project
  - ❖ Objectives, indicators and outputs
  - ❖ Target groups
  - ❖ Strategy
  - ❖ Activities
  - ❖ Inputs
  - ❖ Assumptions, risks and preconditions

- Part C: Project Organisation and management

- Project organization
- Management and coordination
- Monitoring, evaluation and reporting
- Budget and financing
- Financial management and reporting

- Annexes
    - Organisational diagram of the project organization
    - Cooperation agreement(s) with partner organization(s) (Memorandum of Understanding)
    - Project implementation plan
    - Detailed budget
    - Job description of project management personnel
    - Possible other relevant documents

Executive summary:

Use a table with the following format:

Country and sector	
Project title	
Objectives	
Target groups	
Main outputs	
Risks and pre-conditions	
Partner organisations	
Amount applied for	
Implementation period	

Introduction:

The introduction should describe:

- The project idea, including its origin
- Main conclusions of reviews/evaluations and earlier experiences
- Involvement of partners in the project development process and partner ownership to the project, and project document

PART A: National context and problem analysis

- What is the national context of the project? – Outline the situation of the targeted sector, government policy, poverty aspects, etc.
- What is the problem? – Describe the problem, including who is affected by it. Analyse the problem, incl. why did it arise and how can it be solved
- Who are the relevant stakeholders (e.g. Government, civil society, other donors, business representatives, unions, etc.)

- Describe the partner(s) in developing countries (mandate, mission, year of foundation, membership base, democratic governance, organizational capacity (human and financial resources).

It is recommended to include a brief step-wise justification of the ***Theory of Change*** – from the development problem, situation/challenge in sector/value-chain, efforts needed to expected development impact – for instance in terms of an illustration. This can serve as an overview for the actual project description including strategy in part B.

PART B: Project description

Part B describes how the project will seek to solve the identified problems.

<u>Objective, outputs and impact with indicators</u>

Impact is the extent to which the development objective will be maintained after the completion of the project – and could therefore be measured several years after the end of the project.

A project may have:

- A development objective (only one), and
- Immediate objective(s) – max 2-3

The development objective is broader and the time perspective normally longer than the duration of the project. It provides a context or a social frame for understanding the immediate objective(s).

Indicators of impact will define how the intended impact may be measured or assessed.

Indicators must be defined and presented as part of the application, and will be subject to follow up in annual status reporting and at completion of the project. It is recommended to consult "Results Framework and formulation of outputs & indicators", an annex to the Guidelines, and application forms.

At least one, preferably quantitative, indicator should be defined for each immediate objective. This will be the basis for the regular monitoring and reporting to Danida during implementation.

Outputs are deliverables which the project is expected to produce during its implementation period by utilizing inputs to undertake activities. The outputs should lead to the achievement of the immediate objective(s). Outputs must be described with verifiable indicators for measuring the delivery of the outputs.

<u>Target group</u>

A clear understanding of the target group is essential. Gender specific data should be provided.

- Primary target group – and how many are directly benefiting from the results of the project.
- Secondary target group(s)? (E.g. organisations and individuals acting as change agents or catalysts of the development processes)
- Include information on vulnerable groups (women and men) such as people with disabilities, youth, indigenous people etc.

<u>Strategy</u>

The project strategy should clearly outline how elements of capacity building and advocacy as well as possible service delivery activities are interlinked and mutually reinforcing.

This section should describe and justify the strategy of the project based on the Theory of Change presented. The following issues should be considered, but-it is not mandatory to address all issues in every project.

- How will the ***objectives*** of the project be achieved and how will problems be addressed/ solved?
- How will the project improve the ***living and working conditions*** in developing countries, including in relation to the establishment of decent jobs.
- How will the project contribute to ***democratization*** and promote the respect for human rights, including workers' rights?
- How will women's and men's ***equal participation*** in the planning and implementation of the project be secured?
- How will the project contribute to better ***framework conditions*** for doing business?
- How will the project contribute to development of ***value-chains***?
- How will the project contribute to ***skills development***, particularly among youth?
- How will the project foster ***social dialogue*** among relevant public and private parties?
- How will the project promote and respect the ***UN Guiding Principles on Human Rights and Business*** and other relevant international principles?
- How will the project contribute to sustainable development of the ***environment*** incl. prevent climate change or reduce use of natural resources and energy?
- How will the experience of the project be documented and communicated to organisations that are expected to ***replicate*** the strategies developed by the project and other interested parties?
- When and how will the Danish partner organisation phase out/***exit*** the project?
- How will activities be ***sustained*** by beneficiaries or local partners after the project period?

<u>Activities</u>

In the project document the activities should be outlined to a level of detail, which will clearly reflect how the strategy for the project will be applied in order to transform inputs to outputs. The activities should demonstrate for instance how beneficiaries are consulted or participate in the project.

This implies:

- Main category of activities in relation to the stated outputs (see above): what will need to be done in order to produce the outputs?
- Project management activities related to monitoring and reporting?

<u>Inputs</u>

This section describes in words the input needed to implement the project. The budget will later describe in figures what financial resources are required.

Inputs comprise all kind of resources: human resources, funds, equipment, etc. Describe who will provide what for the project as such: Danish staff, consultants, local staff, offices, funding etc.

Make sure that stated resources are available and get partners and other stakeholders' commitment to contribute these resources to the project.

Assumptions, risks and pre-conditions

Projects are implemented in dynamic societal contexts and are therefore affected by a wide number of factors, which can challenge the project's success.

The most critical assumptions and risks must be highlighted and it should be described how the project will try to reduce/mitigate the possible effects of risk factors and strategic options if risks materialize or assumptions break.

See Annex to Guidelines and application forms on Risk Assessment, which is a tool to describe and assess risks as part of the application for support.

PART C: Project organisation and management

Project organisation

In this section it should be described how the Danish organisation(s) and local partner(s) have agreed to implement, manage and monitor the project.

- Describe the staffing of the project (management, operational, administrative): numbers and competencies required.
- Describe the organisation: sections/departments, lines of command. A diagram showing management responsibilities could be considered.

Management and coordination

This section outlines and defines responsibilities among the different actors: The Danish (lead) partner(s), local partner(s), joint steering committee arrangements (if relevant), coordination with other agencies, donors, NGOs, business associations, unions, etc.

For each actor, the level of authority and area of responsibility should be clearly defined. Job descriptions or terms of reference can be annexed. Also procedures for revision of the project document should be clearly stated.

Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

In this section it should be described how the necessary information about progress of project implementation will be provided in order for the project partners to follow implementation and, if necessary, adjust activities, inputs and budgets to obtain the objectives. Who monitors what and when?

Budget and financing

A detailed budget should be annexed. It must be prepared according to the administrative guidelines for the support facility ("Administrative retningslinjer for puljer og faciliteter under den strategiske platform for innovative partnerskaber" (marts 2015)", and the corresponding budget forms.

Financial management and reporting

See the administrative guidelines for the support facility ("Administrative retningslinjer for puljer og faciliteter under den strategiske platform for innovative partnerskaber" (marts 2015)".