Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) are small-scale, low-cost projects that are planned and implemented within a short timeframe. Different actors beyond peacekeeping also fund or implement QIPs with varying objectives. For the purpose of this Handbook, the term QIP applies to a project funded and/or implemented by UN peacekeeping operations.

The objectives and purpose of QIPs in UN peacekeeping operations are set out in the DPKO/DFS Policy Directive on Quick Impact Projects. The objective of QIPs is to build confidence in the mission, the mandate or the peace process. While QIPs...
should always benefit the population, they are not intended to be humanitarian or long-term development support. However, good coordination with development and humanitarian actors is essential to ensure that projects do not duplicate or undermine their work.

It is important to keep in mind the distinct character and confidence-building objective of QIPs throughout the project cycle. The confidence-building objective may influence the choice of implementing partner, the identification and selection of projects, the impact assessment and publicity strategies. Clarity regarding the objective of QIPs is essential in communication with partners as it helps to manage expectations and ensure a clear understanding of the limitations.

12.1. How do QIPs contribute to confidence-building?

QIPs can contribute to building confidence in the mission, mandate and/or peace process in a number of ways, including:

- Through the type of project implemented, for example one that rapidly addresses key community needs, which can demonstrate early peace dividends and/or increase confidence in the mission;
- By cementing or supporting conflict management or resolution activities (see example from MINURCAT below);
- By building legitimacy and capacity of local authorities or organizations;
- Through the dialogue and interaction that comes with the process of project identification, stakeholder consultation and project implementation;
- By “opening doors” and establishing communication channels between the mission and host community;
- By helping uniformed components (UN military or police) to engage with local communities through involvement in project development, monitoring and/or implementation. This can include using military engineering assets to support a project or direct implementation by the military.

Throughout the QIP cycle, it is essential to be guided by the overarching principles of local ownership, gender, culture and context sensitivity outlined throughout this Handbook. Good project and programme management are also essential to building confidence through QIPs. Bad project management, including in the selection, implementation and monitoring of QIPs, can undermine confidence and may exacerbate conflict. Bad practice in QIP management might include:
PART THREE: Implementing the civil affairs roles

United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Support

- Failing to properly consult with stakeholders, which can lead to a lack of buy-in or a failure to address real needs;
- A lack of coordination with other actors, leading to duplication of effort;
- Poor quality work, resulting in short-lived benefits;
- Implementation delays; or
- Inequitable distribution of benefits between or within communities or regions.

Personnel working on QIPs can also refer to chapter 8 in this Handbook for additional guidance and tools on analysis, planning, developing indicators and assessing impact.

12.2. Overall management of the QIPs programme

QIP programmes fall under the overall authority of the Head of Mission, who is responsible for ensuring effective management mechanisms. The DPKO/DFS Policy Directive and Guidelines provide additional details on the structure and mechanisms for QIP programme management.

The Senior Management Team (SMT) sets the priorities for QIPs and estimates overall funding level requirements, based on a needs assessment, as part of the annual mission budget submission. While the SMT is charged with priority-setting for QIP budgets, this tends to be done with input from civil affairs, who often have the greatest field presence.
The Project Review Committee (PRC) is responsible for evaluating proposals and selecting projects for funding, as well as for approving any changes to the project budget, outputs or scope of work during implementation.

The QIP Management Team (QMT), usually within civil affairs, is responsible for ensuring effective budget forecasting, monitoring overall allocation of funds and spending according to geographical and thematic areas, reviewing and screening proposals before submission to the PRC, and ensuring timely allocation of funds over the course of the fiscal year. The QMT or Programme Manager is responsible for ensuring full records for each project are maintained and are available for auditing purposes.

Project focal points are individuals assigned to monitor and shepherd each project through the entire project cycle. Just as any mission component can submit QIP proposals, project focal points can come from any mission component. In some situations the project focal point may also be the QIP Programme Manager. Project focal points may assist implementing partners in proposal development and are responsible for monitoring implementation, liaising with the implementing partners throughout the process, collecting and checking financial documentation before submission to the mission, evaluating impact and reporting on the project.

The Director of Mission Support/Chief of Mission Support (DMS/CMS) has delegated authority from the UN Financial Controller for financial aspects of the QIP programme and acts as certifying officer for individual projects.

The Finance Section works closely with the QMT in administering the budget including by obligating funds. The Finance Section is responsible for processing payment requests and maintaining original supporting documentation required for financial and budget purposes, including expenditure lists, receipts, payment requests and closure reports. The QMT maintains copies of all of these documents in project files.

12.3. Identification of projects

As a Civil Affairs Officer working in the field, the identification of possible projects is likely to come from your discussions and meetings with local authorities, communities and other stakeholders in your area of responsibility. Project proposals may be based upon direct requests/proposals from these stakeholders or on a need identified by your team for which you seek the relevant implementing partner. While it is important not to raise expectations that cannot be met, it is essential that potential applicants have access to accurate information about applying for projects. This promotes transparency and accountability and ensures programmes reach out to as broad a cross-section of the community as possible.
• **Be aware of criteria and strategic priorities.** Be guided by the criteria set out in the Policy and Guidelines and the strategic priorities identified by your mission, and make sure that you remain abreast of national priorities and strategies.

• **Manage expectations.** Don’t promise anything during discussions with potential beneficiaries/implementing partners, ensure a wide distribution of the selection/exclusion criteria and explain the evaluation and selection process.

• **Consult and coordinate** with local communities and authorities, ministries, UN and international agencies and I/NGOs, other mission components and multi-lateral and bi-lateral donor programmes, either directly or through the QMT/Programme Manager.

• **Assess the implementing partner.** Assess the profile (including political affiliation, relationship to the host community etc.) and capacity of the implementing partner.

• **Seek technical advice/expertise,** especially in relation to projects on health, water and sanitation, education etc. (e.g. wells, clinics, schools).

• **Consider issues of culture, gender, ethnicity and vulnerability.** Consider, for example, issues of access to or benefit from the project for different sections of the community, such as women, young people, different ethnic groups or marginalized sections of the population. Arrange consultations with stakeholders and ensure that the intervention is culturally appropriate for the intended beneficiaries.

• **Assess risks and be sensitive to the context.** Look at the potential intended and unintended impact of the project. Assess the risks to practical aspects of project implementation (e.g. risk of delay, reliability of implementing partner) and the risk of generating or exacerbating conflict. Apply “conflict-sensitive” and “Do No Harm” principles, including, for example, avoiding being seen to favour one group or section of the community above others or supporting projects that could be used to further political, ideological or religious objectives.

• **Consider the impact on the environment and natural resources.** It is important to consider environmental and natural resource issues during the identification and approval process. Projects involving construction of buildings, reforestation or irrigation works often have important natural resource dimensions, such as the sourcing of materials, the suitability of species and the sustainability of water supply, respectively.

• **Conduct an initial site visit.** An initial site visit is important both in terms of assessing the feasibility of the proposed project and in documenting progress. If any kind of construction/rehabilitation of public space is involved it is useful to have “before” and “after” photos for publicity purposes. There is a specific initial site visit form in the DPKO/DFS Guidelines on QIPs.
Do No Harm” and conflict-sensitive approaches should be mainstreamed into all aspects of civil affairs work and are particularly relevant to the planning and implementation of QIPs. The principles of “Do No Harm” and conflict sensitivity are outlined in chapter 5 of this Handbook.

12.4. Implementing partners

Government and state institutions, commercial companies and registered and non-registered NGOs, mission components, including the military, UN agencies and international agencies can all be implementing partners for QIPs. Each has distinct advantages and disadvantages for QIP implementation, and the choice of partner will depend very much on the type of project, mission context and particular confidence-building objective.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementing partner</th>
<th>Potential advantages</th>
<th>Potential disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Government or state institution.          | • Builds relations and opens communication with local authorities/institutions.  
• Brings additional legitimacy to authorities/institutions.  
• Supports local institutions through capacity development.  
• Contributes to the extension of state authority.  
• Promotes local ownership.                                                                                       | • May entail lengthy administrative procedures.  
• Human or financial capacity limitations may negatively impact the quality of the project outcome or delay project implementation.  
• In pre-election periods, undertaking QIPs with government or state institutions may be perceived as supporting a particular candidate. |
| Local civil society/grass-roots organization/NGO. | • Brings specific expertise.  
• Can enhance grass-roots/popular engagement or involvement of excluded or marginalized groups.  
• Promotes local ownership and local capacity development.  
• Supports local civil society.  
• Better understanding of the local context and may be better able to navigate local procurement and labour.  
• Supports local employment.                                                                                               | • Organization may be seen to be serving one section of the community above another.  
• In contexts where local civil society is not formally organised, implementing partners of this kind may have limited project management capacity. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementing partner</th>
<th>Potential advantages</th>
<th>Potential disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| International NGO/organization.       | - Specific area of expertise gained from other international contexts and/or in-country; may be able to offer expertise/experts that cannot be found locally.  
- If well established with a good reputation, likely to deliver high-quality results, with effective monitoring and reporting. | - May lack understanding or experience of the specific local context.  
- May place visibility of their organization first (visibility for the mission may be negatively impacted). |
| UN actors.                            | - UNCT partners can provide specific expertise.  
- Can bring experience gained from other countries and/or in country (through longer term presence).  
- May enhance synergy and coordination with UNCT. | - May place visibility of their organization first (visibility for the mission may be negatively impacted).  
- Can involve slow procurement procedures and prohibitive overhead costs. |
| Private company/contractor.           | - If local, supports local income generation.                                                                                                                                                                          | - UN procurement rules will apply in the selection of private contractors or companies – these procedures can be lengthy.                             |
| Military components.                  | - Already have equipment, expertise and manpower.  
- Can help to navigate security or access challenges.  
- Positive role for the military in implementing technical projects.  
- Useful for building confidence between mission and host community, especially where uniformed components are the main interface and in the context of frequent troop rotations. | - Could undermine the local economy or result in missed local income generation opportunities.  
- Could be perceived as compromising humanitarian principles.  
- Not appropriate for some projects (e.g. engagement with a population traumatized by conflict.) |
Civil Affairs Officers should be aware that some humanitarian actors may be reluctant to work too closely with peacekeeping missions, particularly if military peacekeepers are directly involved in the implementation of projects. This is due to concerns that it could compromise the humanitarian principles they adhere to and politicize humanitarian action. As discussed in chapter 9, it is important to understand and be sensitive to the different mandates and policies of partners, both in relation to QIPs and broader coordination issues.

12.5. Proposal development

As a project focal point, you may be involved in proposal writing, supporting before submission to the QMT/PRC. QIP focal points often play a mentoring role during proposal development and implementation, especially in contexts where the local capacity to develop and manage projects is limited. This approach can support local capacity development, help to ensure local ownership and build confidence between the mission and local partners. Proposals may be submitted using the suggested proposal template contained in the DPKO/DFS Guidelines on QIPs. It is also useful to work with implementing partners to ensure the following are contained in the proposal:

- Clear statement of the confidence-building objectives of the project, as well as outputs and intended outcomes and how these will be monitored and assessed;
- Initial site visit form, including photos where relevant;
- Clear scope of work, basic timeline, including two or three progress indicators or “milestones”;
- If necessary, additional technical assessments and drawings;
- Evidence of consultation with relevant clusters/bodies/ministries and awareness of national strategies (e.g. for water, sanitation, health);
- Description of whom the project will benefit (number and profile of beneficiaries) and ratio of beneficiaries to cost of project;
- Clear breakdown of costs (for example, cost of labour, machinery hire, unit cost of materials and quantities required) and price offers if relevant;
- Risk analysis (this should focus on risks to project implementation that are outside of your control) and how potential risks will be managed and mitigated;

12.6. Selection and approval

Evaluation and selection by the PRC is based on information contained in the proposal form. This being the case, a clear detailed scope and an explanation of the merits of the project (both for the local population and in terms of confidence-building) are essential.

If the project is not selected by the PRC, the QMT will provide a brief written summary of the reasons why it was rejected. This should be transmitted to the applicant.

If the project is approved, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) will be prepared by the QMT. Ideally MoUs should be both in the mission language (legal copy) and local language (reference copy). Providing local-language copy can help to ensure implementing partners have a clear understanding of the contractual obligations.

The project officer submitting the proposal will be requested to provide the implementing partner’s bank account or other payment details. In some missions, these details are checked with the Finance Section (this is usually done through the QMT) before the MoU is finalized. The project officer should review the MoU to ensure all other details are correct. Three or more copies of the MoU must be signed: one for the QMT, one for the Finance Section and one for the implementing partner.85

12.7. Once the project is approved

Ensure implementing partners understand the obligations, including timeframe, monitoring, reporting, especially financial reporting, and required documentation (provide additional guidance if required). Explain that original receipts and a list of expenditures related to the project should be maintained and submitted to a mission representative in order for instalments of project funding to be released after the initial instalment. Inform the implementing partner that the Finance Section will require original receipts and cannot process payments on the basis of copies.

85 The number of copies required may vary from mission to mission depending on the mission-specific Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) on QIPs.
Involve the Public Information Office (PIO) at the early stage as this makes it easier for them to tell a compelling story about the improvement that the project is bringing.

12.8. Implementation and monitoring

Each project should be visited at least three times. This includes:

(i) Initial site visit (outlined earlier in this chapter);
(ii) Monitoring visit; and
(iii) Closure visit.

Suggested reporting forms are contained in the DPKO/DFS Guidelines on QIPs for each of these visits. The monitoring and evaluation process should be seen as an opportunity to ensure the work is progressing according to plan but also as a way to interact and talk with implementing partners and local community representatives/beneficiaries. Monitoring and evaluation should include assessment of progress and impact from both the implementing partner and the mission representative (usually the project focal point), based on observation and feedback from the implementing partners and project beneficiaries.

12.9. Mid-term monitoring

- Monitor timelines and milestones (measure progress against outputs in the proposal).
- Depending on the type of project, assess visible progress on the ground or observe project activities (for example, for training or capacity-building projects).
- Discuss progress with the implementing partner and address any implementation difficulties.
- Respond to contingencies, including bringing any requests to change the scope of the work or budget to the PRC.
- Report on progress (using standard template).
- Depending on the way in which the project funding instalments have been structured, you may also need to collect the receipts from the implementing partners in order to request the second instalment. If this is the case, remind implementing partners in advance that you will need to collect the financial documentation during the monitoring visit.
- PIO should also be engaged during the implementation phase and, depending on capacity, may undertake video, photographic or radio coverage of implementation.

12.10. Evaluation and closure

During the evaluation and closure visit, project focal points will need to assess whether the project objectives have been met. This includes assessing whether outputs and/
or activities in the project proposal have been accomplished, as well as the level of beneficiary satisfaction and the confidence-building impact. It may not, however, be feasible to fully measure the confidence-building impact of certain types of projects (e.g. access to basic services, rehabilitation of public buildings etc.) during a standard closure and evaluation visit, as it may take some time for beneficiaries to be fully aware of the project. In such cases, technical evaluations should be the main focus of initial closure visits, with further assessments of beneficiary satisfaction and confidence-building impact being undertaken at a later date. As noted above, the final evaluation of the project should include both an assessment from the implementing partners, as well as an evaluation by the project focal point, based on on-site observation and feedback from community representatives/beneficiaries.

- Prior to the closure visit inform the implementing partner that you will need a list of expenditures and original receipts for the work/equipment.
- Ensure you review the original proposal prior to the visit and, if working with language assistants, brief them about the details of the project and what information you hope to gain from the meeting.
- If necessary for the assessment, request additional technical support (e.g. from engineering components).
- If the local community has been involved in the project during implementation (for example, through receiving training or capacity-building support), include their feedback in the evaluation.
- For projects that involve construction, the provision of basic services, rehabilitation of infrastructure or other projects where the benefits to local communities may not be immediately visible, a further assessment of beneficiary satisfaction and confidence-building impact can be conducted after project closure and inauguration.
- If appropriate, take photos of the finished work.
- Double check all documentation (especially receipts and expenditure list).
- Complete project evaluation report, including your assessment of both the project outputs and, to the extent possible, the confidence-building impact.
- Sign and submit with list of expenditure, receipts and photos to the QMT.

12.11. Inauguration and publicity

Good publicity of QIPs can help to extend their confidence-building impact. Discuss inauguration and publicity with the implementing partner and PIO at the early stage.
Assessing impact

Tools for assessing beneficiary satisfaction and confidence-building impact may include interviews with key informants/beneficiaries, as well as focus groups and surveys. Combining qualitative and participatory methods, such as focus groups, with surveys that capture quantitative data can be particularly effective. The choice of assessment method is likely to depend very much upon resources and capacity.

of project development and again when the project is nearing completion. Many missions organize inauguration ceremonies to publicize the project and erect plaques or otherwise indicate the role of the mission. It is important to recognize the role of local partners. Highlighting the role of local authorities, where involved, can help to build confidence between local authorities and communities.

If the project was co-financed by different sources, all the organizations should be represented on the plaque. However, there are UN regulations that govern the use
of UN logos on joint plaques and it is important to check with PIO about the use of UN logos.

Details of the QIP and plans for the opening ceremony (list of invitees etc.) should be transmitted to PIO well in advance of the event. PIO may be able to help provide coverage through:

- Inviting the media;
- Handling the media during the event;
- Drafting/approving and issuing a press release;
- Providing photo and video coverage;
- Drafting or inviting articles/reports (with photos) on the project for use in magazines, websites or other public information products.

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**Case study**

**Publicizing QIPs in Lebanon**

In Lebanon, the UNIFIL PIO played a key role in publicizing QIPs. Projects were regularly featured in the mission magazine, “al Janoub” (the South) and radio programmes, as well as being profiled as part of a series of UNIFIL TV spots.

Box 12.2 Case study: Publicizing QIPs in Lebanon

**Recommended resources**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>DPKO/DFS Policy Directive on Quick Impact Projects (QIPs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description</strong></td>
<td>Defines the purpose of QIPs and describes their nature, scope, value and duration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Source</strong></td>
<td>UN peacekeeping personnel can access this document via the Policy and Practices database on the POINT intranet: <a href="http://ppdb.un.org">http://ppdb.un.org</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>DPKO/DFS Guidelines on Quick Impact Projects (QIPs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description</strong></td>
<td>Provides suggested procedures on the identification, selection, approval, funding, implementation, monitoring, closure and evaluation of individual QIPs and the overall management of the QIPs programme in missions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Source</strong></td>
<td>UN peacekeeping personnel can access this document via the Policy and Practices database on the POINT intranet: <a href="http://ppdb.un.org">http://ppdb.un.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>DPKO/DFS Lessons learned study on management of Quick Impact Projects (QIPs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>This provides lessons learned on both project and programme management. The study is based on extensive consultations with field missions and contains a series of recommendations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source</td>
<td>UN peacekeeping personnel can access this document via the Policy and Practices database on the POINT intranet: <a href="http://ppdb.un.org">http://ppdb.un.org</a></td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Greening the Blue Helmets: Environment Natural Resources and Conflict (UNEP, forthcoming)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Contains case studies on environment and natural resources in relation to civil affairs work and QIPs in peacekeeping missions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the review of military involvement in civil assistance in peacekeeping operations, A/60/588 (December 2005)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Looks at the issue of military involvement in community support projects in peacekeeping missions.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>SkillPort</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>A resource available to UN staff with a vast range of online skills-building courses, including transitioning into a project management role.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source</td>
<td><a href="https://un.skillport.com">https://un.skillport.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>