# Assessment documentation with assessment key – projects and programmes

## Introduction

This document contains two parts:

* an assessment key, which is a tool to use in assessing a project or programme to provide the basis for a decision
* a part that comprises the drafting documentation for projects and programmes in order to provide the basis for a decision and to provide a basis for feedback to the partner organisation.

What is most important in the drafting is that the decision is clearly justified and documented. Part II comprises the documentation templates.

## Part I – Assessment key

### Tools for the drafting and assessment of projects and programmes

The questions provided should be seen as a support in the assessment only. In other words, you do not need to respond to all of the questions for the assessment to be deemed fully adequate. The context should also guide what importance is attached to the various questions. For example, if the project or programme is a new development project or programme with a new partner organisation, it might be best to answer more of the questions. The questions should be relevant and be instrumental in the implementation of the projects and programmes.

At the end of the document, there are separate questions for General Grants.

Each new application is to be assessed in accordance with the criteria set out below:

* Relevance
* Feasibility
* Effectiveness
* Sustainability
* Forms of cooperation
* Capacity building
* Risk
* Organisation assessment – linked to partner dialogue and accountability and quality

The terms are defined in the terminology used for the Church of Sweden's International Mission and Diaconia. The purpose of the assessment is to be able to determine if a project or programme is necessary and possible to implement. The assessment is also to provide an answer as to whether the implementing organisation is the organisation best suited to implement the projects and programmes, and how such a project or programme is to be implemented.

### General criteria

1. Does the application comply with the formal requirements set out in the Church of Sweden's agreements and/or the information that has gone out to partner organisations via the "How the Church of Sweden works with partner and project support in order to be a change agent"?
2. How have previous cooperation in projects and programmes functioned with the applicant organisation (formal requirements and the focus of its activities)?
3. An important assessment that we make concerns ***how*** we reach goals and achieve results. This means that we want to assess whether we are doing relevant things in an effective and efficient way. This is why assessments of environmental and conflict impact, for example, are important.
4. What is the quality of the application: Are there clear goal descriptions, indicators and anticipated results?

### Relevance

The relevance of a project or programme supplies information about its importance in relation to the problem analysis and specified goals for the mission (primarily the Church of Sweden's objectives for its International Mission, but also in relation to the partner organisation's goals and Sida's goals for support provided through Swedish civil society organisations). The projects and programmes must contribute to goal achievement in order to be deemed relevant.

*Questions to guide the assessment:*

1. Is a problem analysis being done?
2. Whose problems/needs are being analysed?
3. How do you rate the quality of the problem analysis?
4. Are the goals of the project or programme in line with the Church of Sweden's strategic goals, programme objectives and strategies?
5. Are the primary causes of the problem described?
6. How well do the formulations of the goals correspond to the problem analysis (goal analysis)?
7. Is the target group well described and is it broken down by gender?
8. Does the project or programme treat the rights of the target group as described in the problem analysis?
9. Is the target group well described (gender, ethnicity, age and geography)?
10. Does the project or programme target those who are in the most vulnerable situation?
11. Is the project or programme relevant in relation to the guiding perspectives? (For example, are rights and obligations described, and who are the bearers of these? Does the project or programme describe the problem and its solution based on women's and men's different roles and needs? Is a conflict impact assessment being made? Does the project or programme address the issue of sustainability?)

### Feasibility

Feasibility looks at whether a project or programme has what is required in order for it to be realised. Is the project or programme possible, executable and practicable in view of the internal and external conditions and resources? Has a risk analysis been done, and are there strategies for managing the risks?

*Questions to guide the assessment:*

1. What is the partner organisation's implementation capacity/experience?
2. What is the resource availability in the project and within the partner organisation?
3. Who owns the problem, and what are the chances of the project or programme solving the problem (can the partner organisation or target group solve the problem)?
4. What level of support does the project or programme have among its target group and among the staff of the partner organisation?
5. Do they have the skills/experience and capacity to achieve the anticipated results?
6. Does the budget seem reasonable?
7. Do the timetables seem reasonable?
8. What are the risks described? Are there specific risks related to gender, the environment, conflict and HIV and SUPPORTS?
9. Do the partner organisations have clear plans for dealing with corruption?
10. What strategies will be used in the project or programme to mitigate these risks? Are there action plans for managing the risks?
11. Describe the division of work and responsibilities.
12. Has a stakeholder analysis been done?
13. How will this project or programme impact on trust and confidence in the Church of Sweden?

### Effectiveness

Effectiveness describes the extent to which the implemented activities/projects and programmes will lead to the desired outcomes/impacts being achieved, and will not lead to unwanted outcomes/impacts. Cost-effectiveness (or efficiency) can be support to describe the amount of resources that are needed to achieve a certain desired output (goal/results).

*Questions to guide the assessment:*

1. Have the projects and programmes and the approach been chosen strategically and will they lead to the described problem being solved?
2. Does the application demonstrate cost-effectiveness?
3. How many people will be reached by the project or programme?
4. Is the budget reasonable in relation to similar projects and programmes implemented in the past?
5. Are resources used in the right way?
6. Are there any indicators of effectiveness and efficiency?
7. Have previous projects and programmes been evaluated, and have the conclusions been incorporated into the planning of the new projects and programme's approach and focus?

### Forms of cooperation

Description of interaction and networking with local and national government agencies and authorities, other organisations and churches, and networks.

*Questions to guide the assessment:*

1. With whom is the Church of Sweden cooperating?
2. During the project or programme, will the Church of Sweden be operating as part of a network?
3. How does the project or programme relate to the ACT Alliance?
4. What relationships is the Church of Sweden planning to have with other churches and organisations, international actors and national actors during the project or programme?
5. Has the work been divided between other actors, where applicable?
6. Are the resources that exist in the network being used (that is, how will the work be coordinated and how will we cooperate)?
7. Are there other organisations in the target area doing the same thing or similar things, or things relevant to the project or programme that would further support the project or programme if they were coordinated with it?

### Sustainability

Each project and programme is to be assessed as to how sustainable it is in its context. Factors that may affect sustainability include the local partner organisation's long-term capacity, dependence on external donors for a continuation, how the phase-out is planned, if there is genuine local ownership, and also the impact of the projects and programmes on its social, economic and environmental contexts.

*Questions to guide the assessment:*

1. Local accountability and local capacity will increase as a result of the project or programme.
2. Do the necessary conditions exist for the activities to continue on even after the support has been phased out?
3. Can the implementing organisation be described as democratic? If not, does the organisation or the church have any other form of legitimacy and, if so, what?
4. Will the project or programme lead to a change in/development of the organisation?
5. Will the capacity and skills of the staff be developed? Or the skills and capacity of the target group?
6. Are the choices of technology and methodology suitable for the local context?
7. How is the organisation financed? Is its long-term financing secured?
8. Are the strategies for phasing-out the project or programme described?

### Risk

The project description should include a risk analysis of the potential consequences of the project, as well as of the external risks that may affect the project:

*Questions to guide the assessment:*

1. Are internal and external risks identified (for example, internal risks regarding feasibility, organisation, resources and external risks in power imbalances, the political environment, upcoming important events, etc.)?
2. Identify how you plan to manage and mitigate the risks described above – both internal and external.
3. Identify any financial risks and how the organisation plans to deal with and mitigate these risks.
4. Are there side effects that could generate risks described?
5. Are policies and methods stated and visible in the application concerning how the project will deal with corruption and fraud?

### Capacity building

The application or project description may also raise the issue of the need for capacity-building activities both within the project but also in relation to expectations on the Church of Sweden. Our role is to look at this in particular.

*Questions to guide the assessment:*

1. Have specific needs for capacity building been identified?
2. Are we going to work with capacity building together with the partner organisation?
3. What type of capacity building should we invest in?

### Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

An environmental impact assessment (EIA) must be done for all projects that are expected to have a direct or indirect impact on the environment. The principle is that for smaller projects, an assessment that is less extensive can be done, while for larger projects with anticipated direct environmental impacts, a more comprehensive assessment is required.

Projects with anticipated direct environmental impacts are understood to be projects or programmes that include some component or activity that involves work with the environment and natural resources, such as integrated rural development, water and sanitation, the management of natural resources, risk reduction, agricultural projects, small-scale cultivation, etc.

It is a good idea to include the environmental impact assessment as part of the background and problem description in the application for example, but it can also be attached as a summary report in a separate annex.

*Questions to guide the assessment:*

In an EIA, the relationship between the project or programme and the environment is to be described. The implementing partner organisation is required to demonstrate that they have an understanding of:

1. The link between environmental problems and poverty: What are the country's or region's most significant environmental problems? Have changes in the climate been observed in the country/project area? Describe the link between poverty and the environment/climate problems in the country or region. How are poor and marginalised groups being impacted by environmental pollution? What are the consequences of the identified environmental problems for women, men, girls and boys in the target group?
2. The impact of the environmental problems on the project or programme (can be put in concrete form in a risk matrix): Is there a risk analysis in the project that is linked to environmental problems and climate change? What are the most important identified risks for the project? How does the partner organisation intend to manage them?
3. The impact of the project or programme on the environment/climate: What are the positive contributions of the project proposal to ecologically sustainable development? Does the project contribute to adaptation to climate change or climate change mitigation (such as support for renewable energy or strengthening of ecosystems)? Has the project been designed to minimise or avoid adverse effects on ecosystems and the environment (direct or indirect impacts on people, flora, fauna, land, water, air, climate and the landscape, material assets and cultural heritage)? How will environmental impact be monitored during the implementation of the project?

The Church of Sweden has a number of questions that partner organisations can use as a tool for carrying out an EIA.

### Conflict Impact Assessment (CIA)

A conflict impact assessment (CIA) must be done for all projects in countries that are actively engaged in armed conflict, where there is an underlying conflict that risks turning violent, or in countries in a state of post-conflict reconstruction. The Church of Sweden applies the "Do no harm" approach in such circumstances, and for those partner organisations that need support in doing a conflict impact assessment, it has a simple tool that can be shared with partner organisations. It is a good idea to include the conflict impact assessment as part of the background and problem description in the application for example, but it can also be attached as a summary report in a separate annex.

*Questions to guide the assessment:*

The relationship between the project or programme and the (armed) conflict is described in a CIA. The implementing partner organisation is required to demonstrate that they have an understanding of:

1. The conflict and its actors: What is the conflict about? Which actors are directly or indirectly involved in the conflict? What are the consequences of the conflict for women, men, girls and boys in the target group?
2. The potential impact of the conflict on the project or programme (can be put in concrete form in a risk matrix). Is there a risk analysis in the project that is linked to the conflict? What are the most important identified risks? How does the partner organisation intend to manage them?
3. The possibility of the project or programme having a positive impact on the conflict and the risk that the project or programme could affect the conflict negatively. Has the relationship between project and conflict in the context in which the project will be implemented been described? How will various groups/actors be supported by the project? Is the project inclusive? How will issues such as impartiality, transparency, communications and information in relation to stakeholders and target groups/rights bearers be managed? Which of the groups, attitudes and values of importance for peaceful development could the project strengthen? Does the project support conflict prevention work, local peace work or local strategies for peace?

### Rights-based work

The Church of Sweden's rights-based work is based on five key principles: participation, accountability, non-discrimination, empowerment and connection to human rights. When assessing a project or programme, particular attention is to be psupport to the partner organisation's analysis of these principles, as well as their concrete framing in the planned project.

*Questions to guide the assessment:*

1. Participation: How will the target group participate in the formulation, planning and implementation of the project or programme and learnings from them? Have rights bearers been identified as actors (subjects) or as recipients (objects)? Does the project or programme include methods and support that strengthen people's capacity to organise, and do they create space for increased popular participation?
2. Accountability: Is there a Code of Conduct for the staff who are involved in the project? What opportunities do the people we intend to support have for submitting a complaint if something in the project is going or has gone wrong? Does the project or programme have any kind of advocacy component (influencing local authorities, civil society organisations, the general public, government agencies/authorities, public policy and/or regulations)?
3. Non-discrimination: Has a gender analysis of the project or programme been made in order to see how it affects men and women differently? Has an analysis of power and power-sharing been made (that is, are there external and internal power relationships that support or threaten the feasibility of the project or programme, for example, in the political, religious or cultural context)?
4. Empowerment
5. Connection to the international framework and national legislation.

### General grants

*Questions to guide the assessment:*

1. Why is the organisation important for the Church of Sweden in relation to its goals, perspectives and strategic intelligence?
2. What role does the organisation/church/network play in its context and in civil society?
3. Can we say that the organisation/church, etc. contributes something unique that no-one else does in the specific context (value added, something distinctive)?
4. Example: Does it pursue a specific issue? Does the organisation have a distinctive approach that creates value added or a particular legitimacy? Can target groups that the organisation/church, etc. represents be identified (what kind of representativeness and legitimacy does the organisation/church, etc. have)?
5. What historical links are there with the Church of Sweden?
6. Why are General Grants the best form of support?

## Part II - Assessment Documentation

### Documentation of the drafting of the project or programme

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Projects or programmes ID | Date of writing of report | Drafted by: |
|  |  |  |
| Title of projects or programmes/activity and partner organisation, if applicable | | |
|  | | |
| Programme |  |  |
|  |  |  |

### Evaluation of the project or programme

*Briefly summarise the drafting group's assessment of the project or programme in general terms. If the drafting group recommends that the project or programme be approved, where applicable, list what steps must be taken and followed up internally in relation to partner organisations and projects, or other donors, for example.*

TEXT

*Comment on the assessment criteria below[[1]](#footnote-1):*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Criterion | Comments |
| Relevance | A key question for each component. The questions in the Main Document provide more explanation. |
| Feasibility |  |
| Sustainability | RBA/Accountability and local ownership/working with structural causes of problems |
| Forms of cooperation |  |
| Effectiveness |  |
| Capacity building |  |
| Risk |  |
| Organisation assessment |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Policy goals | Specify the policy goal that the project or programme relates to |
| Does the project or programme relate to any of our policy goals? (Pastoral development, Health, Gender justice and equality, Sustainable livelihood, or Peace and reconciliation) |  |

text

### Justification and proposed decision[[2]](#footnote-2):

1. Defined in the International Mission's terminology. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Formal decisions are made by the management group. Decisions are effected in VIPS by starting a case "*Beredning av insats*" (Drafting a project or program). Once the drafting is approved by the manager/MG, the projects and programs can be activated in the VIPS system. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)