



Partners in Aid
AUSTRALIA

PROJECT POLICY

(This policy is complemented by the Project Manual)

1. Background

The mission of Partners in Aid is to:

... partner with local, non-government organisations overseas to support sustainable projects that they have selected and are implementing to enable their communities to thrive through better health, education, and livelihoods.

We believe that an appropriate way of achieving our mission is by establishing strong relationships with a small number of overseas partner organisations which have the same values as Partners in Aid, and which we can trust to collaborate effectively with local stakeholders. Accordingly, Partners in Aid seeks to form long-standing relationships with overseas NGOs that are acting as agents of change in their local communities, seeking to achieve sustainable improvements in the health and wellbeing of those communities.

Projects are the primary instrument by which Partners in Aid collaborates with their Partner Organisations to realise its mission.

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 supported by Partners in AID.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all projects which are wholly or partly funded by Partners in Aid and which have been jointly initiated by an overseas NGO and Partners in Aid. It does not apply to activities undertaken outside a formal Memorandum of Understanding.

4. Sourcing of Proposals

Project proposals submitted to Partners in Aid for consideration may come from three sources:

- existing Partner Organisations,
- an NGO with which a Board or Committee member has previously collaborated, and

- requests from us to NGOs with which Partners in Aid has not previously collaborated to submit a proposal.

The latter requests are usually a result of a Partner in Aid decision to work in a country in which it has not previously worked. When this occurs, one or more Partners in Aid Board or Committee members will make a preliminary visit to the relevant country. A list of NGOs to visit will be drawn up in advance from any personal recommendations of appropriate NGOs to visit and an internet search for NGOs in the relevant country, with particular attention being paid to their international reputation and the nature of the projects they undertake. The NGOs on the list will then be contacted and, where feasible, visited. During that visit, the discussion will focus on projects they have undertaken in the previous two years, along with their organisation's policies, including financial policies and procedures. A report on the NGOs visited will then be made to the Board, along with recommendations on which NGOs, if any, should be invited to submit a proposal.

If the Board decides to support a project proposal from one of the NGOs visited, or from an NGO with which a Board or Committee member has previously collaborated effectively, this project will be considered to be a pilot project and a possible runup to forming a partnership. A successful pilot project, however, will not guarantee that a Partnership Agreement will be entered into with the implementing agency.¹

5. Procedures

5.1 Evaluation of Proposals

- 5.1.1 All project proposals, regardless of source, must be submitted on the Partners in Aid's proposal form outlined in the Project Manual (See Appendix 3 in the Project Manual).
- 5.1.2 To be considered by Partners in Aid, any project proposal must be in accordance with Partners in Aid's vision, mission, and values statements.
- 5.1.3 Before further action is taken, the Treasurer will be consulted as to whether Partners in Aid would be able to fund the project, if approved.
- 5.1.4 If there is sufficient money in the budget to fund the project, a Project Coordinator will be appointed. Throughout the project cycle, this person will be responsible for ensuring that all of the required Partners in Aid project documentation is completed and downloaded onto Dropbox, and that monitoring and evaluation is undertaken by and in association with the NGO.
- 5.1.5 The following steps will be undertaken and documented by the Project Coordinator.

¹ Before any discussion takes place regarding a possible Partnership Agreement or the sponsoring of further projects with the NGO, all criteria outlined in the Partnership Policy as prerequisites for a partnership will need to be explored to ensure that they are met.

- The proposal will be reviewed to ascertain that all key information required by the Partners in Aid proposal form has been adequately covered. If necessary, the Project Coordinator will seek more information from the NGO submitting the proposal.
 - The feasibility of the project will be considered and, if necessary, the proposal will be passed for comment to someone with experience in the locality and/or approach proposed for achieving intended outcomes, especially if technical issues form part of the proposal.
 - Evidence that the project proposed reflects a genuine community need and demand will be sought.
 - Consideration will be given to whether the proposed outcomes and number of beneficiaries appear to warrant the budget.
 - A project assessment (Appendix 4 in the Project Manual) will be undertaken, along with a risk assessment of the project and the implementing NGO's current technical and human resource capacity, its current financial management system, its organisational risks and any country or regional risks that might affect the project (Appendix 1 in the Project Manual).
- 5.6. If, based on the above overall review, the Project Coordinator is satisfied that Partners in Aid should support the project, he/she will report to the Project Committee, which will review all the documentation. The Project Committee will then recommend to the Board whether it should formally approve or not approve the project.

5.2 Project Approval Process

- 5.2.1 Once the Board has approved a proposal, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (Appendix 5 in the Project Manual) will be signed with the implementing NGO. The MOU will, *inter alia*, specify intervals at which Partners in Aid will pay budget instalments and at which the implementing NGO will need to provide Partners in Aid with narrative and financial reports.
- 5.2.2 The Project Coordinator will ensure that the signed MOU and the NGO's letter of consent to raise funds on their behalf and their Certificate of Registration have been obtained and downloaded into Dropbox.
- 5.2.3 If the NGO does not already have its own policies regarding Gender and Diversity, Child Protection, Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment, and Financial Wrongdoing, they will be asked to certify that they will observe the conditions outlined in the relevant Partners in Aid's policies when implementing the proposed project.

5.3 NGO Reporting and Field Monitoring and Evaluation by Partners in Aid

- 5.3.1 The Project Coordinator will follow up the NGO's submission of quarterly narrative and financial reports, and any reason why these are delayed if this is

the case. He/she will check reports and query any concerns. The reports will then be referred to the Board with recommendations that the Board approve the reports.

5.3.1 Other than in exceptional circumstance, no payment of scheduled financial project instalments will be approved by the Board unless satisfactory reports have been received.

5.3.2 The Partners in Aid Project Coordinator will endeavour, circumstances permitting, to once a year visit the Partner Organisation and the project site, and to speak with at least some of the beneficiaries. Should annual visits not prove feasible, one visit must be made during the project cycle, unless safety considerations preclude such a visit.

5.3.3 During these field visits, the Project Coordinator will:

- carry out a periodic assessment of the NGO's financial system,
- check whether Key Performance Indicators are being achieved,
- check that the project expenditure matches the budget initially presented in the proposal or in an agreed contract variation,
- check that lists of attendees at community meetings and trainings are gender disaggregated and indicate that both men and women are participating in project planning and implementation,
- complete the Partners in Aid's Project Monitoring and Evaluation Checklist (Appendix 12, Project Manual), and
- report back to the Project Committee / Board on the M&E visit.

5.3.4 During the monitoring visits, any relevant experiences and technical knowledge relevant to the project that Partners in Aid have acquired from elsewhere will be shared with Partner Organisations to facilitate capacity building. New ideas and approaches that can perhaps be passed on to other Partner Organisations will also be sought out. If the Partner Organisation is experiencing problems in project implementation, Partners in Aid will make every effort to try and find an appropriate solution to these problems.

5.3.5 On return to Melbourne, the Project Coordinator will submit a report to the Project Committee and the Board for discussion of lessons learnt and whether there is a need for any recommendations to be made to the Partner Organisation.

5.4 Project Conclusion

5.4.1 At the conclusion of the project, a Grant Acquittal Form (Appendix 9, Project Manual) must be submitted by the NGO to Partners in Aid to allow us to determine whether the objectives have been successfully met and the lessons learnt.

6. Termination of Projects Before the Completion Date

- 6.1 Projects may be terminated after consultation with the implementing NGO, 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.
- 6.2 All contracts for new projects will contain an anti-fraud and corruption clause and Projects may be terminated by Partners in Aid at any time in the event of evidence of criminal activities, fraud or corruption, or misappropriation of project funds, and/or the organisation or key personnel appearing 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.
- 6.3 All Project Agreements will contain a clause indicating that funding is dependent on donors' contributions continue to being sufficient to meet the agreed budget. In the most unlikely event of Partner in Aid funds being insufficient to sustain the Project at some stage after the MOU has been signed, every effort will be made to minimise the impact on the Project of the inability to meet the intended budget.

7. Review

This policy will be reviewed after 3 years.

8. Relevant PIA Policy Documents

PIA Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct

PIA Child Sponsorship Policy

PIA Risk Management Policy

PIA Partnership Policy

Also

PIA Project Manual

8. References

OECD (1991). The DAC Principles for the Evaluation of Development Assistance

OECD (1986). Glossary of Terms Used in Evaluation, in 'Methods and Procedures in Aid Evaluation'

OECD (2000). Glossary of Evaluation and Results Based Management (RBM) Terms.

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.