

## **GUIDELINES FOR THE PREPARATION OF CONCEPT NOTES FOR THE 8TH TRANCHE OF THE DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNT (2012-2013)**

These guidelines are designed to assist the implementing entities in preparing concept notes for the funds of the 8th tranche of the Development Account (DA). The deadline for submitting concept notes is **15 October 2010**.

### **A. THEME OF THE 8TH TRANCHE**

The Programme Manager of the Development Account has established the theme of the 8<sup>th</sup> tranche as:

*Supporting Member States to accelerate progress towards achieving the Internationally Agreed Development Goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, in the context of the multiple and interrelated development challenges.*

### **B. GENERAL ASSEMBLY ESTABLISHED CRITERIA**

Projects submitted for funding should be guided by the criteria established by the GA:

- Result in durable, self-sustaining initiatives to develop national capacity building, with a measurable impact at the field level, ideally having multiplier effects;
- Be innovative and take advantage of information and communication technology, knowledge management and networking of expertise at the sub regional, regional and global levels;
- Utilize the technical, human and other resources available in developing countries and effectively draw on the existing knowledge/skills/capacity within implementing entities;
- Create synergies with other development interventions and benefit from partnerships with non-UN stakeholders.

The concept notes should be cognizant of the requirements in the General Assembly resolution ([A/RES/62/208](#)) on the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review (TCPR) of the operational activities for development, notably as far as the contribution of United Nations operational activities to national capacity development and development effectiveness and the improved functioning of the United Nations development system in terms of coherence, effectiveness and relevance are concerned. Proposals should take into account the outcome of the High-Level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals in September 2010. Of importance are also the most recent ECOSOC resolutions ([E/2010/L.32](#)), which restated the importance of the TCPR for capacity development work of the organization, and ([E/RES/2009/1](#)), which reiterated that non-resident agencies should contribute to country programme processes through the Resident Coordinator system.

Entities are encouraged, on a voluntary basis, to include proposals in their submission that involve closer collaboration with the UN Country Teams and/or which respond to identified needs reflected in the country(ies) UNDAFs.

The Programme Manager recommends that initial consultations be conducted with relevant development partners as well as, when appropriate, with Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams in countries concerned, ensuring that the project is effectively responding to needs and priorities of Member States.

### **C. TIMELINE**

- 10 August 2010: Programme Manager requested Implementing Entities to submit concept notes;
- 15 October 2010: Deadline for submitting concept notes;
- End November 2010: the Programme Manager presents the short list to the Steering Committee;
- November to December 2010: Programme Manager works with entities to finalize concept notes;
- December 2010: Programme Manager submits draft fascicle to PPBD;
- December 2010 to February 2011: Programme Manager together with PPBD finalizes the actual section of the Proposed Programme Budget 2012-2013;
- May/June 2011: The Administrative Committee for Administrative and Budget Questions (ACABQ) is expected to review the fascicle;
- Fall 2011: The Fifth Committee and the General Assembly will consider the fascicle and make a decision on its final endorsement;
- Fall 2011: Implementing Entities prepare project documents based on the concept notes; the Programme Manager will review prodocs from September onwards;
- 1 January 2012: The funds of the 8<sup>th</sup> tranche will be made available;
- December 2015, projects will financially close;

### **D. MAIN ELEMENTS OF THE CONCEPT PAPER**

The concept paper of each project is comprised of the following elements:

- i. Title
- ii. Background
- iii. Objective
- iv. Expected accomplishments
- v. Indicators of achievement
- vi. Main activities
- vii. Relationship to the Strategic Framework for the period 2012- 2013, the Internationally Agreed Development Goals, the Millennium Development Goals, and major UN conferences and summits
- viii. Budget narrative

These components of the concept paper are expanded on below as follows:

### **i. Title:**

The title should reflect the main programmatic thrust of the project. It **should be short, concise, one sentence long and include an indication as to who will be the main beneficiaries, including the geographical scope of the project, and what capacities will be strengthened. The scope of the project should be realistic and commensurate with the financial envelope.** Titles would typically include: *Strengthening of capacities of (beneficiaries) in (countries / sub-regions / regions) on (substance of the project)*

### **ii. Background:**

The background needs to be concise and describe the **development issue** that the project intends to address. This section should spell out the capacity assets, needs and priorities of the programme countries relevant for the project. It should highlight which **capacity gaps of the project beneficiaries** would be addressed by the project. It should also refer to **intergovernmental legislation, particularly recent ones**, in this area and the mandate calling for your entities' action. This section should explain how the project fits into the specific or overall **normative and analytical work** of your entity. It should detail your **comparative advantages** in this area (if available, a broader strategy note could be attached to the submission that explains what your entities do to help Member States in the concerned programme area). It should elaborate on the implementation arrangements with project partners within the UN Secretariat and with the broader UN System and funds and programmes and specialized agencies, where appropriate. It should highlight lessons learned and achievements from earlier projects in the area. The respective roles and contributions of the different partners should be spelled out as clearly as possible. Initial consultations with the partners are strongly encouraged.

### **iii. Objective:**

The objective is the overall intended goal of the project. The project will contribute to achieving the objective through the expected accomplishments. The objective will not be achieved by the project alone and not within the timeframe of the project (it will only provide a contribution to the achievement of the overall objective). A well-formulated objective should answer the question, **“What does the project intend to achieve?”** It should be concise, not longer than one sentence; it should include the beneficiaries and the geographical scope and should not attempt to explain how the implementing entity intends to go about achieving the objective. **There should be only one objective.** Examples of objectives include: *to increase national / local government capacity to identify/ apply/ develop...; to improve the formulation of national/ local policies on...; to increase the knowledge of public officials and development practitioners on....*

### **iv. Expected accomplishments (EA):**

The EAs describe the desirable future conditions of the individual stakeholders or institutional changes of partner organizations or the society as a whole that can be reasonably attributed to or associated with the project. They indicate in what way the capacity benefits will be used for the accomplishment of the objective, for example through application of knowledge, adoption of practices, and/or utilization of technology. Expected accomplishments should be **achievable within the project timeframe and budget**, and

**specific** enough to be measured by the associated indicators of achievement. A clear distinction should be made between the expected accomplishments (results) and the activities utilized for achieving each of them. Please note that UNDP and other organizations use the term *outcomes* instead of expected accomplishments. **There should be a maximum of three expected accomplishments that are logically linked to the project objective.** Examples of expected accomplishments include: *increased levels of knowledge and awareness of...; increased skills in...; increased understanding of...; establishment of a network to...; improved organization of...; adoption of international measures of...*

#### **v. Indicators of achievement:**

The **indicators of achievement** are measures used to determine to what extent the stated expected accomplishments have been achieved. Indicators refer to the information needed to help determining progress towards meeting stated project objectives. An expected accomplishment may have more than one indicator. There are no absolute principles about what makes a good indicator of achievement; however the SMART characteristics listed below are useful:

- *Specific* - indicators need to be specific and to relate to changes in conditions of beneficiaries that can reasonably be attributed to or credibly be associated with the Development Account project;
- *Measurable* – both quality and quantity indicators are useful - quantifiable indicators, to the extent that they are appropriate and available are preferred because they are precise and can in some cases be aggregated;
- *Achievable and attainable* - the indicator (information) must be attainable within the timeframe of the project and at reasonable cost;
- *Realistic and relevant*- indicators should be relevant to the management information needs of stakeholders who will use the data;
- *Time bound* - indicator that provides information on the timeframe, within which accomplishments need to be achieved.

Examples of indicators include: *increased number of national/ local personnel able to identify/ apply/develop...; increased number of project countries/ institutions utilizing; national policy or strategy documents reflecting (substance of the project)*

#### **vi. Main activities:**

Main activities are the actions that have to be taken or provided to achieve the expected accomplishments. Well-formulated activities should answer the question, **“What specific actions need to be taken by the project team, in cooperation with the beneficiaries, to achieve the expected accomplishments?”** **There should be around six main activities per proposal (more activities may be added later where relevant).** Examples of main activities include: *workshops; publications; training modules; advisory services; or seminars.*

These four elements (objective, expected accomplishments, main activities and indicators) together need to be clearly linked through a logical framework and build on each other. In order to ascertain the validity of the logical framework, a **top down and bottom up review** should be conducted.

**Top down questions:**

1. How can the objective be met? ...by achieving the expected accomplishments.
2. How can the expected accomplishments be achieved? ....by delivering the main activities.

**Bottom up questions:**

1. If the project delivers the main activities, will they contribute to achieving the expected accomplishments?
2. If the project achieves the expected accomplishments, will this help meeting the objective?

**vii. Relationship to the Strategic Framework for the period 2012-2013, the Internationally Agreed Development Goals (IADGs), the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and major UN conferences and summits:**

A reference is to be made to the relevant expected accomplishment(s) of the concerned subprogramme of the Strategic Framework for the period 2012-2013. This part should include, where appropriate, a reference to the IADGs, including the MDGs it will contribute to. If there are other parts of the UN Development Agenda or Global UN Conferences it will contribute to, please also elaborate.

**viii. Budget narrative:**

Project size and funding distribution will be similar to the 7th tranche (see A/64/6 Sect. 35), with approximately 35-40 projects with an average size of US\$ 650,000.

**The projects should make use of existing human resources capacities within the implementing entities.** Therefore, the share of General Temporary Assistance (GTA) and consultancies should be limited. Ideally, consultants should be from developing countries so to have more sustainability in the country as per GA recommendations. Contractual services with local and regional institutions and/or NGOs are encouraged for the implementation of certain activities of the projects. **At least two percent of the total budget needs to be allocated for the final evaluation.**

The nine budget categories used to prepare the concept paper are:

**1. General temporary assistance (Object class 602)**

GTA should be used to respond to temporary assistance needs through the recruitment and/or extensions of staff members only, and are usually located with the entity implementing the project. GTA should not be used for the recruitment of consultants or UNVs. The share of GTA should be reasonable.

**2. Consultants (Object class 604)**

Please differentiate between international consultants and national/ regional consultants. The budget should include fees and travel. The share of international consultancies should be limited.

**3. Expert groups (Object class 604)**

Expert groups should be used if meetings are required to discuss policy issues/publications related to the project. Only expert panellists are to be captured under this budget line. Other participants to expert group meetings are to be captured under seminars and workshops.

#### **4. Travel of staff (Object class 608)**

This budget line is for UN staff travel only, for all types of travel (participation in expert groups, workshops, and providing advisory services). Travel of experts, consultants and participants to workshops should be budgeted under their respective budget lines. Do not include the travel of staff under workshops.

#### **5. Contractual services (Object class 612)**

The contractual services budget line might include institutional contracts for preparing publications or, for example, for NGOs that might organize activities through subcontract or grant arrangements. Contractual services with local and regional institutions and/or NGOs are encouraged for the implementation of certain activities of the projects.

#### **6. Operating expenses (Object class 616)**

The operating expenses budget line should be used for postage, communications, in-house or low-value printing of reports, etc. For major undertakings relate to printing services, use object class 612, contractual services. Most of these costs will be covered from regular budget, so its share in the project budget should be limited.

#### **7. Equipment and supplies (Object class 618)**

This line should be used for office equipment, office automation equipment, software and supplies for beneficiary countries. Laptops for support staff will not be considered.

#### **8. Study tours (fellowships) (Object class 621)**

In the UN, the term “fellowships” has also been used in a similar context to study tours. Fellowships should only be used if the duration is more than six months.

#### **9. Seminars and workshops (Object class 621)**

The seminars and workshops budget line should be used for capacity-building/training activities other than expert group meetings, and include costs related to the travel/DSA of participants, as well as rental of venue and local conference-related expenditures, including interpretation and translations services (if non-UN venue). Subcontracts which are issued to implementing partners to carry out training activities should be charged to contractual services. Travel of staff for workshops needs to be budgeted under travel of staff.

Each budget line item should be supported by a brief, easy-to-understand narrative providing information on activity-related expenditures.