Partners in Aid

PROJECTS POLICY

1. Background

Partners in Aid believes that an appropriate way of achieving its goals is through having strong relationships with a small number of overseas partner organizations which it can trust to work effectively with local stakeholders. Accordingly, Partners in Aid Ltd works by forming long-standing partnerships with a small number of local not-for-profit organisations that are acting as agents of change in their local communities and are seeking thereby to achieve improvements in the health and wellbeing of those communities.

Projects are the primary instrument by which Partners in Aid works with their Partner Organisations to realise its mission. Project proposals are only considered by the Partners in Aid Board if they come from organisations with which a Partnership Agreement has already been signed. Partners in Aid currently partners with organisations in India, Bangladesh and the Philippines and collaborates with these organisations to deliver projects which achieve our vision of enduring, capable communities and which deliver on our Mission:

> - to improve living standards, capacity and resilience in developing communities with a focus on the Indian sub-continent.

> -to fund and facilitate social and environment projects and child education sponsorship with local partners.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the guiding principles and steps involved in initiating, developing, approving, implementing, monitoring and evaluating projects.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all projects which are funded by Partners in Aid and jointly initiated by the organization and a Partner Organisation. It does not apply to activities undertaken outside a project agreement.

4. Procedures

1. To be considered by the PIA Board, any project proposal must be in accordance with PIA vision, mission and values statement.

2. Development of projects is based on the initial submission of a proposal by one of PIA Partner Organizations (see Appendix 1). The proposal is then reviewed by the Project Committee, based on PIA policies and relevant best practice, and the checklist outlined in Appendix 2. This review will be documented and placed on the project file. Where appropriate, the proposal will be also reviewed by someone with expertise in context, locality and/or approach proposed for achieving intended outcomes, and especially in any technical issues being addressed in the proposal. If changes between the initial proposal are considered desirable or necessary, an exchange of ideas will then take place between PIA and the Partner Organisation.

3. Once finalised, the proposal must be presented to the Board of Partners in Aid and the governing body of the Partner Organization for approval. Once Board approval has been given, a contract will be signed with Partner Organisation for the full or partial funding of the project (Appendix 3). Each project will have a Partners in Aid Board Member allocated to liaise with the Partner Organisation.

4. Monitoring reports must be forwarded to the Board Member by the Partner Organisation at an agreed frequency, and not greater than annually.

5. An evaluation should be completed by the Partner Organisation at the end of the project period, or at agreed intervals, to allow the Board to determine that the objectives have been met and guiding values followed.

6. Projects may be terminated by Partners in Aid at any time in the event of criminal activities or misappropriation of project funds; the appearance of the organisation on key personnel or on the list of groups proscribed as terrorist organisations under the Criminal Code on the Australian National Security website; or the DFAT Consolidated List of targeted financial sanction against persons and entities.

7. Projects may also be terminated after consultation with the Partner Organisation, if project/s being fully or partially funded by Partners in Aid are consistently failing to meet mutually agreed outcomes and/or impacts, or funding provided by Partners in Aid is consistently not being spent in accordance with the agreed budget;

8. All Project Agreements will contain a clause indicating that funding is dependent on donors' contributions being sufficient to meet the agreed amount.

9. In event of Partner in Aid funds being insufficient to sustain the Project at some stage after the Project Agreement has been signed, every effort will be made to minimise the impact on the Project of the inability to meet the intended budget.

5. Project Monitoring and Evaluation

1. The Partners in Aid Board member designated to liaise with the Partner Organisation will endeavour, circumstances permitting, to visit the Partner Organisation, project site, and at least some of the beneficiaries, once a year, in order to undertake systematic monitoring and

evaluation. Should annual visits not prove feasible, one visit must be made during the project cycle, unless safety considerations preclude such a visit.

2. In the course of the visit, if feasible and appropriate, the Board member carrying out the monitoring and evaluation visit will complete the checklist outlined in Appendix 4.

3. Based on the response to whichever of the above questions are applicable, plus the results of general discussion and observation, the Board member will submit a report to the Project Subcommittee on return to Melbourne for review and discussion of lessons learnt and need for any recommendations to be made to the Partner Organisation.

4. In the course of monitoring visits, experiences and technical knowledge that PIA Project Coordinators have acquired will be shared with Partner Organisations to facilitate capacity building. They will also seek out new ideas and approaches that can perhaps be passed on to other Partner Organisations. If the Partner Organisation is experiencing problems in project implementation, PIA will make every effort to try and find an appropriate solution to these problems.

5. Project Coordinators will also discuss the requirements of the Child Safeguard Policy and Code of Conduct and Partners in Aid's expectations during regular project visits. A simple checklist recording current adherence to these expectations will be completed and reported to the Board following the project visit. This will occur in the first instance within 12 months of adoption of this policy.

6. Review

This policy will be reviewed after 3 years.

7. Relevant PIA Policy Documents

PIA Child Protection Policy

PIA Child Sponsorship Policy

PIA Risk Management Policy

8. References

The *DAC Principles for the Evaluation of Development Assistance*, OECD (1991), Glossary of Terms Used in Evaluation, in 'Methods and Procedures in Aid Evaluation', OECD (1986), and the *Glossary of Evaluation and Results Based Management (RBM) Terms*, OECD (2000).

World Bank. *Performance Monitoring Indicators Handbook*. World Bank Technical Paper No. 334. http://siteresources.worldbank.org/ (last sighted 24 April 2017)

Metzger, L. and Guenther, I. (2015). 'How to Assess the Effectiveness of Development Aid Projects; Evaluation Ratings versus Project Indicators'. *J. of International Development*. Vol 27, No. 8, pp.1496-1520.

Appendix 1: Project Proposal Application Form

PROJECT PROPOSAL APPLICATION FORM

1. THE PROJECT

    i.   Name of NGO responsible for project implementation:

    ii.   Project Goal:

    iii.   Project Purpose:

       To …….

       …….

    iv.   Dates of start and proposed finish: Start _____
                                     Proposed finish_____
             (If project has no set finish date, please indicate number of new communities it is anticipated to involve per year)

2. PROJECT SITE AND ITS PEOPLE

    i.   Total population in affected area: _____ people, *or* _____households

    ii.   Are there any indigenous people in the community: No   Yes:
                                        If yes, what % of community
                       members belong to indigenous group/s? ____%

    iii. Are there any disabled people in the community: No   Yes:
                                      If yes, number:_____ persons

    iv.   Please describe briefly the main problems facing affected community/ies, including main cause/s of poverty.

_____

_____

_____

_____

    v. Please indicate the 3 main causes of mortality (death) and morbidity (illness):

	Morbidity	*Mortality*
Adults		
Children		

    vi.   Please describe briefly any aspects of the household and / or community roles of men and of women that may affect/be affected positively or negatively by the project implementation or outcome (e.g. collection of water for domestic use by women):

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. PROJECT BENEFICIARIES AND ENGAGEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS IN PROJECT DESIGN

    i.   Number of potential beneficiaries:

Male (or no. of households)	Female (or no. of households)	Children (under 14)

    ii.   What consultation about project design has taken place with members of communities who may be affected by the project (e.g. focus group discussions, interviews of community leaders, etc.)?

        a.   *Consultation with men*:

_____

_____

_____

        b.   *Consultation with women*:

_____

_____

_____

        c.   *Consultation with indigenous members of the community (if any)*;

_____

_____

d.   Consultation Disabled (if any):

4. KEY PROJECT ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION	*PROPOSED BENEFICIARIES*	*NUMBER*	*PERSON/GROUP RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTING ACTIVITY*
	Particular Group (e.g. Farmers' Association – please specify)		
	Men		
	Women		
	Children		
	Indigenous Peoples		
	Other (e.g. people with disabilities – please specify)		
	Particular Group (e.g. Farmers' Association – please specify)		
	Men		
	Women		
	Children		
	Indigenous Peoples		
	Other (e.g. people with disabilities – please specify)		

	Particular Group (e.g. Farmers' Association – please specify)		
	Men		
	Women		
	Children		
	Indigenous Peoples		
	Other (e.g. people with disabilities – please specify)		
	Particular Group (e.g. Farmers' Association – please specify)		
	Men		
	Women		
	Children		
	Indigenous Peoples		
	Other (e.g. people with disabilities – please specify		

(Please attach another page if necessary)

5. INTENDED OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES OF PROJECT

    i.   Please list intended project outputs (e.g. no. of people trained in certain farming techniques, etc) and ultimate project outcomes (e.g. improved crop yield as a result of adoption in new techniques)

6. SUSTAINABILITY

    i.   Please list steps being taken to ensure sustainability (training in operation and maintenance of newly constructed infrastructure, training in budgeting for asset maintenance, etc.)

    7. **BUDGET BREAKDOWN (Please attach a budget indicating key expenditure items)**
TO BE AGREED BETWEEN PIA AND THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PROJECT - KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS:

Appendix 2. Checklist for Evaluating Proposals

Are the objectives and purpose of the project consistent with the mission, vision, values and guiding principles of PIA?

How relevant are the anticipated outputs/outcomes/impacts of the project to mitigation of the key causes of poverty in the recipient community/ies?

Will the project benefit or exclude any of the most vulnerable members of the recipient community/ies including any people with disabilities?

Is the proposed budget warranted, given the number of beneficiaries anticipated and the proposed outcomes?

Is there some evidence that all impacted members of the community, including women, different ethnic and religion groups, children (if relevant), different castes and socio-economic groups, etc. have been given the chance to have an informed input into decision-making about the project?

Have any barriers to the inclusion of any relevant group in the affected community/ies been identified. If so, how will these barriers be overcome?

Is there evidence to suggest that primary stakeholders will be provided with the necessary information to make an informed input into decision-making?

What strategies are in place to enable primary stakeholders to contribute their ideas, feedback and complaints in the course of project implementation, so that they have a voice in and ownership of the initiative? Is there an action plan for primary stakeholder participation?

Is there evidence to suggest that primary stakeholders will be provided with the necessary information to make an informed input into decision-making?

Is the implementation strategy consistent with best practice as applied to the particular context in which the project will be implemented?

Is a review of the project proposal by someone with specialist expertise required?

What mechanisms does the project incorporate to facilitate sustainability?

Does the project timeframe seem to be reasonable? Does it take into account seasonal weather, labour commitments of recipient men and women, etc?

Does the project budget account for all expenses likely to be incurred in the course of project implementation?

Appendix 3: Sample Contract

CONTRACT BETWEEN XXX AND PARTNERS-IN-AID

This contract is intended to extend the ongoing partnership between Partners in Aid and XXX relating to the implementation of the XXX Project.

It is understood that the overall goal of the Project continues to be....

This contract extends the partnership for [a further] 5 years, with the anticipation that a further extension may be made at the end of that period.

Partners in Aid will contribute a minimum of AUDXXX per year in XXX increments, starting in XXX, towards the implementation of the project, providing that no unforeseen circumstances result in there be insufficient donor money to continue supporting the project. Should this unlikely event occur, every effort will be made to minimize the consequences of the early cessation of funding.

XXX will in turn, undertake the following:

- Undertake to implement with due diligence the XXX Project according to the agreed proposal, or any mutually agreed variations.
- To complete and summit to PIA a progress report together with a statement of expenditure, a plan of action for the next 3 months, and the anticipated costs associated with implementing that plan.
- To ensure that a responsible, independent person undertakes an annual audit of Project income and expenditure, and submits a signed copy of the audit to Partners in Aid.
- To ensure that no child labour will be used in the course of project implementation.

Appendix 4: Checklist for PIA Project Coordinators' Monitoring and Evaluation Visits

Discussion with Partner Organization and, if possible, at project sites, to ascertain:

- that there is no evidence of funds being disbursed in a manner other than that outlined in the mutually agreed project proposal, or a subsequent mutually agreed variation;
- the overall effectiveness of any mechanisms set up to ensure future sustainability;
- whether any negative environmental impacts are occurring or likely to occur;
- that there is no evidence of any negative project impacts on the beneficiary communities or evidence of abuse, discrimination or exploitation effecting any project stakeholders in any way associated with the project, or, if this is not the case, that steps are being taken to address such impacts;
- that there are no negative impacts on women, people with disabilities, vulnerable people or, if any, indigenous people.
- that the Code of Conduct with respect to Child Protection is being observed.
- whether stakeholders have been made aware of the complaints process, and if there are any complaints that need to be addressed, especially on the part of children.
- That the project is meeting the key performance indicators outlined in the proposal.

In addition, the following questions, based on those suggested by the DAC Principles for the Evaluation of Development Assistance[1] will be addressed with Partner Organization and, if possible, at project sites where feasible and appropriate:

Relevance

- To what extent are the objectives of the project still valid?
- Are the activities and outputs of the project consistent with the overall goal and the attainment of its objectives?
- Are the activities and outputs of the project consistent with the intended impacts and effects?

Participation

- To what extent have the beneficiaries participated in decision-making at different stages of project design and implementation (including children, if appropriate)?
- Was there any attempt in the design stage of the project to provide those likely to be impacted with the necessary information to enable them to have an **informed** input?

Effectiveness

- To what extent were the objectives achieved / are likely to be achieved?
- What are/were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?

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[1] The *DAC Principles for the Evaluation of Development Assistance*, OECD (1991), Glossary of Terms Used in Evaluation, in 'Methods and Procedures in Aid Evaluation', OECD (1986), and the *Glossary of Evaluation and Results Based Management (RBM) Terms*, OECD (2000).

- Is the project implementation on schedule? If not, what are the causes of the delay, and how can these be redressed?

*Impact (*The positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.)

- What has happened/is happening as a result of the project or project?
- What real difference has the activity made to the beneficiaries?
- Has there been any gender-specific impacts on men or women?
- Have any barriers to the inclusion of any segment of the impacted community/ies been identified? If so, how have they been mitigated?
- Have there been any unforeseen impacts on the environment – if any negative impacts are observed, how can these be mitigated?
- How many people have been affected?

Sustainability (Are the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after PIA funding has been withdrawn.)

- To what extent are the benefits of the project likely to continue after donor funding ceased?
- Have any mechanisms been put in place to increase the likelihood of successful project outcomes (e.g. training in asset maintenance, asset maintenance budgeting etc)?
- What are the major factors which have or may influence the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of successful project outcomes?