

Australian Small Activities Scheme (ASAS)

GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION

The Australian Small Activities Scheme (ASAS) is a component of the Vietnam-Australia Development Cooperation Program administered by the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID). The Scheme is intended as a mechanism for funding relatively small development activities in Vietnam. The guidelines may be subject to adjustment from year to year depending on funding allocation and program priorities agreed between the two governments.

GOAL

The goal of the Australian Small Activities Scheme is to support small discrete initiatives which contribute to poverty reduction and sustainable development in areas consistent with the Vietnam – Australia Development Cooperation Program and supplementary regional strategies.

THE VIETNAM AUSTRALIA DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION PROGRAM

In May 2003, the Governments of Viet Nam and Australia agreed on a new Development Cooperation Program Strategy 2003-2007. The objective of the revised program is “to advance Australia’s national interest by assisting Viet Nam to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development.” The goal will be achieved through two strategic objectives:

1. **Broad based economic growth** by strengthening the governance of institutions required for a competitive market economic; and
2. **Improved productivity and links to markets for the rural poor** in the Mekong Delta and Central Coast regions

Copies of the new Development Cooperation Program Strategy are available on the AusAID web site: www.ausaid.gov.au/vietnam

AusAID encourages applications for ASAS activities in line with the objectives of the Country Strategy. Examples of focus areas where grants may be given are:

1. Activities that directly aim at poverty reduction for poor people:
 - Income generation activities (especially those that support women to actively participate in income generation and social activities): for example (1)

- development of agro-forestry and/or agro-fishery models for incomes and food security promotion; (2) livestock and animal husbandry recovery for income generation; (3) technology transfer to promote tree-for-fruit model for income improvement...
- Integrated agriculture activities: for example (1) promotion of sustainable use and management of forestry products for food security; (2) development of grassroots agricultural extension network; (3) transformation of agricultural plantation structure to aquatic plantation structure for alternative livelihood.....
 - Environmental education and protection linked to poverty reduction activities: for example (1) bio-diversity preservation and environmental protection in river basin areas; (2) protection of mangrove-forests and sustainable use of mangrove-forest products; (3) education and communication youth activities to promote environmental protection habits.....
2. Activities that promote better social and/or economic governance:
- Social governance: grassroots democracy implementation and promotion; administrative reform projects; strengthening civil society as a contribution to better governance.....
 - Economic governance: hunger alleviation and poverty reduction capacity building activities; decentralization in community forestry management with its link to poverty reduction; capacity building on the management of micro-credit activity for poor women.....

Well-targeted proposals in support of AusAID's other regional and corporate objectives, such as: HIV/AIDS; trafficking of women and children; and gender equity will also be considered. Additionally, whilst the focus of the Country Program is on the Central Coast and Mekong Regions, AusAID will consider high value and innovative proposals from other regions in Vietnam.

ADMINISTRATION

General administration of this Scheme is the responsibility of Ms Le Minh Nga, Cross Sectoral Program Support Officer in Hanoi.

FUNDING

The value of single activities which can be funded under this Scheme will be in the order of AUD10,000 to AUD100,000.

AusAID is willing to consider co-funding to support projects which meet the selection criteria but have budget amount that exceeds the funding limit of this Scheme. Eligible projects could be co-funded with either a Government Agency or Bilateral Donors who may have the same interests in these projects. Co-funding mechanism will be specified in a Co-funding Grant Agreement on the case-by-case basis.

SUBMISSION; APPRAISAL; AND APPROVAL

Activities proposed for funding under the Scheme may be identified by either Vietnamese or Australian agencies, organisations or NGOs. Project proposals are to be submitted in writing to the AusAID office at either the Australian Embassy in Hanoi or the Australian Consulate General in Ho Chi Minh City. Proposals are normally assessed in November and December each year. Any proposals received after 31 October will be held over for consideration in the following year. All applicants will be acknowledged upon the receipt of proposals.

Each proposal for funding under this Scheme will be appraised and, in some cases, will subject to a site visit by AusAID staff to verify the project design and implementation arrangements. Proposals will be shortlisted and appraised for their development impact and consistency with the overall objectives of the Vietnam - Australia Development Cooperation Program.

Final approval on the selection of successful projects is the authority of the Counsellor (Development Cooperation), Australian Embassy in Hanoi. A Grant Agreement advising of project approval and of the conditions relating to the Grant will be sent to the applicant as soon as possible after the completion of each selection round. Unsuccessful applicants will be informed in writing.

ELIGIBILITY

ASAS grants are available to government and non-government organisations and community groups engaged in development activities in Vietnam on a not-for-profit basis.

ASAS is primarily aimed at supporting small-scale development projects/activities that are participatory in nature and have involved beneficiaries in their identification, design and management.

Eligible activities would normally be implemented over a relatively short period of time of not more than 1 year.

As a general rule, the following activities and inputs will not be funded:

- conferences or overseas study tours;
- pre-investment/feasibility studies or pilot demonstration projects related to potential down-stream commercial activities;
- lead-in studies for future larger projects;
- contributions directly towards the components of a bilateral project;

- academic training in Australia;
- research projects;
- items of recurrent nature such as staff salaries, office rental and utility costs, spare parts, supplies, maintenance and repairs, etc;
- payment of consultants and advisors, where they constitute a major cost component.
- activities that primarily involve construction works (i.e. construction of schools, commune health station, rural road, etc.)
- activities that involve the provision of underground water (i.e. construction of wells and handpump, etc.)

COUNTERPART CONTRIBUTION

A counterpart contribution, in cash or kind, of some 10% of the total project cost is normally required from the proposing organisation or from the beneficiaries themselves. The counterpart contribution could include project management and administration, provision of food used during training, labour, raw materials and/or existing assets and services which may be costed and valued.

PROJECT PROPOSAL FORMAT

Proposed activities should be clearly defined in accordance with the Attachment 1.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Activities must be:

- consistent with the Vietnam – Australia Development Cooperation Program Strategy 2003-2007 and Australian development cooperation policies;
- capable of being implemented on the basis of a single design document which will be appraised at the post;

In addition, consideration will be given to the following issues:

- ASAS activities should demonstrate their impact on poverty reduction. Applications should clearly detail the expected development impact, for example in terms of promoting community development, health, the role of women and disadvantaged peoples, and environmental sustainability;
- It is essential that ASAS projects be orientated towards self-help and be sustainable. Submissions should demonstrate a commitment on the part of the local authorities

and/or people who will be the beneficiaries to implement the activities and sustain them.

- Appropriate institutional support arrangements must be described, eg the level of recurrent costs generated and evidence of capacity to sustain these costs in the longer term. Examples include staff for medical centres and schools, utility costs etc;
- The extent to which the activity might act as a catalyst for additional development of the target community;
- The demonstration or pilot capacity of a project – preference for projects with clear capacity to be replicated without (or minimal) further outside assistance.
- ASAS projects will be considered in terms of value for money. They must represent cost-effective options to achieve the desired outcomes.

Please note that given the limited funding available each year more worthwhile activities are submitted than can be funded.

MONITORING AND REPORTING

The following reports are required from the recipient organisation once the project funding is approved:

- a. progress report (at the mid point of the project implementation). This should provide a brief overview of project achievements against what was anticipated in the application. Any significant problems encountered should be described as well as action taken to overcome these problems.
- b. project completion report (2 months after the project completion). All recipients must submit a project completion report. A pro-forma report is provided by AusAID.

Monitoring visits to observe the implementation and progress of activities will be conducted by the staff from the AusAID Office. Joint monitoring visits to co-funding activities will be organised with participation of AusAID office and co-donors. In certain cases, participation of Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) may also be invited.

If for any reason, the proposal or nay activities included in the proposal can not proceed as originally approved, the AusAID must be informed immediately. In such situations AusAID may require any unexpended funds to be returned.

FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS

The Australian Government requires that the recipient organisation provide a full financial acquittal report as part of the project completion report.

Where goods are being procured as part of the activity, the ASAS grant will cover only the actual cost price of the goods. No additional costs may be charged.

An auditor's report may be requested by the AusAID Representative or MPI.

AUSTRALIAN IDENTITY

Australian funding of activities should be acknowledged in an appropriate way. This might involve signs on infrastructure, or written acknowledgments in brochures and programs etc. Recipient agencies are requested to consult with AusAID staff before acknowledging Australian funding supports in their projects.

FAMILY PLANNING ACTIVITIES

The Guiding Principles Questionnaire at Attachment 2 should be completed if projects include a family planning component. Family planning activities refer to projects that involve:

- family planning services including counselling;
- training in the practice of family planning;
- distributing contraceptives for family planning purposes;
- developing and distributing family planning information, education and communication materials; and/or
- capacity building for organisations that deliver family planning services.

This definition excludes all other projects that fall under the general categories of health, and population and reproductive health. Projects such as STD control including HIV/AIDS, and pre- and post-natal care will not be subject to this checklist if they do not include a family planning component.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information can be obtained from the AusAID Offices at the addresses indicated below:

Counsellor (Development Cooperation)
AusAID
Australian Embassy
8 Dao Tan Street
Ba Dinh District
Hanoi

Counsellor (Development Cooperation)
AusAID
Australian Consulate General
4th Floor, Landmark Building
5b Ton Duc Thang Street
District 1 HCMC

ATTACHMENT 1

AUSTRALIAN SMALL ACTIVITIES SCHEME

Please read the ASAS Guidelines carefully before writing your application. Please fill out this form and then attach a description of the project following the format shown in section 1-3

PROJECT SUMMARY AND CONTACT DETAILS

(Please complete this Section of the form with as much detail as possible.)

Project Title:

Sector:

Project Duration:

Project Location:

Commune

District

City

Province

Name of the Organisation Proposing the Project

Telephone number:

Address:

Total Cost of the Project:

Total Amount of Local Contribution:

Contribution of Any Other Organisation:

Total Amount Requested:

Date of application:

Name and position:

Signature:

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Describe the development problem or issue which the project is designed to overcome
- Explain how the problem arose.
- Describe the area where the project will be located including its socio-economic status.
- Describe the target groups (disaggregated by gender where appropriate) and their needs. Describe the relationship of those needs to the goal of the ASAS.
- Explain the reason for undertaking this project. How will this project help solve the problem?
- Are there any similar activities being conducted by government or other donors to address the problem in your area?

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 Goal/Objectives

State the major development objectives of this project (Objectives should be stated in measurable terms whenever possible, such as

2.2 Project Implementation

- **Describe** the key activities/tasks to be carried out
- Provide an implementation schedule for the project (breakdown for each components/tasks if necessary)
- Detail the inputs required (personnel, equipment, training, etc).
- Explain how this project will benefit the target beneficiaries. If possible give the number of direct beneficiaries and any indirect beneficiaries by target groups (disaggregated by gender where appropriate).
- Describe how the beneficiaries have been involved in developing the proposal;
- What other benefits can be expected as a result of this project (additional teachers/doctors)?
- How will the outcomes of the project be sustained over time? How will the ongoing operating and maintenance costs be covered? Will fees be levied on users?

2.3 Funding

- Provide a detailed breakdown of the costs required to undertake the activities. Describe how these costs have been calculated (e.g on the basis of quotes)
- Specify the amount of funding requested from AusAID
- Contribution by the requesting agency (e.g funds, labour, materials)

- Has the proposal also been or will be submitted to other donors? Is this activity a part of or being implemented in conjunction with any activity funded by Government or other donors?

2.4 Project Management

Describe how you plan to manage the project (provide details on who will be responsible for each components/tasks if appropriate).

3. OTHER RELEVANT ISSUES

- Does the project create any possible negative environmental and health impacts? What are the proposed remedial actions for the problems?
- How are women consulted during the preparation of the project? If so, describe the consultation process.

ATTACHEMENT 2

GUIDING PRINCIPLES **FOR AUSTRALIAN ASSISTANCE FOR FAMILY PLANNING**

ACTIVITIES

Australia supports a reproductive health approach to family planning activities based on the following guiding principles:

- Individuals should decide freely the number and spacing of their children and have the information and means to exercise this choice.
- Women and men should have access to the widest possible range of safe and effective family planning methods and should participate fully in defining the family planning services they need.
- Family planning programs should cater for all people who may be sexually active.
- Australia's assistance should actively work towards improving the quality of care in family planning programs by (but not limited to):
 - involving communities in planning programs appropriate to their needs;
 - increasing the choice of family planning methods available;
 - improving the skills and competence of family planning service providers;
 - providing accurate information and confidential counselling for clients;
 - providing follow-up advice and services to clients;
 - ensuring affordable, acceptable and accessible services.

NOTE:

- *Australian aid funds are not available for activities that involve abortion training or services, or research, trials or activities, which directly involve abortion drugs.*
- *Australian aid funds can ONLY be used to purchase contraceptives which are available and widely used in Australia: monthly cycle oral contraceptive pills; barrier methods (including condoms, diaphragms, cervical caps), Depo Provera (three monthly injectable), Copper T and Multiload IUDs and Implanon (hormonal implant).*
- *Australian aid funds cannot be used to provide information, education or communication (IEC) materials on emergency contraception.*

FAMILY PLANNING CHECKLIST

The *Family Planning Checklist* is a tool for monitoring and reporting on the family planning component of projects funded under the Australian aid program. The contractor/NGO should answer the *Checklist* in narrative form.

NAME OF PROJECT

NAME OF IMPLEMENTING AGENCY:

COUNTRY:.....

.....

PERIOD COVERED BY THE CHECKLIST:.....

1. Has the project encountered any difficulties in ensuring the beneficiaries are able to make free and informed choices about the number, timing and spacing of their children?
 - If so, what were these difficulties?
 - How are these difficulties being addressed?
2. Are project beneficiaries able to choose freely from a wide range of family planning methods?
 - What is the range of methods available?
3. Do all project beneficiaries have access to accurate information about family planning?
 - What is the range of information available?
 - Is the quality of information adequate?
4. Please list all types of IEC (Information, Education and Communication) material developed or purchased with Australian aid funds during this reporting period. (Please note: it is the contractors/NGO's responsibility to ensure that all Australian aid funded IEC material complies with the *Guiding Principles*.)
5. (Other questions as identified by the AusAID Activity Manager/NGO Section)

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