

## **GRANT SCHEMES FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION BY NORWEGIAN AND INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTARY ACTORS**

### **GUIDELINES**

#### **1. Introduction**

The cooperation covered by these guidelines encompasses short- and medium-term humanitarian assistance, support for peace and reconciliation processes, human rights and democracy-building, and long-term development cooperation.

The schemes are primarily aimed at strengthening civil society as a driving force and agent for change in achieving national and international development goals. For the purpose of these guidelines, “civil society” means the formal and informal networks that are active in the public sphere between the state and the family. Development assistance directed towards civil society encompasses not only the actors concerned, but also the steering parameters, meetingplaces and interaction that provide the actors with influence and room for manoeuvre. Norwegian NGOs and other voluntary actors have a comparative advantage in their cooperation with civil society in developing countries because of the role they play in the development of Norwegian society.

Organizations and networks in civil society can serve as a voice for the poor, and strengthen their influence on social parameters and practical policy. However, this requires two conditions: that people consider their own influence to be legitimate and that there are arenas and channels available for them to express their interests and views. Respect for freedom of expression, freedom to organize and freedom of association, the right to gather and disseminate information and respect for civil and political rights are all fundamental in this regard.

Grants to humanitarian assistance and development cooperation by NGOs are a supplement to multilateral and bilateral development cooperation. Voluntary workers, interest groups and organizations are necessary in every country to serve as prime movers, guides, correctives and partners in the development process. A country’s civil society reflects the divisions and lines of conflict in that country, at both local and national level. The distribution of roles between the public sector, the market and civil society is the national responsibility of the individual country and the way these roles are distributed varies from country to country, depending on national policies and other steering parameters. Development cooperation must be based on an understanding of the various actors’ roles in their own society.

International development goals and the growing need for humanitarian assistance require all the actors in international cooperation to coordinate their activities effectively and make efficient use of scarce natural resources, and to base these efforts on a clear and strategically well-defined distribution of roles. Cooperation with civil society must be organized in a way that effectively promotes social change in keeping with international development goals.

Strengthening local capacity and ownership is a central element in these efforts. Every country's progress and stability depend on the development of a functioning democracy and respect for human rights.

Poverty reduction, people's participation in decisions that affect them and the promotion of good governance form a sound basis for reducing violent conflicts and the effects of natural disasters. It is the poorer segments of the civilian population that suffer most from violent conflicts and natural disasters. Crisis management at the local level helps to prevent violent conflict and war, to support reconstruction and to alleviate the effects of new disasters. Conflict prevention and intensified efforts to promote peace and reconciliation require close integration of humanitarian assistance into long-term development cooperation

## **2. Aims of the grant schemes**

These grant schemes are based on Report No. 19 (1995-96) to the Storting, *A Changing World*, and on the annual Proposition No. 1 to the Storting (the Fiscal Budget).

The grant schemes are intended to make it possible for organizations and other actors to contribute effectively to achieving key goals in Norwegian development policy, including:

- sustainable alleviation of poverty and support for national poverty strategies,
- rapid, effective and high-quality humanitarian assistance to victims of natural disasters and emergencies resulting from conflicts and war,
- prevention of natural disasters and enhancement of local capacity for crisis management,
- peace and reconciliation in conflict situations, both through prevention and during reconstruction after conflict and war,
- promotion of human rights, the principles of the rule of law, political pluralism and democracy,
- maintenance and strengthening of the natural resource base and the local environment,
- strengthening of popular participation in local and national decision-making processes,
- improved access for the poor to social, economic and political resources,
- coping with and control of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and its consequences,
- increased participation by women in decision-making processes and improvement of women's lives,
- promotion of the rights of the disabled,
- promotion of children's rights,
- promotion of the rights of indigenous people and minorities,
- strengthening of solidarity between the people of Norway and those of developing countries.

## **3. Principles**

All grants under these schemes are for activities in countries that at any given time are on the DAC list of developing countries eligible for ODA. Grants may be given to countries that are not on this list in exceptional cases. Some of the schemes also have special geographical or thematic guidelines.

Cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Norad and voluntary actors is based on respect for the identity, independence and distinctive characteristics of the grant recipient.

Activities supported under these schemes must satisfy the same qualitative criteria as other Norwegian development assistance with regard to recipient and performance orientation. Importance is attached to strategic coordination between the various development actors in their efforts to achieve the development goals.

The activity in question must be planned and run in such a way as to provide the most effective and targeted assistance for poverty reduction. Grant recipients must describe and give reasons for the cooperation relations and activities in the context of other relevant activities in civil society and the public sector.

Local resources shall decide the form, scope and goals of the cooperation, both technically and financially. The main emphasis is on cooperation with partners in civil society. Local and central government authorities in the partner country may be cooperation partners in cases where this contributes to capacity- and institution-building within their spheres of responsibility and in areas where the grant recipient has particular expertise.

The activities must allow for flexibility and must be subject to review and assessment. The cooperation must aim at building up capacity in local cooperation partners. Systematic learning by the grant recipient, the exchange of ideas and information and the dissemination of experience are to be given weight. Emphasis will also be placed on systematic learning by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Norad, for example through regular reviews and appraisal of the various activities.

The activities must be carried out in such a way that they do not detract from the national authorities' ability to govern and responsibility for government.

Activities should from the beginning have goals and plans for achieving the necessary sustainability, so that the long-term effects of the activities can be maintained after external assistance has been phased out.

When grants are awarded for help in acute humanitarian crises, the usual requirements may be waived.

All the activities to be supported must benefit the local population irrespective of social background, sex, religion, political views and ethnic or cultural affiliation.

#### **4. Grant recipients**

The grant recipient must:

- be a separate legal entity with its own statutes and an accountable board of directors,
- have framed a strategy for its involvement in the developing country,
- have an adequate financial basis that will enable it to carry out the work, and the necessary technical and administrative competence and capacity for project work and management,
- mobilize and inspire its members and supporters to become involved in activities in addition to collecting funds.

Examples of recipients to which grants may be allocated are Norwegian NGOs, trade unions, organized interest groups, religious movements, and educational and research institutions.

Grant recipients must be able to demonstrate that their expertise and capacity are commensurate with the activities to be supported. They must also be able to demonstrate that they will give added value to the cooperation in addition to purely economic contributions.

Norwegian recipients are expected to take part in the work of providing information and changing attitudes vis-à-vis the Norwegian public.

Support may be given on the basis of a special assessment to independent international NGOs or organizational networks that are active in several different countries at a regional or global level. International actors based in the South will be given priority. The support is subject to the same conditions as other support under these schemes.

Recipients must also satisfy the requirements posed at any given time as regards financial management and the technical quality of the development assistance.

## **5. Forms of cooperation and grants**

The form of cooperation and financial conditions will vary according to the type of grant scheme that covers the activities. Information about the various schemes is given below.

A dialogue is carried out with the grant recipients on the priorities and operating conditions for the cooperation. In this dialogue all the various grant schemes are taken into consideration.

Grants are calculated on the basis of budgeted expenses that are directly linked to the activity that is to be supported.

The respective contributions to be made by the Norwegian and the local partner to carrying out the planned activity must be described in the application.

The grant is subject to the conditions set out in the notification. When the grants are received the conditions are assumed to have been accepted.

The grants are subject to the annual allocations over the government budget. The grants must be administered in accordance with the notification and with generally accepted principles of financial management.

### **5.1 Long-term development cooperation. Allocations earmarked for voluntary actors**

In order to exploit the comparative advantages and expertise of Norwegian voluntary actors, grants under this global scheme are particularly directed at strengthening civil society.

Grants may be awarded for activities in countries that at any given time are on the DAC list of developing countries eligible for ODA, and on the basis of the special role the recipient considers itself to play in development cooperation with partner organizations in civil society.

The cooperation must enhance the ability of the cooperation partners to coordinate their activities with each other and with the authorities, and to influence development in a way that enables poor and marginalized groups to participate more fully and gives them greater opportunities for improving their living conditions and sources of income. Support for organization, capacity-building, strengthening of the social network, exchange of information, knowledge development and entrepreneurship are all important target areas for change-oriented development cooperation with civil society. Grants for the provision of services should preferably be given when this will help strengthen the partner's organizing ability and capacity.

Notification may be given for support for up to five years at a time, depending on the cooperation model and type of agreement.

Annual reports must be submitted documenting that the grant recipient has covered at least 10 per cent of the costs entered in the accounts using its own cash funds.

The grant recipient may use up to 8 per cent to cover administrative costs.

The annual reports should describe the cooperation relations and the contribution made by the activities in a broader national development perspective.

In areas of Norwegian development assistance that have been given special priority, the grant recipient may apply for an exemption to the rule concerning a minimum of 10 per cent of its own cash funds.

Applications must be made to Norad.

## **5.2 Geographically and thematically based allocations**

Such allocations are not earmarked for voluntary actors, but can be made in the form of grants for these actors' activities under the conditions that at any time follow from the purpose and steering parameters of the allocation. This presupposes that the grant recipient has special expertise and accepts certain special conditions and strategic guidelines governing the specified objectives of the allocation and the characteristics of the activity in question.

The provision of services, as in primary industries, education and health, may be supported. Emphasis will be placed on activities that are effective and relevant, that develop and revitalize working methods and that contribute to long-term organizational and economic sustainability. The provision of such services must be in accordance with national strategies and standards and take account of the principles of equal treatment and equitable distribution. The grant donor reserves the right to evaluate the choice of cooperation partner and the location of the project and to impose requirements as regards coordination and collaboration.

The grant will be calculated on the basis of the budgeted expenses for the activity for which a grant is being applied and of a comprehensive appraisal of the activity in the context of the total Norwegian investment in the country and field in question.

The requirements as to the recipient's own efforts and the rules for covering administrative costs are the same as for the earmarked allocations (5.1), unless a special exception is made.

The time frame, reporting requirements and cooperation routines will depend on the nature of the project and must be specified in the agreement.

Applications should be made to Norad in the case of long-term development cooperation and to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the case of transitional aid.

### **5.3 Humanitarian assistance and support for human rights and democracy measures**

Grants under the present scheme are intended to be part of rapid, effective and high-quality humanitarian assistance to the victims of natural disasters and to refugees and others in an emergency situation resulting from war and conflict. They are also intended to contribute to peace and reconciliation efforts in conflict situations, both through preventive measures and in connection with reconstruction after war and conflict, and to promote respect for human rights, the principles of the rule of law, political pluralism and democracy.

Grants may be given to projects with a limited time frame. Such projects should be terminated as soon as circumstances allow.

On conclusion of the agreement, an assessment shall have been made of the probable time frame for the organization's participation in the humanitarian efforts and of which guiding principles the organization will follow in its cooperation with local partners, including the transfer of responsibility to partners or outphasing.

Local takeover of the project, competence-building and strengthening of local capacity should as far as possible be integral elements of the project.

Grants may be made on application for projects and if appropriate to cover the main organization's administration costs in the country in which it is based.

Applications are to be made to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

## **6. Responsibility**

Applications are assessed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or Norad, depending on which cooperation arrangement applies to the activity in question. The grant donor issues the notification and draws up a draft of the agreement.

The grant recipient is responsible for administering the grant in accordance with the notification and with the agreement that has been concluded, from receipt of the grant until all the conditions have been fulfilled. Control of the activities and responsibility for carrying them out must be regulated in an agreement between the grant recipient and the local partner.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the appeals body in the case of decisions made by Norad.

## **7. Forms of agreement**

Cooperation with the grant recipient is governed by the guidelines for grant schemes, the requirements governing the financial management of grants, the letter of notification and any agreements that have been concluded.

Applications under the grant scheme for humanitarian purposes (cf. 5.3) may be made for grants lasting for up to 12 months.

Long-term agreements may on application be concluded with grant recipients that meet all the minimum requirements and have extensive experience of development cooperation supported by Norad. The party to the agreement must have shown in previous cooperation efforts that it has the capacity and expertise to make effective use of development assistance funds, and must be able to document that it has adequate routines for planning, implementing, following up and evaluating its own development assistance activities.

Agreements may be made with an association of several independent organizations that have established a joint development assistance secretariat.

## **8. Consultations and cooperation**

Norwegian actors (or their partners) are expected to coordinate their activities with those of other actors in the same field or with those of other actors and authorities at various levels in the country in question.

They must provide a description of the other actors in the field and of how the activity contributes to the total picture in the sector/target area. The embassies shall serve as meeting places in cases where consultations may create synergies, promote complementarity and deepen knowledge of developments in the country.

At the same time the Norwegian authorities will seek to ensure through other channels (primarily multilateral) that the national authorities give higher priority to creating enabling environments for the development of civil society, with an emphasis on the legal framework and respect for fundamental rights and freedoms.

There is also a need in Norway for more knowledge of the various ways in which Norway can contribute to development in a particular country or thematic target area and for discussions on this subject. This requires cooperation across organizational boundaries and in appropriate ways between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Norad and the organizations.

## **9. Verification and follow-up**

The grant donor and the Office of the Auditor General are to have the right to examine all documentation related to the activity being supported and to verify at any time that the support is being used according to the intention.

The grant donor may also carry out a review or appraisal of the cooperation partner, the project or any other activity that is receiving a grant. The grant recipient is obliged to facilitate such follow-up.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Norad lay down more detailed information concerning the requirements for accounting, auditing and reporting in the rules for the financial management of grants.

## **10. Applications and reporting**

The deadline for applications to Norad is normally 1 September each year for support for the following year. For organizations that cooperate regularly with Norad the deadlines are published every year in Norad's schedule of administrative procedures. In special cases Norad publishes other deadlines.

More detailed information on the application procedure may be obtained from Norad. The requirements for accounting, auditing and reporting are laid down in the rules for the financial management of grants.

There are no deadlines for applications for grants from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

## **11. Addresses**

Applications and other enquiries concerning these grant schemes should be addressed to:

The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad)

Postal address: P.O. Box 8034 Dep, 0030 Oslo

Street address: Ruseløkkvn. 26

Telephone: 22 24 20 30

Telefax: 22 24 30 31

E-mail: [postmottak@norad.no](mailto:postmottak@norad.no)

Information may also be obtained from Norad's Information Department or from

<http://www.norad.no>

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Postal address: P.O. Box 8114 Dep., 0032 Oslo

Office address: 7. juni plassen 1/Victoria Terrasse 7, 0251 Oslo

Telephone: + 47 22 24 36 00

Telefax: + 47 22 24 95 80/+ 47 22 24 95 81

E-mail address: [postmottak@mfa.no](mailto:postmottak@mfa.no)

Information may also be obtained from the ministry and from <http://www.odin.dep.no/ud>.