



Project application directives

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Version 3.1
11-11-2010

Table of Contents

Explanatory Notes	3
1. Context.....	5
2. Target Group.....	6
3. Objectives	6
4. Activities.....	7
5. Expected output	7
6. Expected outcome	7
7. Monitoring and evaluation / learning.....	7
8. Organisation.....	8
9.a Budget and financing	8
9.b Model Budget - Explanatory Notes	9
10. Annexes	11
11. Checklist.....	11

Explanatory Notes

Every project-program application is assessed by Cordaid on a number of aspects. Certain information is required in order to be able to carry out a proper assessment and to subsequently take a decision on project-program funding. In order to increase efficiency in processing applications, Cordaid has drawn up these Project-Program Application Directives to indicate the information we would like to see included in your application.

By following these directives you enable your application to be dealt with more quickly. Of course, it is still possible that your application will give rise to further specific questions. In such cases, we will of course forward them to you, but our intention is to limit correspondence about applications as much as possible.

In general, it is important not to make applications too long. An application that is formulated as clearly and concisely as possible makes proper processing easier. The length of the project application should be in proportion to the amount of funding requested and the nature of the project. For simple projects, shorter descriptions are needed than for relatively complicated projects. The same applies to small projects compared to big ones.

A number of terms which appear in the directives are explained below. The s are also intended to contribute to creating more consistency in the usage of these basic terms and thus to simplify discussion of their usage.

Inputs: means/resources (goods, services, staff, funds) needed to implement activities.

Activities: actions which lead to an output.

Output: direct result of the activities implemented by partners (school is built, medicines are distributed, loans are provided, number of training / workshops given to beneficiaries or to grassroots associations, number of organisations working together on lobby initiatives, etc.)

Outcome: concrete result of the output (longer term) related to changes that occurred at the level of the beneficiaries (increased number of girls attending school, change in behaviour, increased capacities at beneficiary level, increased capacities at grassroots / local organisation level, etc.)

Impact: the achievement of the objectives in the longer term (such as an improved standard of living, greater independence, greater access to social circuits, positive changes in laws, beliefs and practices, etc.). Naturally, other interventions undertaken by other actors (other donors, other NGO's, government agencies, etc.) may also influence the outcome and the impact of your project/program. Do not forget to mention these other interventions as well as two other important elements:

- the sustainability of all interventions geared towards the target group;
- the carry-over effect on other sectors/target groups or the significance in a wider context.

Capacity building efforts at the organisation level, i.e., the nature of efforts or trajectories that have been undertaken by the partner to enhance its capacities¹. Link your capacity building trajectories to the organisational scan (if already provided).

Indicators: are standards against which to measure, assess or show progress towards the achievement of expected results (% of birth deliveries supervised by trained personnel, number of lobby activities implemented to change regulations, etc.). Indicators presuppose that project-program objectives are clear.

Outreach: description and number of beneficiaries targeted who benefit from the program (for example, 25.000 women and girls from x communities or 45 community organisations involved in the reproductive health sector, representing 25.000 women). A distinction should be made between direct and indirect beneficiaries. Direct beneficiaries participate in the implemented activities or receive / use services offered by the applicant organisation directly supported by Cordaid while indirect beneficiaries refers to the beneficiaries (such as family members, neighbours, etc.) who also experience, in an indirect way, an improvement in their living conditions as a result of the intervention. A distinction should also be made between male and female beneficiaries.

¹ Capacity building efforts at beneficiary level are supposed to be part of the outcome of the program
Version 3.1
11-11-2010

a. Basic project-program data

1. Project-Program title
2. Project-Program location (country, town)
3. Agency requesting funding (name, address, contact person, legally authorised representative)
4. Type of organisation (community based organisation, intermediary organisation, service delivery institution, research institution, network, federation, micro-finance institution, umbrella organisation etc.)
5. Scope (local, national, international, several levels)
6. Beneficiaries age (children, young people, adults, elderly people, all ages)
7. Ratio of women to men (men, women, men/women)
8. Project duration (including dates of commencement and completion)
9. Funding (total amount, own contribution, contribution by third parties, contribution requested from Cordaid)

b. Short summary of the project (in one paragraph)

1. Context

This section explains the background to the project-program in relation to policy, geographic, sectoral, and thematic aspects.

1.1 General background information on the geographic area and sector

A general picture should be given of the area concerned and its population (wider than just the target group), focused on the fields (health, housing, micro-finance, conflict transformation, capacity building of civil society organisations, etc.) which form the subject of the project intervention.

1.2 Actors influencing the position and interventions of the applicant

It is important to know how other actors (private sector, other civil society organisations, the church) influences your position within your community. Describe your relationship with these actors, how you engage with them, types of partnerships, etc.

With regards to your relationship with the government (national and local), describe how government policy impact NGOs and civil society in general. How are the interventions of civil society affected, especially from the point of view of the sustainability of the results.

- firstly government policy and attitude with regard to NGOs should be described in general terms (antagonistic, neutral, cooperative);
- subsequently, government policy for the target group, region or sector should be set out;
- a more detailed picture of the availability of government services in the region or sector concerned should then be given;
- finally, the relationship of the government to the project-program should be clarified (exchange of information, consultation, coordination, cooperation).

There should also be an indication of how you view the future relationship with the government, the nature of its effort in this respect, an estimation of the prospects for sustainability (e.g. access to government services, personal or financial support).

1.3 Make an analysis of the power relations in the region where you operate

Write a paragraph on the power relations in your sector or area of intervention, at the micro level (i.e. beneficiary level along gender, ethnic, political, socio economic lines) as well as at the macro level (between civil society actors, government, multinational institutions, private sector, etc.). Describe the existing relationships between these actors, how they affect your target group as well as how they affect your own relationship with the target group (dependency, participation, etc.). Write how your intervention will (attempt to) bring about change in the existing power relations.

1.4 Risks

Factors which could have a considerable effect on the implementation of the project-program, but over which no control can be influenced within the framework of the project (political and macro-economic developments, security situation, climatological/ecological conditions) should be mentioned briefly. Also mention which measures your organisation plans on taking to mitigate those risks.

2. Target Group

This chapter should describe briefly the situation of the target group before the commencement of the project and the origins of the project or how the initiative arose.

2.1 Description of the target group

Firstly, the target group should be described on the basis of their relevant characteristics (with special consideration for the position of women, the gender issue, the relationships between men and women, the process of social exclusion, based on identity, religious beliefs, etc.). Then, preferably using quantified information, the current situation of the target group in relation to the project-program should be described.

2.2 Origins of the project

The origins of the project-program include matters such as the relationship between the target group and the applicant organisation, how the initiative developed and participation (with regard to scope, level and quality) by the population in this process and involvement of other donor organisations.

A short description of previous projects-programs (results, problems, possible reorientation) would be appropriate in this paragraph.

If evaluations have been held, it is desirable to indicate here the most important findings and recommendations.

3. Objectives

In describing the objectives, a distinction should be made between long-term objectives (often expressed in general terms after several project-program periods) and short-term objectives which relate to this specific project-program period.

Short term objectives should be related to/translated in the project-program.

Long term objectives refer to the impact of the intervention on the position of the target group in the longer term taking two elements into account:

- the sustainability of the results achieved
- the ripple effect on other sectors/groups (i.e. the social significance in a wider context).

Short term objectives should indicate in a detailed (and preferably quantified) manner the situation desired at the end of the intervention.

The description of the desired situation should deal with:

- the improvement of the beneficiaries' well being through the structures, facilities and services which the project has implemented;
- the "social" opportunities which the target group will acquire via the project (access to social systems and connections, more equal relationships between men and women)
- the capacities which the target group will have gained through the project to sustain the structures created and to use or expand their opportunities in society effectively.
- the multiplying effect for the beneficiaries, in terms of improved capacity of the target group, to undertake their own (lobby) activities

In describing the desired situation on completion of the project-program, distinction should be made between men and women on the basis of the previously described gender-specific situation on commencement of the project (2.1).

While defining your objectives, use the SMART methodology: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timebound.

4. Activities

In this chapter, there should be a description of the intervention schedule, i.e. a time-bound plan of activities designed to change the situation described at the commencement of the project into the desired situation on completion of the project.

Consideration should be given in the description to:

- quantifying and indicating what the activities entail;
- how the activities are related to the results to be achieved (output and outcome, see under);

The activities should distinguish between activities for men and women and specific activities for women should also be indicated separately.

Activities aimed at institutional strengthening should be listed separately (see capacity building at organisational level under 8.).

5. Expected output

A description of the expected output should be made at the project design stage. This can be represented as follows:

- quantification of the expected output (number of workshops provided, number of schools built, number of loans outstanding, etc..)
- objectively verifiable performance indicators.

6. Expected outcome

It is important to describe the achieved **change** at beneficiary level. Go beyond the output (implementation of the activities leading to a concrete output), and provide information regarding the expected direct result of the output/activities on the beneficiaries (decrease in infant mortality, increase in enrolment, etc..).

As much as possible provide:

- quantification of the expected outcome (x number of participants / beneficiaries with greater knowledge of or greater access to, number of lobby trajectories that led to a greater commitment from policy makers, etc..)
- objectively verifiable performance indicators
- describe the process of change in quality terms (change in behaviour, etc.)

7. Monitoring and evaluation / learning

In this chapter, special attention should be given to how outcome and output are monitored, i.e. how progress is measured. Focus should be on:

- how is progress monitored (review of indicators over time against achieved objectives, etc.)
- how is monitoring organised (periodicity, data collection mechanisms, verification of sources, availability of baseline data, etc.)
- how many resources are available for monitoring (staff involved, overall capacity, etc.)
- limitations of monitoring system, and what risks these limitations entail
- information on how to improve the monitoring system
- evaluation methodology (when, how, who)
- how is learning organised

8. Organisation

In this chapter, there should be a description of the capacities and means which are available to the implementing organisation in order to bring the project-program to a successful conclusion.

- Firstly, there should be an account of the history of the organisation (general mission/vision/orientation, antecedents to the relationship with Cordaid);
- This should be followed by a description of the organisational structure and set-up (legal form, board, management, departments, decisiontaking mechanisms, tasks and responsibilities including those relating to the conclusion of financial agreements);
- There should be a separate paragraph dealing with the vision of the organisation regarding gender and gender expertise available (qualifications/experience of women staff, the degree to which gender is integrated in the organisation, percentage of women at management positions, etc.);
- There should also be a separate paragraph in which details are given of management aspects such as financial management (internal control mechanisms, external audit, external supervision), and assets management (including security and insurance);
- If applicable, mention if your organisation has an HIV-Aids mainstreaming policy
- Capacity building at level of the organisation: describe the capacity building efforts related to your organisation. Describe the “what” (which capacity building efforts will you undertake, at what level of the organisation, who will benefit) and “how” (which strategies will be used, i.e. training, workshop, exchange programs, etc.). Fill out organisational scan (if provided to you). Write your own indicators related to the improvement linked to the capacity building efforts your organisation will undertake.

9.a Budget and financing

The budget should be summarised under a number of headings with a detailed budget included as annexe. Moreover, the budget should be given in detail for the first, second and third year of implementation. There should be a clear link between the objectives presented, the activities derived from these and the budget reservations.

To enable a proper assessment of the budget, the following are required:

- specification of important items such as personnel costs (name, qualification, function, department, salary, social security expenses), logistical expenses, accommodation expenses, costs of the activities, etc. ;
- insight in costs per unit.

If applicable, the costs of inspection by an external accountant and any necessary technical assistance/guidance by the accountant should be taken into account.

In principle, the attached model should be used when drawing up the budget.

If a number of financing agencies are involved, financing per donor per year should be indicated, including the relevant budget item if applicable.

The local contribution should be differentiated according to:

- own income (e.g. from provision of services);
- income from interest;
- contribution in cash by the target group;
- contribution by the government.

Moreover, there should be an indication of how firm the commitments are, especially those by third parties. Also indicate whether your organisation was/is able to raise funds locally

Own contributions in kind should not be included in the budget, but must however be mentioned.

In the case of so-called institutional financing, the working budget is sufficient. However, the certified annual accounts for the previous three years should be submitted. In addition, there should be an indication of how and to whom the project results (including any project goods) will be transferred at the end of the project period and what measures will be taken in the event of premature termination of the project.

9.b Model Budget - Explanatory Notes

The budget submitted should contain at least the costs described and a specification of income.

Operating costs should include items such as:

- rent
- water/electricity
- communication costs
- office supplies
- maintenance costs
- administrative costs
- accountants fees

Investment costs should include :

Acquisition of buildings, land, machinery, fittings, means of transport, etc.

Costs of activities:

A detailed breakdown of the main type of costs per activity should be provided under this budget heading.

Means for transfer:

This includes credit facilities for example.

Specific costs:

Costs related to evaluation and monitoring are included under this heading.

Model Budget

Organisation:
Currency:

Country:
Project Title:

<i>Description</i>	<i>Year 1</i>	<i>Year 2</i>	<i>Year 3</i>	<i>Total</i>
COSTS				
Staff expenses				
Salaries				
Social security charges				
Other staff expenses				
Subtotal				
Travel and accommodation				
Travel expenses				
Accommodation expenses				
Subtotal				
Operating Costs*				
Subtotal				
Investment Costs*				
Subtotal				
Costs of Activities*				
Subtotal				
Means for transfer*				
Subtotal				
Specific Costs*				
Subtotal				
Contingencies (max. 5%)				
Subtotal				
TOTAL COSTS				

*please specify

Description	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
INCOME				
Funding agencies				
Cordaid				
Possible others (specify)				
Subtotal				
Local/national authorities*				
Subtotal				
Own contribution				
Income from other sources*				
Subtotal				
TOTAL INCOME				
Own contribution in kind				

*please specify which income is secure, and for which income you are still involved in the fund application process (per other income source). Also specify whether funds have been acquired (besides own contribution) through local fundraising.

Information on the budget per item (description in words and if necessary, further quantification)

10. Annexes

These could include annual reports, accountants reports, "mission statements", general policy papers, W&D/gender papers, feasibility studies, cost/benefit analyses, co-operation agreements, background information, reports of studies, Human Resource / Staff policy, logframe, financial management policy, Local fundraising policy, etc.

11. Checklist

- Please provide up-to-date information on the membership of your Board
 - function in the Board
 - profession and educational background,
 - length of Board membership

- Please provide up-to-date information on the structure of the organization and salaries:
 - organization chart
 - salary per post, allowances and social security costs

- Please provide information on any outstanding proposal with other donors.

- Please provide bank account details (name bank accountholder and address, name of the bank and address, bank account number, SWIFT number)

- Please note in relation to your project budget that:
 - It must be presented in EXCEL
 - That it must be presented in local currency
 - Cordaid requires a consolidated or institutional budget for the organization on an annual basis
 - Cordaid also requires a detailed activity-based budget on an annual basis for the proposed project.
 - The budgets should show who will pay for what item i.e. broken down according to Cordaid

- contribution, own contribution, local contribution and other donors.
- The activity budget should be linked to activities, objectives and project goals.
- In relation to the programme:
 - The objectives and expected project results and outcome should be formulated quantified and specific.
 - Naturally the above implies that first base-line data are needed.
 - Cordaid expects that gender-specific information will be given.
 - The proposal should state how many beneficiaries will be reached directly and how many indirectly.
 - A schedule of implementation of activities must also be submitted.
- In the case of first time funding by Cordaid, the following additional information is required to enable us to assess your overall situation:
 - a copy of your articles of association
 - copies of your annual report for the last year
 - copies of your audited statements of account for the last three years
 - income from donations for the last three years.
 - The policy of your organization in relation to gender, if available.
 - The financial manual of your organization, if available.