

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

MANATŪ AORERE

Manaaki

“Uplifting mana, through listening, supporting and empowering”

Activity Design Appraisal Framework

ROUND TWO – MARCH 2020



**NEW ZEALAND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE
Aid Programme**



Appraisal of Activity Designs

Activity designs will be appraised by a team of Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) staff, drawing on expertise from bilateral, Post, Partnerships and sector/thematic teams. Independent technical expertise may be drawn on as necessary.

Assessment of the Activity designs will be based on the four assessment areas: the Strategic Case, Scope, Commercial Case and Management Case.

1. Strategic Case

An analysis of the context in which the Activity will take place. It should provide sufficient information for someone not familiar with the context and the local development needs to be able to understand the issues.

2. Scope

The Activity Design which includes an explanation of what changes the activity is expected to bring, the time frame of the activity, and the resources required. A detailed implementation workplan should be provided in Appendix A in a format based on the NGO applicant's systems and processes.

3. Commercial Case

Describes the Activity cost and value for money. A detailed activity budget should be provided in Appendix B in a format based on the NGO applicant's systems and processes.

4. Management Case

Sets out the main issues and factors affecting how the proposed Activity will be delivered on the ground.

Applicant's responses in each area will be assessed according to the appraisal framework provided below and assigned a rating from 5-1 with totals collated at the end of the assessment. Each of these four assessment areas has been weighted at 25%.

Rating Number	Rating	Rating Description
5	Very strong	No amendments required
4	Strong	Very good quality; minor clarifications or changes in order to proceed
3	Sufficient	Adequate quality requiring some changes to improve
2	Inadequate	Less than satisfactory; needs amendments in key areas
1	Does not meet requirements	Poor; requiring major changes/redesign in order to proceed

Summary Scoring Table

Section	Strategic Case	Scope	Commercial Case	Management Case
Reviewer name				

1 Activity Design Appraisal Framework

1. Strategic Case

Provide an analysis of the context in which the Activity will take place. It should provide sufficient information for someone not familiar with the context and the local development needs to be able to understand the issues.

Design Template Section	Guiding questions to make an informed and objective assessment. Compelling positive answers will increase the rating.	Assessment rating
1.1 Development problem and opportunity [up to 1 page]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the problem clearly articulated and understandable? • Is it clear how this problem was identified? • Is there adequate evidence of contextual analysis? Is there a compelling reason to address this issue now? • Does the applicant provide research or evidence to substantiate claims? • Is a high level statement included of what success looks like? 	<p>1 = Does not meet requirements (DNMR)</p> <p>2 = Inadequate</p> <p>3 = Sufficient</p> <p>4 = Strong</p> <p>5 = Very strong</p>
1.2 Development Context - social, economic and political [up to 1.5 pages]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the context analysis show a clear understanding of local social, economic, political, and environmental and infrastructure factors, as well as how the problem developed? • Does the analysis consider equity, social inclusion and/or other human rights concerns? • Is there good rationale for the selected location of the Activity? Is it a remote and or difficult to reach location? • Are marginalised or vulnerable people identified as beneficiaries? How were they identified? • To what extent were local people, groups and/or communities involved in/consulted regarding the development of this design? Is there evidence of responding to local voice in the design? Is there evidence of articulation of local CSO priorities and how the Activity will strengthen the ability of these groups to engage and influence through delivery.? 	<p>1 = DNMR</p> <p>2 = Inadequate</p> <p>3 = Sufficient</p> <p>4 = Strong</p> <p>5 = Very strong</p>

1. Strategic Case

Provide an analysis of the context in which the Activity will take place. It should provide sufficient information for someone not familiar with the context and the local development needs to be able to understand the issues.

1.3 Relevance to NZ Aid Programme objectives and developing partner plans [1/2 page]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it clear how this activity aligns with (or is complementary to) New Zealand Aid Programme and in-country government development priorities? • Is it clear the Activity aligns with the geographical and sector focus of Manaaki? • Does the design reference or align with other regional/sectoral or other policy /guideline priorities, such as the International Cooperation for Effective Sustainable Development, Pacific Reset priorities, Sustainable Development Goals, or synergies with other donors? 	1 = DNMR 2 = Inadequate 3 = Sufficient 4 = Strong 5 = Very strong
1.4 Related Activities [up to 1 page]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the proposed design explicitly reference and build on lessons learned from other interventions and best practice? • Is the Activity a continuation of previous MFAT-funded work? Is there a strong rationale for a subsequent phase and is it clearly additional to any previous work? • How does the Activity fit within the broader work in the planned location or sector i.e how does it avoid duplication? • Does the design describe the work of other organisations or agencies/discuss opportunities for potential collaboration? 	1 = DNMR 2 = Inadequate 3 = Sufficient 4 = Strong 5 = Very strong
Overall Rating		1 = DNMR 2 = Inadequate 3 = Sufficient 4 = Strong 5 = Very strong

2. Scope – Activity Design

This section should explain what changes the activity is expected to bring, the time frame of the activity, and the resources required. A detailed implementation workplan should be provided in Appendix A in a format based on your systems and processes.

Design Template Section	Guiding questions to make an informed and objective assessment. Compelling positive answers will increase the rating.	Assessment rating
2.1 Activity description [up to 2.5 pages] <i>Activities, outputs and outcomes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the outcomes and approach clearly articulated, measurable and aligned to addressing the problem? • Does the design adequately identify who or what is expected to change, the type of change expected and when that change is expected to occur as a result of this project. • Have any assumptions, interdependencies and constraints been clearly presented and are they logical and reasonable? 	<p>1 = DNMR 2 = Inadequate 3 = Sufficient 4 = Strong 5 = Very strong</p>
<i>Efficiency and effectiveness</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the explanation as to how activities and inputs will be delivered on time feasible? • Do the activities, inputs and outputs relate to outcomes and is it clear how they will they transfer into the outcomes? • Is there is a clear presentation of the theory of change in diagrammatic and narrative form? 	
<i>Participation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a clear and informed understanding of the local community and its structures/networks? • Is it clear how local communities will be involved through different stages of the activity i.e. in improving localisation, providing feedback and in having an increased voice including to better represent local needs long term? • Has it been presented how stakeholder/networks might support /enable and or present obstacles to the implementation of the project/achievement of outcomes? 	
<i>Do No Harm</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there clear mechanisms for ensuring open and honest dialogue between NZ and local NGO around delivery, effectiveness and localisation? (Also ensuring safeguarding/PSEAH concerns can be raised). • Does the design articulate how activities will do no harm to the local population and the environment? 	
<i>Sustainability</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How viable/capable is the local CSO and/or does the design outline specific strategies for institutional strengthening or local capability enhancement to improve the sustainability of the Activity outcomes? • Is it clear how any activities and outcomes will be maintained beyond the project? 	
<i>Cross Cutting Issues</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the design explain how the activity delivery will consider gender equality, people living with disability and remote, marginalised, vulnerable and/or excluded groups? i.e. Does the proposed design: 	

2. Scope – Activity Design

This section should explain what changes the activity is expected to bring, the time frame of the activity, and the resources required. A detailed implementation workplan should be provided in Appendix A in a format based on your systems and processes.

- Include a gender analysis (e.g. identifying the needs and engagement of women and men, girls and boys; and describing gender roles; and barriers for women and girls)?
- Identify specific actions to support gender equality?
- Identify specific actions to genuinely engage people with disabilities?
- Ensure collection of disaggregated data (by sex and other indicators of inclusion/exclusion)?
- Have a focus on accessing remote or marginalised or other excluded groups?
- Identify possible interventions to promote environmental integrity, sustainability, climate change or resilience to natural hazards?

Implementation and workplan

- Is the implementation/work plan clear, logical and feasible with high level milestones?
- Does it allow for/enable reflections and adaptive design based on lessons learnt?
- Does it align with the proposed outputs and scope?
- Does it correlate with the budget and resources proposed?

2.2 Options
 [1/2 page]

- Were a sufficiently wide range of options considered to address the problem? Were these comprehensively assessed against relevant criteria?
- Is the rationale for selecting the proposed option made clear including the level of consensus and who was involved?
- Does the intended approach appear appropriate and feasible based on the context and the issue being addressed?
- Was there sufficient review of the scope either internally or externally?

1 = DNMR
 2 = Inadequate
 3 = Sufficient
 4 = Strong
 5 = Very strong

Overall Rating
 1 = DNMR
 2 = Inadequate
 3 = Sufficient
 4 = Strong
 5 = Very strong

3. Commercial Case – Activity cost and value for money

A detailed activity budget should be provided in Appendix B in a format based on the NGO applicant's systems and processes.

Design Template Section	Guiding questions to make an informed and objective assessment. Compelling positive answers will increase the rating.	Assessment rating
3.1 Explanation of Financial Management [up to 2 pages]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have explanations as to how costs were determined been comprehensively presented? • Do the costs appear sufficient or excessive to provide all the resources and inputs required for planned outputs including M&E costs? • Are there any concerns/apparent gaps in the costing or assumptions? • Does the budget appear reasonable and good value for money? • Has the NZNGO adequately considered risks and mitigations with regard to cost over-runs such as forex fluctuations? • Has the NZNGO confirmed how and when the co-funding will be provided? Is it clear how they will meet the Manaaki requirements for NZ sourced co-investment (at least 60% of the total NGO co-investment). • Based on what is presented, is it reasonable to assume this activity would not happen without MFAT support? 	1 = DNMR 2 = Inadequate 3 = Sufficient 4 = Strong 5 = Very strong
3.2 High-level Activity Budget Table Explanation (in NZD, excluding GST)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a complete budget amount been presented and have calculations been checked for accuracy? • Is the financial structure in regard to MFAT co-investment, other co-investment and in-kind contributions adequately explained? Have all co-funding contributions from the NZNGO and local CSO been presented? • Are in-kind contributions reasonable/substantiated and meet requirements (up to 30% of the NGO co-investment)? 	1 = DNMR 2 = Inadequate 3 = Sufficient 4 = Strong 5 = Very strong
	Overall Rating	1 = DNMR 2 = Inadequate 3 = Sufficient 4 = Strong 5 = Very strong

4. Management Case

Set out the main issues and factors affecting how the proposed Activity will be delivered on the ground.

Design Template Section	Guiding questions to make an informed and objective assessment. Compelling positive answers will increase the rating.	Assessment rating
4.1 Management roles and responsibilities [up to 1.5 pages]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the governance arrangements explained, including frequency of meetings, how any conflicts will be managed and how decisions will be made? • Has an organisational chart showing management arrangements been clearly presented? • Are the roles and responsibilities of the direct beneficiaries, the local CSO and the NZNGO clearly presented, including those in the implementation team? Is it clear how these role and responsibilities were discussed and confirmed? • Does the design adequately explain the value the NZNGO will add throughout the Activity's lifecycle e.g. specific expertise, support or resources that will be contributed? • Is the collective experience of the respective parties to undertake this activity adequately substantiated? • Is there evidence of capacity assessment/capability mapping by the local CSO (self-assessment) and/or the NZNGO having undertaken capacity assessment of CSO partner/s to identify strengths and weaknesses in the partnership? • Is there evidence of likely investment in local capacity/capability building and/or organisational strengthening? 	<p>1 = DNMR 2 = Inadequate 3 = Sufficient 4 = Strong 5 = Very strong</p>
4.2 Results measurement, monitoring and evaluation and reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the detailed implementation Results Framework provided in Appendix C fit-for-purpose and clear as to how the outputs will contribute to outcomes? • Are sufficient resources budgeted for M&E? • Based on what is presented, is it reasonable to assume the NGO and its partners can perform the implementation and monitoring tasks required? • Does the MERL implementation workplan/framework provided in Appendix D and any information provided in section 2.1 adequately describe/include? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – How results will be monitored, measured, and reported – Any 'stop/go' decision points 	<p>1 = DNMR 2 = Inadequate 3 = Sufficient 4 = Strong 5 = Very strong</p>

4. Management Case

Set out the main issues and factors affecting how the proposed Activity will be delivered on the ground.

- Roles & responsibilities and accountabilities (who is responsible for M&E activities, what and when including explaining any variance)
- Any independent Activity Evaluations and/or Post-Activity evaluations
- SMART qualitative and quantitative indicators of change
- How baseline data will be collected and used to compare/verify results over time
- Mechanisms for collecting beneficiary feedback
- How reflection will occur and lessons integrated into delivery
- How research/learning from this Activity will be communicated with MFAT/NGO supporters/local community/other development actors
- How M&E data will be used for decision making and adaptive management (e.g. through annual partner learning forums)?

4.3 Risk management and safety planning [1/2 page]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have key risks (Activity, health and safety, safeguarding and reputation) been presented and prioritised (e.g. rated for seriousness/impact) and addressed in the Safety Plan in Appendix E? • Are these risks reasonable and relevant to the proposed activity and context? • Have sensible strategies to manage risks been presented? • Are there any significant risks that have not been identified by the NGO? • Is the NGO's risk assessment process adequate? • Is a process explained to review and update risks in a timely manner to inform on-going implementation monitoring, decision-making, management and communication of risks? 	1 = DNMR 2 = Inadequate 3 = Sufficient 4 = Strong 5 = Very strong
4.4 Communications and stakeholder planning [1/2 page]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the NZNGO clearly identify key stakeholders and how they will be engaged? • Has the NZNGO clearly described its relationship and contact with the New Zealand public and how it will engage with the New Zealand public during implementation? 	1 = DNMR 2 = Inadequate 3 = Sufficient 4 = Strong 5 = Very strong

4. Management Case

Set out the main issues and factors affecting how the proposed Activity will be delivered on the ground.

4.5 Sustainability, ownership and handover management planning [1/2 page]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does this section of the design and any information contained in 2.1 adequately describe: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – How the Activity outcomes will be sustainable – The strategy for management and future ownership of the Activity and any assets acquired. – The hand-over of responsibilities to officially confirm the end of MFAT funding, and any formal ceremony. 	1 = DNMR 2 = Inadequate 3 = Sufficient 4 = Strong 5 = Very strong
Overall Rating		1 = DNMR 2 = Inadequate 3 = Sufficient 4 = Strong 5 = Very strong