

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

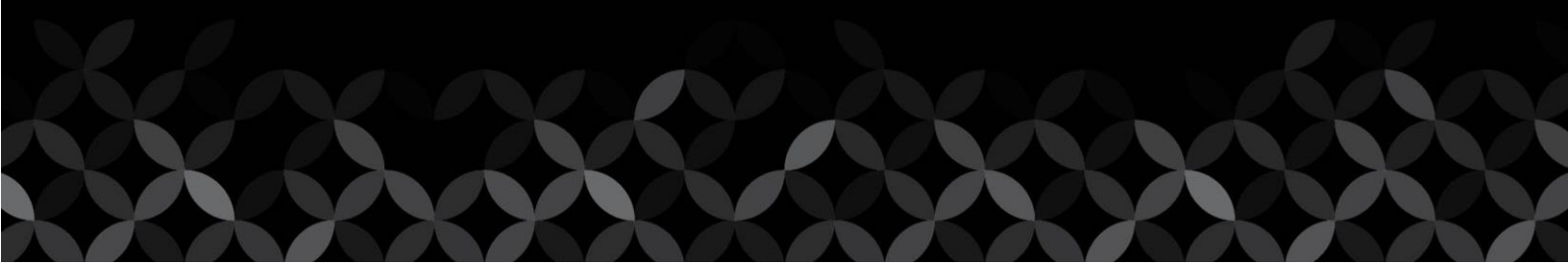
MANATŪ AORERE

# Manaaki

*“Uplifting mana, through listening, supporting and empowering”*

## Activity Design Appraisal Framework

ROUND THREE – Updated February 2021



# Appraisal of Activity Designs

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) bilateral, Post, Partnerships and sector/thematic teams will be involved in appraisals drawing on independent external support and expertise 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 (DNMR)	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

Design Template Section	Guiding questions to make an informed and objective assessment. Compelling positive answers will increase the rating.	Assessment rating
<b>1. Strategic Case (5 pages maximum excluding high level statement and appendix)</b> <i>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. Referenced evidence from international best practice should be included.</i>		
High Level Statement and opportunity [250 characters]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check summary section on page 1 for response to this.</li> <li>Does the applicant clearly articulate what success looks like and is it feasible?</li> </ul>	1 = DNMR 2 = Inadequate 3 = Sufficient 4 = Strong 5 = Very strong
1.1 Development problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the problem clearly articulated and understandable?</li> <li>Is it clear how this problem was identified?</li> <li>Is there a compelling reason to address this issue now?</li> <li>Is there good rationale for the selected location of the Activity? Is it a remote and or difficult to reach location?</li> <li>Will the Activity reach/benefit vulnerable and/or marginalised people and groups<sup>1</sup>? Is it clear how they were identified?</li> <li>Does the applicant provide research or evidence to substantiate claims?</li> </ul>	1 = DNMR 2 = Inadequate 3 = Sufficient 4 = Strong 5 = Very strong

<sup>1</sup> Defined as people and groups experiencing, or at risk of, discrimination and exclusion by historic, existing and [or] emerging economic, social, geographic and political inequalities, and humanitarian situations of crisis, conflict and fragility, which render them disadvantaged and at risk of being left behind by the usual development processes and benefits.

### 1. Strategic Case (5 pages maximum excluding high level statement and appendix)

*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. Referenced evidence from international best practice should be included.*

1.2 Development Context - social, economic and political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there adequate evidence of contextual analysis?</li> <li>• Does the context analysis show a clear understanding of local social, economic, political, and environmental and infrastructure factors (including from COVID-19), as well as how the problem developed and how the conditions might impact the project?</li> <li>• Does the analysis consider equity, social inclusion and/or other human rights concerns?</li> </ul>	<p>1 = DNMR                  2 = Inadequate                  3 = Sufficient                  4 = Strong                  5 = Very strong</p>
1.3 Relevance to NZ Aid Programme objectives and developing partner plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is it clear how this Activity aligns with (or is complementary to) New Zealand Aid Programme and in-country government development priorities?</li> <li>• Is it clear the Activity aligns with the geographical and sector focus of Manaaki?</li> <li>• 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 and other New Zealand Aid Programme priorities, Sustainable Development Goals, or synergies with other donors?</li> <li>• Is it clear how the Activity will strengthen local civil society and reach vulnerable and/or marginalised people and groups<sup>2</sup>?</li> </ul>	<p>1 = DNMR                  2 = Inadequate                  3 = Sufficient                  4 = Strong                  5 = Very strong</p>
1.4 Related Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the proposed design explicitly reference and build on lessons learned from other interventions and best practice?</li> <li>• 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?</li> <li>• Does the Activity fit within the broader work in the planned location or sector i.e does it avoid duplication?</li> <li>• Does the design describe the work of other organisations or agencies/discuss opportunities for potential collaboration?</li> </ul>	<p>1 = DNMR                  2 = Inadequate                  3 = Sufficient                  4 = Strong                  5 = Very strong</p>
<b>Strategic Case</b>	<b>Overall Rating</b>	<p>1 = DNMR                  2 = Inadequate</p>

<sup>2</sup> See footnote 1 on page 2.

**1. Strategic Case (5 pages maximum excluding high level statement and appendix)**

*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. Referenced evidence from international best practice should be included.*

**3 = Sufficient**  
**4 = Strong**  
**5 = Very strong**

## 2. Scope – Activity Design and Description (6 pages maximum excluding appendices)

*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.*

2.1 Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Were a sufficiently wide range of options considered to address the problem? Was the short list comprehensively assessed against relevant criteria?</li> <li>• Is the rationale for selecting the proposed option made clear including the level of consensus and who was involved?</li> <li>• Does the intended approach appear appropriate and feasible based on the context/issues?</li> <li>• Was there sufficient review of the scope either internally or externally?</li> </ul>	<p>1 = DNMR                  2 = Inadequate                  3 = Sufficient                  4 = Strong                  5 = Very strong</p>
2.2 Activities, outputs and outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are the activities (tasks), outputs and approach clearly articulated, measurable and aligned to addressing the problem?</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>	<p>1 = DNMR                  2 = Inadequate                  3 = Sufficient                  4 = Strong                  5 = Very strong</p>
2.3 Efficiency, effectiveness, assumptions and constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the explanation as to how activities and inputs will be delivered on time feasible?</li> <li>• Is the cost effectiveness clearly articulated?</li> <li>• Do the activities, inputs and outputs relate to outcomes and is it clear how they will they transfer into the outcomes?</li> <li>• Are assumptions, interdependencies, constraints clearly presented. Are they logical/reasonable?</li> <li>• Is there is a clear presentation of the theory of change in diagrammatic and narrative form?</li> </ul>	<p>1 = DNMR                  2 = Inadequate                  3 = Sufficient                  4 = Strong                  5 = Very strong</p>
2.4 Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent were local people, groups and/or communities (i.e. the vulnerable and/or marginalised<sup>3</sup>) involved in/consulted regarding the development of this design? Is there evidence of responding to local voice; articulation of local CSO/community priorities and how the Activity will strengthen the ability of these groups to engage and influence through delivery?</li> <li>• Is there a clear and informed understanding of the local community and its structures/networks?</li> <li>• 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? For applicants partnering with government agencies, how will they ensure participation (i.e. will they also partner with local CSOs or incorporate community-based interventions)?</li> </ul>	<p>1 = DNMR                  2 = Inadequate                  3 = Sufficient                  4 = Strong                  5 = Very strong</p>

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 2 on page 2.

## 2. Scope – Activity Design and Description (6 pages maximum excluding appendices)

*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.*

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has it been presented how stakeholder/networks might support /enable and or present obstacles to the implementation of the project/achievement of outcomes?</li> <li>• Are direct/indirect beneficiary numbers provided, broken down by gender/other characteristics?</li> </ul>	
2.5 Inclusive Development, Climate Change and Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the design explain how the Activity delivery will support gender equality and engage/benefit/reach people living with disability and vulnerable and/or marginalised people and groups? i.e. Does the design:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Include a gender analysis (e.g. identifying the needs and engagement of women and men, girls and boys, and gender diverse; and describe gender roles and barriers)?</li> <li>– Identify specific actions to support gender equality?</li> <li>– Identify specific actions to genuinely engage people with disabilities?</li> <li>– Ensure collection of disaggregated data (by sex and other indicators of inclusion/exclusion)</li> <li>– Have a focus on accessing remote or marginalised or other excluded groups?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Has participation been carefully considered/intentionally supported for all gender groups as well as the vulnerable and/or marginalised?</li> <li>• Does the design discuss how investment in this Activity will be climate resilient (e.g how would an Activity building a new water supply avoid or mitigate a water supply scarcity; what are the mitigations for an agricultural Activity should the community face drought?)</li> <li>• Does the design identify possible opportunities (beyond do no harm) to promote environmental integrity, sustainability, support adaptation to climate change, promote emissions reductions and/or improve resilience to natural hazards?</li> </ul>	<p>1 = DNMR                      2 = Inadequate                      3 = Sufficient                      4 = Strong                      5 = Very strong</p>
2.6 Do No Harm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there robust mechanisms and relationships that would enable open and honest dialogue between NZ and the local partner (including ensuring safeguarding and PSEAH concerns can be raised)?</li> <li>• Does the design articulate how activities will do no harm to the local population and the environment?</li> </ul>	<p>1 = DNMR                      2 = Inadequate                      3 = Sufficient                      4 = Strong                      5 = Very strong</p>
2.7 Implementation and workplan Appendix	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the implementation/work plan clear, logical and feasible with high level milestones?</li> <li>• Does it allow for/enable reflections and adaptive design based on lessons learnt?</li> <li>• Does it align with the proposed outputs and scope?</li> <li>• Does it correlate with the budget and resources proposed?</li> </ul>	<p>1 = DNMR                      2 = Inadequate                      3 = Sufficient                      4 = Strong                      5 = Very strong</p>

## 2. Scope – Activity Design and Description (6 pages maximum excluding appendices)

*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.*

Scope Case

Overall Rating 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5

## 3. Commercial Case – Activity cost and value for money (3 pages maximum including high level budget but excluding appendix)

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

3.1 Explanation of Financial Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have explanations as to how costs were determined been comprehensively presented?</li> <li>• Is it clear how the budget links to achieving results, and how this will be monitored?</li> <li>• Are there any concerns/apparent gaps in the costings, explanations (including of how value for money was assessed) and/ or assumptions?</li> <li>• Is their evidence that local partners were involved in decision making about the whole budget including NZ based costs? Is it clear how the budget will enhance localisation?</li> <li>• Has the NZNGO adequately considered risks and mitigations with regard to cost over-runs including forex fluctuations and inflation?</li> <li>• Has the NZNGO confirmed how and when the co-investment 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).</li> <li>• Are in-kind contributions reasonable/substantiated?</li> <li>• Based on what is presented, is it reasonable to assume this Activity would not happen without MFAT support?</li> </ul>	<p>1 = DNMR                  2 = Inadequate                  3 = Sufficient                  4 = Strong                  5 = Very strong</p>
3.2 High-level Activity Budget Table Explanation and Detailed Budget Assessment of Appendix B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has a complete budget amount been presented and are calculations accurate?</li> <li>• Does the budget appear reasonable and good value for money? Do costs appear sufficient or excessive to provide all the resources and inputs required for outputs including MERL costs?</li> <li>• Does the budget meet all MFAT budget requirements?</li> <li>• Is the financial structure in regard to MFAT co-investment and other co-investment adequately presented including from the NZNGO and local CSO/partner?</li> </ul>	<p>1 = DNMR                  2 = Inadequate                  3 = Sufficient                  4 = Strong                  5 = Very strong</p>



### 3. Commercial Case – Activity cost and value for money (3 pages maximum including high level budget but excluding appendix)

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

- (in NZD, excluding GST)
- Do in-kind contributions meet requirements (up to 30% of the NGO co-investment)?

Commercial Case

Overall Rating 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5

### 4. Management Case (4 pages maximum excluding appendices)

*Set out the main issues and factors affecting how the proposed Activity will be delivered on the ground.* A MERL Framework should be provided as Appendix C; an Organisational Chart showing management arrangements should be provided as Appendix D; and a Risk Management and Healthy and Safety Plan as Appendix E.

4.1 Management roles and responsibilities

- 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 and explained?
- Are the roles and responsibilities of the direct beneficiaries, the local CSO/partner 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 partner (self-assessment) and/or the NZNGO having undertaken capacity assessment of 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?
- Does the NZNGO have a plan to ensure relevant support/collaboration is sought if required?

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

#### 4. Management Case (4 pages maximum excluding appendices)

*Set out the main issues and factors affecting how the proposed Activity will be delivered on the ground.* A MERL Framework should be provided as Appendix C; an Organisational Chart showing management arrangements should be provided as Appendix D; and a Risk Management and Healthy and Safety Plan as Appendix E.

4.2 Monitoring, evaluation, research and learning (MERL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the detailed implementation MERL Framework provided in Appendix C fit-for-purpose and clear as to how the outputs will contribute to outcomes?</li> <li>• Are sufficient resources budgeted for MERL activities?</li> <li>• Based on what is presented, is it reasonable to assume the NGO and its partners can perform the implementation and MERL tasks required?</li> <li>• Does the MERL Framework provided in Appendix C and any information provided in section 2 adequately describe/include?                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Diagram of the theory of change</li> <li>– How results will be monitored, measured, and reported</li> <li>– Any ‘stop/go’ decision points</li> <li>– Roles &amp; responsibilities and accountabilities (who is responsible for MERL activities, what and when including explaining any variance)</li> <li>– Any independent Activity Evaluations and/or Post-Activity evaluations</li> <li>– SMART qualitative and quantitative indicators of change</li> <li>– How baseline data will be collected and used to compare/verify results over time</li> <li>– Mechanisms for collecting beneficiary feedback</li> <li>– How reflection will occur and lessons integrated into delivery</li> <li>– How research/learning from this Activity will be communicated with MFAT/NGO supporters/local community/other development actors</li> <li>– How MERL data will be used for decision making and adaptive management (e.g. through annual partner learning forums)?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>1 = DNMR                  2 = Inadequate                  3 = Sufficient                  4 = Strong                  5 = Very strong</p>
4.3 Risk management and safety planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have key risks (Activity, health and safety, safeguarding and reputation, climate change impacts) been presented and prioritised (e.g. rated for seriousness/impact) and addressed in the Risk Management and Health and Safety Plan in Appendix E including those related to COVID-19?</li> <li>• Are these risks reasonable and relevant to the proposed Activity and context?</li> <li>• Have sensible strategies to manage risks been presented?</li> <li>• Are there any significant risks that have not been identified by the NGO?</li> </ul>	<p>1 = DNMR                  2 = Inadequate                  3 = Sufficient                  4 = Strong                  5 = Very strong</p>

#### 4. Management Case (4 pages maximum excluding appendices)

*Set out the main issues and factors affecting how the proposed Activity will be delivered on the ground.* A MERL Framework should be provided as Appendix C; an Organisational Chart showing management arrangements should be provided as Appendix D; and a Risk Management and Healthy and Safety Plan as Appendix E.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the NGO's risk assessment process adequate?</li> <li>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?</li> </ul>	
4.4 Communications and stakeholder planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the NZNGO clearly identify key stakeholders and how they will be engaged?</li> <li>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?</li> </ul>	<p>1 = DNMR                  2 = Inadequate                  3 = Sufficient                  4 = Strong                  5 = Very strong</p>
4.5 Sustainability, ownership and handover management planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does this section adequately describe:                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How the Activity outputs and outcomes will be sustainable</li> <li>How viable/capable is the local partner and/or does the design outline specific strategies for institutional strengthening or local capability enhancement to improve the sustainability of the Activity outcomes?</li> <li>The strategy for management and future ownership of the Activity and any assets acquired.</li> <li>The hand-over of responsibilities to officially confirm the end of MFAT funding, and any formal ceremony.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>1 = DNMR                  2 = Inadequate                  3 = Sufficient                  4 = Strong                  5 = Very strong</p>
<b>Management Case</b>		<b>Overall Rating 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5</b>