

Annex G – Summary of Main Changes to Aid Management Guidelines

The Aid Management Guidelines (AMG) were established in 2003 when the Programme Management Guidelines were developed. In 2005, the Guidelines for Multilateral Development Cooperation were developed, and over the years the AMG have been extended and revised multiple times. The main changes in the AMG were reviewed in the evaluation and are summarised below and in Figure 1.

A. Programmes and Projects Guidelines (2016–2022)

Changes from 2016 to 2018:

- **Appropriation Threshold:** The limit for grants requiring presentation to the Programme Committee and Council for Development Policy increased from DKK 37 million to DKK 39 million.
- **Stakeholder and Partner Analysis:** Enhanced emphasis on analysing and justifying partner choices, reflected in annexes and templates for documentation.
- **Quality Assurance:** A Quality Assurance Checklist was introduced, signed by MFA unit heads, except when TQS conducted the appraisal.
- **Single-Partner Projects:** New templates were developed for projects with single partners exceeding DKK 10 million.
- **Residual Risk Analysis:** Reintroduced to the risk management matrix, requiring mitigation measures to be documented alongside remaining risks.
- **Reporting Changes:**
 - Annual Country Reports were discontinued.
 - Mandatory **Annual Portfolio Performance Reports (APPRs)** were introduced to document key indicators and portfolio updates, aligning with result-oriented management practices.

Changes from 2018 to 2024:

- **APPR Abolishment:** APPRs were discontinued as their insights were deemed duplicative with the Grant Management Report and stocktaking reports.
- **Grant Top-ups:** Introduced flexibility for adding funds (top-ups) to existing grants exceeding DKK 43 million, subject to proportionality and partner capacity considerations.
- **Strategic Framework Reporting:** Reporting on strategic objective-level indicators in Country Strategic Frameworks was eliminated due to complexity and limited relevance.
- **State Approval for Framework Usage:** Explicit approval by the State Secretary for Development Policy was mandated for applying Country Strategic Frameworks in non-country contexts.

B. Multilateral Organisation Guidelines (2014–2024)

Changes from 2014 to 2017:

- **Simplified Formats:** Organisation Strategies were streamlined to a single format (maximum of three priority areas, 10 pages).
- **Concept Notes Removed:** Draft Organisation Strategies replaced Concept Notes for presentation to the Programme Committee.
- **Holistic Cooperation:** Strategies were revised to provide a comprehensive view of Danish engagement with multilateral organisations, including contributions and trust funds.
- **Strategic Alignment:** Integration of SDGs and Danish development strategy in guiding strategies and dialogues.

- **Communication of Results:** Greater focus on result-sharing in strategies and dialogues with multilateral partners.
- **Approval by Minister:** The Organisation Strategy is presented to the Council for Development Policy only once in a draft version before approval by the Minister.
- **Mid-term Reviews (MTRs):** Updated scope to improve strategic oversight, although their utility was under scrutiny.

Changes from 2017 to 2024:

- **Abolition of MTRs:** MTRs were discontinued due to inconsistent relevance and quality. Focus shifted to annual action plans, stocktaking reports, and active engagement with MOPAN assessments of multilateral organisations.

C. Guidelines for Country Programmes 2013–2015

- **Reduced Partnerships:** Maximum number of development engagements and partners reduced from 30 to 25.
- **Theory of Change:** New sections were added to incorporate a ToC.
- **Monitoring and Reporting:** Enhanced guidance on results frameworks and annual output-level reporting.
- **Fragile Contexts:** New provisions to ensure flexibility and resource efficiency in conflict-affected areas.
- **Document Size:** Increased the maximum length of Country Programme documents from 25 to 35 pages, excluding annexes.
- **Replaced in 2017:** Replaced by Guidelines for Programmes and Projects as of January 2017.

D. Key Themes in Guideline Evolution

Result Orientation: Across all areas, there has been a consistent shift towards enhancing monitoring, reporting, and accountability mechanisms, though with adjustments to avoid duplication and unnecessary complexity.

Streamlining Processes: Simplifications in formats (e.g., multilateral strategies), reduced reporting obligations, and more flexible tools (e.g., grant top-ups and risk matrices) aim to improve efficiency.

Strategic Focus: Revisions align with Danish and global priorities, particularly climate, fragility, and sustainable development, while addressing resource constraints.

Integration and Flexibility: Guidelines increasingly accommodate external challenges and diverse contexts, including fragile states and middle-income countries, with tailored tools like the SSC Initiative and Country Strategic Frameworks.

Figure 1: Summary of main changes in the AMG from 2013 to 2024

