

Guidelines on how to elaborate a project application for the DEMENA Pool

Preface

This guideline is intended for applicants with no or limited experience in developing applications for development cooperation.

Before you write the application you need to take the following into consideration:

Is the DEMENA Pool relevant for your project?

- Does your project enhance capacities and opportunities for young men and women, youth groups and CSOs/NGOs to participate in processes of political and social change?

Does your project contain the following components?

- Promote dialogue, understanding and cooperation between Danish youth and youth from the Arab region
- Advance gender equality and active participation of young women
- Include communication activities to inform the public about the partnership and its results

What type of project should you apply for?

- Partnership Identification Project to identify a local partner?
- Pilot Project to test a project idea or develop a methodology for the partnership?
- Longer term Partnership Project?

Do you meet the formal requirements?

- Is your organisation a non-governmental organisation (NGO) or non-profit company?
- Are you a partnership composed of both a Danish NGO and an Arab NGO?
(Unless you are seeking funding for partner identification projects)

The preparation process

The application form can be used as a planning tool in cooperation with your partner organization(s) in order to think through the whole project idea. Before you prepare the project, we recommend reading the Pool Criteria and Application Guidelines carefully. The documents will provide a more comprehensive notion of the criteria that will be emphasised in the selection of the projects. You can find the mentioned documents on the DEMENA website.

It is a good idea to start the project planning with a comprehensive analysis of the context within which you will be working, the issues that your project will focus on as well as the capacity and competences of the partners. Based on these analyses, you can then define the project objectives, success criteria (indicators) and expected outcomes, along with designing the activities and assessing resources needed to implement the project. You need to consider the project strategy and the division of responsibilities. In order for the project to reflect the wishes, ideas and needs of all involved partners, the preparation process must be conducted in a close cooperation between all partners.



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APPLICATION FORM

The following sections describe the terminology related to development projects as these terms are used in the application form.

The numbers below refer to different sections of the application form.

PART 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

Here you have to write the contact details of the applicant and the partner organisation(s), along with the time frame, geographic focus and the amount applied for.

PART 2: PROJECT

2.1. Target Group

The target group is the people involved or affected by the project. The primary target group is the youth that directly benefits from the project activities (e.g. young people who receive training). While the secondary target group is the people who indirectly benefit from the project (e.g. the organisations where the young people are active, and who will benefit from the newly acquired skills in order to further develop their capacities as an organisation).

In this section, you have to describe the target group; sex, age, social background, number, etc. Additionally, you have to consider how to recruit and select participants. You need to describe if there are any possible challenges or issues connected to the recruitment of the target group.

2.2. Objectives

The overall development objective is what the project seeks to achieve in the long term. It indicates a social change, which may also depend on other factors than your project.

There should not be more than 1-2 overall objectives. You have to note that the development objective must be relevant to the purpose of the DEMENA Pool, namely to enhance capacities and opportunities for young men and women. Additionally, the objectives have to increase mutual understanding between young people from Denmark and the Arab region. The overall development objective constitutes a given social change, which should justify the implementation of the project.

For example

- Created a more democratic Palestine
- Changed young people's beliefs in their ability to create social change
- Increased commitment by organisations, donors and political institutions to projects launched and led by young people
- Changed the voting age to 18 years



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The immediate objectives describe what you expect to obtain as a result of the project. The results should describe the new or altered conditions that you expect to see within the period of the project. The immediate objectives should be able to answer the following: when (time); who (audience); where (place); what happened (the changed condition i.e. quality); and finally, what you have achieved (i.e. the amount/ quantity.) There should not be more than 1-3 immediate project objectives.

For example

- On January 1st 2013, hundred young people initiated and implemented their own projects in Lebanon, Jordan and Syria
- On December 31 2013, twenty Palestinian youth has passed on their experiences of participating in organisations in Denmark to local youth in Jenin.
- By the end of 2014, eighteen civil society organisations have adopted internal democratic structures which also include participation of women

Indicators are a set of criteria to evaluate whether the project achieves its objectives. The indicators (or success criteria) are used to assess the on-going progress of the project (monitoring) and at the final evaluation to evaluate whether the project has reached its objectives.

The indicators must specify the minimum to be achieved at a given time. The indicators are thus used to measure the degree of immediate or long-term success of the project. Often it is necessary to make several indicators.

The indicators should be expressed in such a way so it is easy to assess and evaluate what has been achieved. Therefore the indicators should be:

- Relevant – in terms of what to measure
- Specific – in terms of target audience, quality, quantity, time frame and geographic area
- Possible to measure

Indicators should be arranged in relation to the project objectives. At least one qualitative indicator for each project objective would be needed:

For example

Project objective 1: By the end of 2014, eighteen civil society organisations have created a more democratic internal structure and included women in decision-making bodies.

Indicators:

- Women have greater influence in organisations (qualitative indicator)
- Eighteen organisations have approved rules for election to the Board (quantitative indicator)
- Minimum two of the Board members in each organisation are women (quantitative indicator)



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2.3. Activities and expected results

Activities are specific actions to achieve project results. For each activity, you have to consider the timing, target audience, the organisations involved and the division of responsibilities, along with the expected result.

Under the section “Methods/tools” you would need to write your reflections on how you and your partner will implement an activity.

For example

- Map the present involvement of young people in civil society organisations
- Arrange meetings with partners and target groups to plan the project
- Conduct training workshops on advocacy for young people
- Collect information and develop manuals/training materials

The results are the concrete outcome of the project – in other words the “products” you and your partner can guarantee to take place after the project is complete. In this section, you need to write what you expect the situation to be after the end of the project. It can be advantageous to use “when”, “who”, “where”, “what happened” and “how much has happened”/“what has been archived”.

For example

- By June 2013, hundred young Yemeni girls have been trained in advocacy
- By June 2013, twenty Danish and Egyptian youth have mutually elaborated a strategy and material for a campaign to increase the number of young people in political parties

The results should lead to the achievement of the long-term objectives.

**The logic between activities, outputs and targets can be set up as the following:
Activities Results > Immediate Objectives > Development objective**

2.4. Expected Impact

The expected impact (long-term effect) is the change, intentional and unintentional, which a project has led to after its completion. The larger projects and amounts you apply for, the higher is the requirements that your project contributes to concrete lasting change. But it is important that all project applications include reflections on how the project now or in the future could contribute to creating concrete lasting changes for young people in the Arab region, for example by promoting young people’s opportunities to participate in political and social change processes.

2.5. Risks and challenges

Projects can be affected by several factors posing risks for the implementation of the project. You need to take the political sensitivity into account in the countries where the projects will take place. These are not factors that you can influence, but that you constantly need to assess as they may affect your project. Accordingly, in the application’s risk matrix you must describe the challenges you may run into which could hinder the achievement of the project objectives. This could be the security situation, linguistic challenges, and difficulties in reaching the target audience, dramatic political change etc. You also need to consider the likelihood that these problems may occur and write your reflections on how you would handle the risk elements and what you will do to reduce the influence of these. This could for example be involving local expertise or by making the time period for the project as flexible as possible.



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2.6. Sustainability

Sustainability is the long-term positive impact of the project. You have to assess this in relation to both the target group (How will the target groups benefit from the project in the long-term?) as well as the partners (How will your organisation and partner organisations benefit from the project when it is completed?).

In addition, you will need to describe how to phase out the financial and technical support in a sustainable way? In other words, what will happen when the project is ended.

2.7. Communication activities

Projects must incorporate considerations on how to inform the public about the activities over the course of the project, i.e. before, during and after, both in Denmark and in the target country. This can be done by getting press coverage, writing essays or opinion piece to newspapers etc. You can offer your story to radio or television channels, or organise seminars and use social media outlets. Please consider how communication activities can be incorporated into the project so they become part of the daily tasks from the beginning of the project and included in the budget, if needed.

You may find inspiration to develop the communication plan in the document "Seven Golden Rules for Communicating a Project" on DEMENA's website.

PART 3: COOPERATION ISSUES

In this section, you have to describe the cooperative relationship of the involved partner organisations.

In order to apply funding from the DEMENA Pool, the projects have to be implemented in a partnership between at least one Danish organisation and one organisation based in the Arab region. Both organisations need to have relevant experience with youth empowerment and the specific target group. In addition, the DEMENA Pool priorities projects based on genuine and equal partnerships where the partners share mutual responsibility.

3.1. Preparation

In this section, you have to describe the project preparation. It is important that you involve your partner and the target group in the preparation process from the beginning. If the application builds on previously completed Partner Identification, Pilot or Partnership Project, you need to describe the achieved results and the lessons learned. These could include meetings with partners, results from previous projects or descriptions of how you have engaged the target group in identifying the focus of the project.

3.2. Applicant

Here you have to describe the applicant, which can be a Danish or a local organisation from the Arab region. This can be done by answering the following questions: What is the focus of the organisation in Denmark or in the Arab countries, and what are your experiences with international cooperation? If you are applying as more than one organisation, then you need to describe all organisations that are applying. However, one organisation needs to be stated as the formal applicant and therefore needs to be described first.

3.3. Partner

Here you have to describe your partner organisation; how the organisation is founded, how it is structured, does the organisation have a board, how it is composed and finally what is the vision/mission and the formal status of the organisation.



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3.4. Capacity

In this section, you have to describe the experiences of your partner organisation working within the project's area of focus by answering the following questions: What other projects are they are involved in currently? You have to include their organisational capacity – both human and financial resources, and how the project is embedded in the organisation? Which staff will be involved in the project? Please describe both strengths and weaknesses of your partner's capacity. If you have more than one partner, you should make a similar section for each partner.

PART 4: PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

4.1. Roles and responsibilities

In this section, you have to describe how the involved partners have agreed to implement and manage the project and what is the division of responsibilities?

4.2. Monitoring

Monitoring is the on-going assessment of the progress of the project and assessment of whether the project follows the plans. Monitoring should not only be used to document the results obtained, but also to identify possible needs of change of strategy during the implementation (e.g. due to changed conditions).

4.3. Evaluation

Evaluation is a more systematic review of project results, its impact, relevance and effectiveness. It also includes what the project has achieved, what have been learned and how it can be used in the future. The evaluation forms the basis of the final report to be submitted to ActionAid Denmark (AA DK) at the end of the project.

It is important to include how the target group will be involved in the final evaluation in order to assess whether the project has achieved its objectives. Finally, it is important to consider how to share your finding and experiences with others.

PART 5: BUDGET

See separate indicative budget format and guidelines for the preparation of a budget on DEMENA Pool's website: <http://www.ms.dk/mellemoesten/mellemoestpuljen>

It is not possible to apply for staff salaries in either the Partner Identification or Pilot Projects. If you apply funding for salaries in Partnership Projects, then the employee has to contribute with special skills that are essential for the implementation of the project. In addition, the position has to be justified by an attached job description, a description of the purpose and the reasons why the position is needed in order to complete the project. If the position that you are applying funding for is placed at a Danish organisation, you need to explain why you need an employee in Denmark and not in one of the Arab countries.



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WHERE CAN I GET HELP?

You are very welcome to contact the ActionAid Denmark Partnership Coordinator for the Arab region to assist in the preparation of the application.

Checklist for submission of application

- ▶ Have you filled out the application form in English? The application form is available at <http://www.ms.dk/mellemoesten/mellemoestpuljen>
- ▶ Have you attached a budget in English? Indicative format and guidelines for preparing the budget are available at <http://www.ms.dk/mellemoesten/mellemoestpuljen>
- ▶ Have you attached the applicant organisation's statutes, the latest annual report and minutes of the last board meeting?
- ▶ Have you attached a declaration of cooperation signed by your partner(s) (This is not necessary if you are applying for a Partnership Identification Project.)
- ▶ Have you attached a list of other organisations involved in the project?
- ▶ Have you attached the job descriptions and CV of the persons involved in the project with specific expertise? This is mainly relevant for paid staff.
- ▶ Have you and your partner(s) signed the application and sent a hard copy of all the documents? (This is not relevant for application to Partnership Identification Project – in this case your signature is sufficient)
- ▶ Have you sent a copy of the application by e-mail to DEMENA Pool Coordinator in AA DK?

Applications must be submitted to AA DK no later than the first working day after January 1st, May 1st and September 1st. Partnership Identification and Pilot Applications may be submitted at any time.