

**UK Aid Connect: Frequently Asked Questions**  
**(Updated on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2017)**

This document will be routinely updated as more questions are submitted. For ease, we have tried to group questions around similar issues.

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## **1. Eligibility**

**Are non-UK based organisations eligible to apply to UK Aid Connect?**

Yes.

**India was previously on the list of eligible countries but does not appear on the lists featured in the terms of reference. What is the status of India?**

India appeared on the eligible countries list on the UK Aid Connect website in error and has been removed from the list. It is not an eligible country.

**Previously DFID have said they will no longer fund Myanmar – but it is on the list of eligible countries for UK Aid Connect (under both lowest 50 HDI and high/moderate fragility) – can you kindly just confirm that Myanmar is definitely eligible for UK Aid Connect?**

We can confirm that Myanmar is an eligible country.

**Note Iraq and Syria are included on the eligible country list yet a number of other fragile countries are excluded.**

UK Aid Connect grants will be awarded to consortia for work to benefit people in countries ranked in the bottom 50 countries in the Human Development Index and/or those on DFID's fragile states list.

We recognise there are other countries that could be considered, UK Connect is not the only avenue for funding.

**Is it mandatory that my organisation needs to be based in DFID priority countries?**

UK Aid Connect grants will be awarded to consortia for work in or for the benefit of people in countries ranked in the bottom 50 countries in the Human Development Index and/or those on DFID's fragile states list. The Consortia do not need to be based there.

**Given the list of countries, is it safe to assume you are looking for quite a large, global scope?**

The objective of UK Aid Connect is to deliver exciting, innovative approaches that can be used around the world to produce rigorous evidence of effective approaches that can be used globally and will probably require work in a number of countries.

**I have been able to bring together a consortium of researchers and Psychiatrists at three major hospitals in Pakistan to study and research the effects of child abuse on adult mental health, in order to potentially**

**influence a change in current policies on child protection, which unfortunately are almost non-existent. Would UK Aid Connect be the right funding opportunity for us to pursue this project?**

We are not expecting to fund pure research programmes. We are very keen for new ideas to be tested and worked on within the programmes. We are keen for there to be a real practical aspect to it; testing and trialling in the field and making sure that effective new approaches can be scaled up, underpinned by robust evidence. We will be expecting consortia to present a balanced proposal with a mix of practical programme delivery and evidence generation showing the potential for scale up across multiple countries.

In this context, it will be up to you to determine whether your current proposed project and consortia would be able to deliver this.

**Can NGOs from Tajikistan, in close partnership with the Commissioner for Children's Rights apply to UK Aid Connect?**

We would expect consortiums to be made up of a wide range of partners, though the consortium lead must be a registered non-governmental and not-for-profit-organisation. UK government funds cannot be directed to any government ministries or its associated agencies, if the Commissioner for Children's Rights has any affiliation with the government of Tajikistan it wouldn't be considered an eligible consortium partner.

**Would DFID consider an application from a consortia targeting only one country, if not what would be the minimum acceptable number of countries?**

DFID is not expressing a preference in terms of whether proposals are multi-country or single country proposals. We want to leave this as open as possible.

**In light with the current UK Aid Connect funding, are we limited to organisations and Universities in the UK or are US Universities also eligible?**

Yes, if it is a registered non-governmental and not-for-profit organisation.

**Please can you provide clarity on any eligibility or assessment threshold that DFID will be applying to the UK Aid Connect programme in relation to lead applicant and size of grant? Also, how would you view a consortium that was not led by the biggest INGO partner?**

We will not be setting any thresholds for grant size as a proportion of annual turnover either for the consortium-lead or consortium members. The consortium-lead will need to demonstrate that they have sufficient capacity, capability and governance structures in place to manage the funds, including the arrangements and flow of funds to consortium partners.

**We are a UK based charity who support black and African children through various projects (trafficking, family support, therapeutic) - we don't have official international links to charities and organisations in Africa although we have previously worked informally with parties since we are a specialist service who are recognised as offering help/support that is considered culturally relevant. Are we eligible to apply?**

UK Aid Connect grants will be awarded to consortia for work in or for the benefit of people in countries ranked in the bottom 50 countries in the Human Development Index and/or those on DFID's fragile states list. The Consortia do not need to be based there. However, we are interested in as wide a range of organisations as possible. We do want Southern involvement and organisations that can reach different groups and different areas.

It appears that you work with children and families from Africa but now residing in the UK. Under these circumstances, for the reasons set out above, you would not be eligible for a grant through UK Aid Connect.

**For the Non-governmental organisations, would it be only the NGOs based on the countries mentioned? Does this mean that outside the enumerated countries, only the NGOs based in the UK are eligible to apply?**

The only pre-requisite is that the consortia-lead has to be a registered non-government, not for profit organisation. The organisation does not have to be UK registered. Organisations also do not have to be registered in the benefitting countries listed, although we would expect the proposal to set out work that will be for the benefit of people in those countries. We would also hope that some members of the consortium would be from the global south.

**Is there any benefit to having diversity in a region when considering programming?**

It's about whether you have the spread of countries to show an approach is effective and can be used widely. But there is always a trade-off between breadth and depth.

## **2. Consortia/Partnerships**

**Can my organisation lead or be part of one or more consortium?**

Yes.

**Can a UN Agency be nominated to lead a consortium?**

No. There is nothing to prohibit a UN agency being part of a consortium but they can't perform the function of consortium-lead as UK Aid Connect is specifically set up for the awarding of accountable grants to non-governmental, not-for-profit organisations.

**Can a private sector organisation be nominated to lead a consortium?**

No. The consortium lead must be a registered non-governmental and not-for-profit organisation.

**Can a university be nominated to lead a consortium?**

Yes, if it is a registered non-governmental and not-for-profit organisation

**Can a government body lead a consortium?**

No. The consortium lead must be a registered non-governmental and not-for-profit organisation.

**If a consortium has international or southern organisations involved, does it need the lead to be UK based?**

No, it is not a requirement for the lead organisation having to be UK based, providing they can attend the co-creation phase.

**Any indications on the size of the consortia you are looking for? If they are on the larger side, any chance for exclusive/non-exclusive partnerships?**

No, we are not suggesting any specific size for the consortia. We will leave it up to the consortia to make the case for the size of consortium they feel is most appropriate.

You can have a consortium of a certain size, but work with a wider range of organisations.

**How broad based do you anticipate successful consortia being? How broad does the skill and experience base need to be?**

As with size, we leave this up to you. There is a trade-off between breadth and depth, so we look forward to seeing what you come up with.

**Is there any preference for working with NGOs, CBOs and what that might look like?**

No, we do not have any preferences.

**What is the ideal geographical reach of the consortia? Do proposals have to be multi-country or will single country proposals be considered?**

DFID is not expressing a preference. We want to leave this as open as possible.

**Can a consortium, as part of its intervention, look to develop a further downstream grant facility?**

Yes as long as there is an explanation as to why this is needed to meet the overall objectives of the programme.

**DFID would like to see consortia including a broad range of organisations. Should a bid include all agreed consortia members?**

Yes, the bid should include all proposed consortium members and complete the 2-pages accordingly. The more information provided on the proposed consortium and all members the better. A strong bid will demonstrate what all members bring to the table.

**If so, do all members complete Section 3 2-pagers if not managing DFID funding? Or is DFID expecting to only see core partners in a bid, with reference to additional partners with whom organisations may decide to work with during the co-creation phase?**

Yes, see answer to previous question.

**The guidance notes imply that DFID has a preference for just one consortium under each theme at this time. Does this mean there might be additional calls under each theme in future in which other consortia might be successful addressing other issues, not addressed by the first 'crop'?**

Too early to say. Future funding windows will be subject to the availability of funds in future years.

**Will DFID assist with bringing consortia together?**

DFID is not in a position to bring consortia together as this could pose a potential conflict of interest. BOND and The Scottish Alliance have already facilitated a brokering exercise to help bring potential partners together.

**As a new consortium, where consortia include local NGOs, how would you see capacity building in local NGOs to continue work outside of the life-span of the project?**

Yes. We are assuming that there will be a need to provide some capacity building as part of the overall programme. It would need to be justified as adding value, but this is very much something we expect.

**Following co-creation, will that lock in the consortia and technical partners e.g. if we find new partners can we add them as we go?**

The co-creation period will be an opportunity for consortia to consider whether they have the right make-up, or whether there is a need to bring in other organisations with additional skills.

In the spirit of adaptive and flexible programming, we expect there will be considerable change throughout the life of the consortia.

**How many bids can one organisation go for? Can an organisation go for multiple bids?**

Organisations can apply for as many bids as they want across different themes.

**Are you looking to fund one consortium per theme? Will you come back to different organisations after the proposals have gone in?**

We are working on the assumption we will have one consortium for each thematic area. If there are two consortia bidding on a thematic area that are both excellent, we are willing to be flexible.

**In our proposal, we have 3 tiers of partners:**

- **'Primary' partners** - these are organisations that will deliver a large portion of the activities under our proposal and will receive direct funding from us. They will manage and sub-grant funding to our 'secondary' partners
- **'Secondary' partners** - these organisations will deliver a smaller portion of the work under our proposal and will receive funding through our 'primary' partner
- **'Tertiary' partners** - these organisations will support the delivery of our work but will not receive any funding from the project.

**Would all of the partners outlined above be considered to be 'Consortium partners' by DFID and so have to submit information on their background and track record? Or would it just be the 'Primary' and 'Secondary' partners?**

Please provide the requested information on your 'Primary' and 'Secondary' partners only. It would be helpful if possible, to list your Tertiary partners, but we do not need anything more than that on those.

**Regarding the Fund Management (Section 3.12). Is this information needed for all consortium members or the lead only? In our case, we are SME and a partner in the proposed project, we did not have grant experience yet we have managed short and long term projects with budget exceeding the proposed budget. If this information is required in our case, what kind of evidence you need?**

All of section 3 should be completed for the lead and all other consortium members. We are looking for a short summary of each organisation's recent fund management history, where they get funding from; what is it used for; how much and the period covered. Any other relevant information in regard to their fund management that we should know about should also be included here.

**In the proposed make-up of a consortium, there was mention of think tanks and businesses. How do you see those organisations contributing?**

There could be many roles. We are hoping think tanks and business can contribute new ideas, particularly around new ways of working.

**Do you have a vision of where you would like consortia organisations to be located?**

We are interested in as wide a range of organisations as possible. We do want Southern involvement and organisations that can reach different groups and different areas. We have no specific views on where these organisations should be located.

**Can you please clarify if you expect to see CVs of proposed team at proposal stage?**

No. The proposal is being scored on the merit of the consortium partners you are proposing will best deliver the impact, outcomes and outputs - not individual team members. Please complete the 2-page annexe in the proposal form, including all details on consortium partners.

**In your FAQs on the UK Aid Connect website, it states that universities are eligible for the grant, but another response indicates that private institutions are not. As our organisation falls under both categories, I was hoping you could clarify whether we are eligible as a consortium lead. Furthermore, is it important for a private university such as ours to have non-profit status in order to qualify as consortium lead?**

The pre-requisite for qualifying as the consortium-lead is that you have to be a registered non-government, not-for-profit organisation. There is nothing to prevent you from participating as a consortium member if you do not meet the eligibility criteria to lead the consortium.

**If it is compulsory to have multi-country cooperation, is it possible to apply 1 NGO from Tajikistan and 1 NGO from Kyrgyzstan?**

Multi-country or single country proposals will be considered. DFID is not expressing a preference; we want to leave this as open as possible.

**We are a newly formed NGO, barely 3 months old, will we be eligible to apply either in consortia or the lead partner?**

As we are asking for the annual audited accounts for the previous two years from the Consortium Lead then you would not be eligible to apply for that role. You would be able to be a member of a consortium, working with other organisations who meet the necessary criteria.

**Can a government agency be a sub-recipient of funds from an NGO under your programme?**

A national or local government agency cannot be a lead partner in the consortium and be a recipient of funds but we would not discount opportunities to work with local partners.



**Annexe 1 states that the Lead organisation must be a "non-government and not-for-profit organisation which supports the delivery of poverty reduction projects". The question concerns the scope of "supports the delivery of poverty reduction projects". We are working with an organisation which specialises in conflict resolution, human rights and good governance in the Global South. Would such an organisation qualify, even if poverty reduction is not explicitly mentioned in its mission statement?**

Given the areas that the organisation works on, yes, it would qualify to apply as lead organisation.

**If an organisation has not previously received DFID funding, does the successful consortium lead automatically acquire the status of 'Approved Organisation' for the purposes of disbursement and management of an 'Accountable Grant'? If not, could you clarify the process and the relationships between the consortium, the DFID Programme Management Team and the 'approved organisation' nominated to disburse funds.**

The Consortium Lead does not have to have had previous funding from DFID. The Consortium Lead will hold the accountable grant agreement with DFID. As part of the process, due diligence will be carried out on the consortium lead before the accountable grant agreement is issued and funds are disbursed.

**We have a member organisation in our foundation that already has a livelihood/work collaboration ongoing in one target country. Would it be possible for them to be included in our application (with improvement/escalation as target for them) or you would only like for completely new projects to be in the proposal? The other organisations in our foundation would be establishing new projects.**

We wouldn't want to simply upscale an existing programme unless it can demonstrate innovation, trialing and testing new ideas with a view to generating evidence that the programme could potentially work in a multi-country context – generating a global public good.

**Bearing in mind that you wish the consortia to be made up of a range of stakeholders - e.g. private companies, think tanks, philanthropic organisations and so on - will any of those types of organisation be involved in assessing the applications?**

The proposals will be assessed by DFID staff who have experience of working with those organisations.

### **3. Innovation**

**What sort of innovation is DFID looking for in the partnerships?**

We are looking for innovative approaches, investigating whether approaches that work in certain locations are effective in other environments and whether effective approaches at certain levels can be scaled up effectively.

**We would welcome some clarity around the requirement to prove scalability while also coming up with new and innovative approaches. The TOR note that ‘Testing the viability of scaling up effective approaches’ is possible. Do we understand correctly that full scale up is not envisaged under Aid Connect?**

We do envisage that proposals will include how the consortia are planning to show that the approaches can be effective at scale. This will require consortia looking at the implementation of approaches at scale.

**How much actual taking to scale is possible under an Aid Connect Programme? Testing the viability of scaling up without actually scaling up can be a fine line – there may be some scaling as a part of the testing process.**

This is for the consortia to present in the proposal.

**Does the focus on new and innovative ideas preclude work to scale out existing mechanisms?**

We are certainly interested in work trialling innovative ideas in new contexts and identifying whether effective new approaches can be scaled up.

**What are DFID expectations on how consortia should monitor impact and effectiveness having further scalation in mind? E.g. request for control groups? What is DFID’s plan for scalation?**

It is for the consortia to present their ideas on how the approaches will be scaled up and how they propose to show that this is effective and how they will gather rigorous evidence to support this.

#### **4. Outcomes**

**Are consortia expected to cover all the outcomes which are defined within each of the TORs or can they focus on selected outcomes?**

Consortia don’t have to cover all the outcomes – they are there for guidance.

**The Global Stability ToR mentions the Building Stability Framework building blocks, but does not indicate these as specific goals/outcomes/considerations. What level of emphasis should a proposal place on these building blocks?**

We expect proposals to help tackle the drivers of instability in fragile states, through addressing the building blocks set out in the Building Stability Framework. They should demonstrate how consortia will drive innovation in these areas. However, proposals might choose to focus on a small number of

these building blocks or on specific issues within them where consortia have particular expertise.

**The building civil society effectiveness ToR has multiple objectives and outcomes including development outcomes around service delivery, however it appears that the primary purpose is to build the organisational capacity of southern civil society. Which outcomes does DFID prioritise or does it give equal weighting to CSO organisational development/capacity outcomes and development outcomes?**

We are interested in how the work can contribute to systematic change. We are flexible in respect to the outcomes and outputs outlined in the terms of reference. We are interested in how you feel this work should be developed.

**The terms of reference for each theme under UK Aid Connect are very broad and comprehensive. It is unlikely that one consortium could speak to all aspects in the ToR and instead they will propose one possible approach to achieving the outcomes, where many others are also possible. There are clear criteria for selecting a consortium but how will DFID prioritise one such approach over another?**

The proposals will be assessed using the criteria highlighted in the terms of reference.

**The Guidance Notes imply that DFID has a preference for funding only one consortium per theme. To what extent is a bid expected to address all impact, outcome and output areas outlined in each ToR?**

A consortium does not need to meet all the impact, outcome and outputs areas outlined.

## **5. Sustainability**

**It's clear we need to focus on programming that is scalable, sustainable and reaching the hardest to reach – this is a very big challenge, can you prioritise these aspects?**

We do agree that this is a significant challenge. It is difficult to prioritise as they are all important aspects to be considered.

**There are concrete aims around delivery of services and long term aims about CSOs and sustainability. So how long do we have in the field and what kind of aims should we be speaking to down the line?**

We have funding to support consortia for four years, including the co-creation period.

## **6. Evidence and Evaluation**

**In terms of price in a quality evaluation – e.g. from a bottom-up costing process – would you come back and say we like the concept but reduce budget expectations if we are over what is allowed?**

The budget will be looked at and modified during the co-creation stage. There is flexibility.

**Will there be an external evaluation process of the successful proposals or will the consortium be required to carry out evaluation as part of the budget?**

Evaluation of a number of the programmes is highly likely. The selection of programmes to evaluate will be dependent on the evidence gap identified by DFID or the consortium. This will be considered during the co-creation phase and if appropriate, DFID will make funds available against an agreed, costed evaluation strategy. The consortium will manage the evaluation.

**In the online ToR there is a lot about evidence and the purpose of it. Are you looking for a consortium that is programmatic that is supported by evidence, rather than a research consortium, for example?**

We are very keen for new ideas to be tested, worked on within the programmes. But we are also keen for there to be a real practical aspect to it; trying them out in the field and making sure that these effective new approaches can be scaled up and the evidence for that.

## **7. Risk**

**DFID is encouraging diverse partnerships in order to tackle the most challenging development problems. These types of non-traditional groupings will carry a degree of risk as their modes of working and ways of prioritising process and results may diverge. What is DFID's appetite for taking on the risk of a truly multi-sector consortium?**

Yes we understand that there will be risks involved in this work. It is important that the consortia show that they understand the risks involved and have plans to mitigate and address these risks.

## **8. Thematic Areas**

**In response to the Global Security & Stability TOR, does DFID envisage selected geographies (pilot sites) be proposed in the bid, or, will this be worked out with DFID during the co-creation phase?**

We would certainly be interested in your ideas on where you plan to work. However there will also be opportunities to discuss and modify this during the co-creation phase.

**Age doesn't seem to feature very strongly in the Disability Inclusion theme and the focus on disability vis-a-vis livelihoods and economic empowerment seems to preclude age?**

We have not explicitly defined age within this programme. Our vision is the inclusion of people with disabilities, regardless of age and sex, in international development and humanitarian assistance. Elderly people are not therefore excluded as programme beneficiaries and many people in developing countries work long into their older years.

**DFID have made it clear that the focus is on waged employment, but has committed to “leave no one behind”. The most marginalised persons with disabilities may not be able to access waged employment schemes, so would DFID prefer that we develop a comprehensive model that leaves no one behind and moves beyond waged employment, or to focus on waged employment only and accept that this will not “leave no one behind”?**

The primary focus of the UK Aid Connect is to influence other actors across the international community to increase action and investment on disability inclusion. Within that, we want to see more innovative partnerships developed with the formal private sector to create jobs and opportunities for persons with disabilities.

Alongside this programme, we will also be launching a new research and evidence programme, with a strong focus on the informal sector to ensure DFID has a comprehensive portfolio reaching those furthest behind. Nevertheless, the objective of UK aid connect is to encourage innovation and therefore we welcome bids that propose a more comprehensive approach that can be explored further in the co-creation stage.

**For the disability inclusion theme, you did not specify target age?**

We are not specifying an age range in this challenge. Whilst we are aware that disability is prevalent amongst all ages, we are also aware it is also more common amongst older age groups.

**Are we right in thinking that a focus on self-employment would not be welcomed? This is not made clear in the terms of reference.**

UK Aid Connect is seeking to find new, innovative and effective approaches to support people with disabilities. The consortium's primary work should bring together existing actors, networks and mechanisms with new partners that may not have traditionally engaged on this issue. We propose to primarily focus these partnerships on jobs and livelihoods within and across the formal sector. Whilst we are not precluding any focus on self-employment, we anticipate this will be more of a focus in DFID's upcoming research and evidence programme.

**DFID has shown strong commitment to addressing disability - how key is inclusion of disability issues and data dissertation in all the themes (not just the disability inclusion one)?**

It is important to address the issue of disability inclusion in all the thematic areas not just the disability inclusion thematic area.

**In addressing barriers to disability inclusion, would there be an expectation that the successful consortia should consider and address the lack of appropriate assistive technology as a barrier to access? For people with a mobility disability, having the right wheelchair fitted in the right way is fundamental to their greater participation in their communities.**

The primary focus of Connect and any successful consortia should be to engage new actors to find new and innovative approaches to support people with disabilities – this should particularly focus on jobs and livelihoods. A lack of appropriate assistive technology is a significant barrier and could be considered as part of this approach – but is not the primary objective of this funding.

**In regard to the Disability Inclusion call, is there scope to look at innovations in self-employment?**

We are focussing on creating jobs within the private sector so this type of employment will not be in scope for this programme. Self-employment will be part of our wider work and through the upcoming Disability Inclusive Development (DID) research and evidence programme.

**What is meant by the “Formal Private Sector” as mentioned in the Disability Inclusion session notes?**

We are focussing on engaging with the private sector to create job opportunities. We mean that there will not be so much of a focus on individual entrepreneurship, this will be addressed in DID.

**Does "Disability Inclusion" include "childhood disability"?**

We have not explicitly defined age within this programme. Our vision is the inclusion of people with disabilities, regardless of age and sex, in international development and humanitarian assistance

**How many proposals will you select under each theme? For example, will only one proposal be awarded under Building Civil Society Effectiveness or there are possibilities of awarding few proposals under the theme?**

We are working on the assumption we will have one consortium for each thematic area. If there are two consortia bidding on a thematic area that are both excellent, we are willing to be flexible.

**To what extent should proposals avoid overlap between programme themes?**

We recognise that there is overlap between the different thematic areas and that it will be impossible to avoid this.

**How is DFID intending to address intersectionality? Can a consortium put forward a proposal across one or more themes?**

We recognise that there is considerable intersectionality across these thematic areas and we recognise that proposals for one thematic area will include work addressing some of the other thematic areas.

**Social accountability is only specifically mentioned in the Open Societies ToR and not the civil society ToR, yet the results you would expect to see highlighted for social accountability, especially around service delivery, are far more explicit in the civil society ToR. Does DFID see social accountability interventions as appropriate to either ToR?**

Yes, social accountability will be a component of the work of most thematic areas.

**Will there be a humanitarian Connect?**

This is not one of the currently planned thematic areas agreed across DFID. We have selected 8 areas. If these prove to be successful, there may be opportunities to look at including more thematic areas.

**The civil society effectiveness ToR is specifically looking for innovation but the Open Society ToR specifically highlights the scope to scale existing work - is that a key distinction between the two ToRs?**

We are interested in work looking at whether effective approaches can be effectively scaled up in both areas.

**The Building Civil Society Effectiveness theme TOR states that the work of the successful consortia will contribute to four results. Under the services result it states "equal access to opportunities and resources including good nutrition, protection from disease, access to quality education, access to clean water and sanitation services". Please confirm if these are the priority areas for work on services for the call? And if so will other thematic areas be considered?**

No these areas are just examples. They were not specific priority areas, and yes other areas would be considered.

**Have any other NGOs who are supported/funded by USAID, reached out to you regarding this opportunity (Phase 1 promoting SRHR) and possible challenges faced in relation to the Mexico City Policy, and the (or vs. the) UK's policy position on safe and unsafe abortion? If yes, how are they tackling this and are they still able to apply?**

We would want a consortium to work within the context of our published position, as part of comprehensive SRHR. If particular partners within a consortium are not able to support this, it is for the consortium to come up with a way-of-working that manages this while still covering comprehensive services. We are unable to provide direct advice on USAID positions. Our published position on safe abortion sets out how our support always operates in the context of local laws. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safe-and-unsafe-abortion-uks-policy-position-on-safe-and-unsafe-abortion-in-developing-countries>

**Given the focus of the Global Security and Stability call is very closely related to the CSSF priorities, will DFID be open to projects which relate to or build upon CSSF funded activity (current or proposed)?**

Yes, projects which relate to or build upon CSSF funded activity would be considered.

**In the briefing meetings, there was a very clear and understandable directive not to focus on content production but on the production capabilities of local actors. Can DFID clarify that the project teams would manage and support the consortia in identifying how to develop that capability into content production without DFID branding or funding and to ensuring internal sign off for this at the planning stage? For example, we work very closely with content producers and post production for Syrian content currently. We would want to plan in an integrated fashion to involve them as amplifiers of the capacity developed through the DFID work.**

We would permit work on production capability that was not directly content production, for example supporting development of networks of media producers to distribute and exchange news content. We appreciate that how to distinguish between media content and media production capability needs clarification. That would be done during the co-creation stage with DFID.

**We note that Jordan is not included in the list of eligible countries. However, the consortium's target group is Syrian displaced adolescent girls residing in South Syria, but also groups displaced across the border. This would consequently entail implementing programme activities in Jordan but benefitting Syrian refugees.**

**It would be very helpful if you could confirm whether operations inside Jordan for Syrian refugees would be eligible under this call.**

We can confirm that implementing some programme activities in Jordan to benefit Syrian adolescent girls would be eligible under UK Aid Connect.

**Can the modification of existing public infrastructure like schools to make them accessible for people with disability be included in a proposal?**



As noted in the Disability Inclusion Terms of Reference, we are inviting proposals that answer complex policy and practice problems. If your programme is about modifying existing public infrastructure to make them accessible for people with disability then that would not be meeting the outcomes/criteria for UK Aid Connect.

**Is the cost for modification of the project office to improve access by persons with disability permitted?**

We would cover a percentage of the cost; however the overall cost of any modifications would need to be shared by any other programmes/projects being run from the project office.

**The Application Form for the Global Security & Stability asks applicants to set out the expected Impact and Outcome in terms of poverty reduction, gender disaggregated impact and intended beneficiaries. However, this seems to be asking for something quite different then the stated outcome in the TOR: International Development Actors are able to access and implement new and effective approaches to tackle key drivers of conflict and instability. Could you provide some clarity on how best to address this?**

The proposal form is the same no matter what theme you are applying for. Each TOR is different and relevant to its own subject matter so although you should address the stated outcome in relation to the actual TOR we would still expect you to be able to tell the story of the expected impact and outcome in terms of poverty reduction, gender disaggregated impact and intended beneficiaries.

**Point 30 of the Global Security and Stability TOR refers to one consortium per theme. Could you please clarify whether this refers to the five building blocks of the framework (point 9 of the TOR)? or refers to the four thematic areas noted in Phase 1 at <https://www.gov.uk/international-development-funding/uk-aid-connect#contact> (promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights, disability inclusion, working towards global security and stability, and building civil society effectiveness)?**

This refers to the four thematic areas noted in Phase 1 that you list above.

**Are you looking for a single consortium to cover multiple components within the theme of Global Security and Stability? Or are you able to consider consortiums that focus on one specific component?**

We are looking for one single consortium to cover the “Working towards Global Security and Stability” theme as a whole.

**The thematic areas of both Phase 1 and 2 appear to overlap in regard to Disability Inclusion and SRHR. I would like to combine the two in one theme as SRHR is a big issue for people with a disability in my country.**

There is overlap between the Disability Inclusion and SRHR themes. However, you will need to submit a proposal for a specific thematic area – you can't combine two themes and submit one proposal. It would be beneficial though, to reflect the complementarity with other themes in a proposal.

**The Disability Inclusion TOR mentions a Disability Catalyst Fund and a new Disability Inclusion Programme that is under development. Can you please provide more information on these two programmes?**

The business case for the Disability Catalyst Programme will be published on DFID's development tracker shortly. The programme works with Disability Rights Fund, the International Disability Alliance and the United Nations Partnership for the Rights of People with Disabilities. There's currently an open proposal round with DRF – more information can be found at their website: <http://disabilityrightsfund.org/for-grantseekers/>

The Disability Inclusion Programme has just been approved and the procurement will shortly be launched, with an early market engagement meeting currently being scheduled for late September or early October. A notice confirming the date will be published on the DFID supplier portal shortly.

**Policy implementation is often lacking in many developing countries. Advocacy and lobbying is often required. Can this be included as an area of the proposal?**

We are interested to see your ideas on improving policy and how you will measure that.

**Will DFID be running further funding windows?**

It is too early to say. This will be subject to the allocation of funds during phases 1 and 2 and the potential availability of funds in future years.

## **9. Co-creation Phase**

**What is the expected level of involvement of DFID staff?**

The Policy team (thematic) leads will be heavily engaged in working alongside the consortia during the intensive co-creation phase.

**Is it possible to present a project idea with the possibility of identifying the countries that the project will focus on at the inception phase?**

Yes this would be possible if it was explained why the countries needed to be identified during the co-creation phase.

**During the co-creation phase, what will be the parameters and balance of ownership between DFID and the consortium?**

DFID resources and expertise are available to facilitate the co-creation phase but the ownership of the programme of work falls to the consortium.

**In the co-creation phase, how do you see the process working for organisations based outside the UK?**

We are content for organisations to be based outside of the UK and we would expect the organisations to be actively involved in the co-creation phase. We do not rule out travel to the UK and it can be included in the budget but it must be justified. There are alternative options for meetings such as video and telephone conferencing too.

**What kind of investment of time will the co-creation process take? Can this be costed into the proposal?**

The organisations in the consortia will be able to budget this time in. We are anticipating 6 – 9 months for co-creation.

**In terms of the co-creation phase, are there processes in place to ensure all the organisation voices are heard; smaller organisations can sometimes be drowned out by larger ones? How can we ensure there is an equal say?**

We would want to see the consortium being effective. All organisations having a voice is something we would want to see and would expect the consortium-lead playing a significant role in ensuring this happens.

**Does the co-creation phase include the baseline and needs assessment?**

Yes we would expect the baseline and needs assessment to be included and worked on at the co-creation phase. These are areas that you should be thinking about as you put together the proposal.

## **10. Timeline**

**Why is the timeline for the submission of proposals so short?**

DFID has listened to concerns about the short timeframe and has extended the deadlines for submission of proposals by 5 weeks. The revised closing dates are as follows:

- Phase 1: 23:59 on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2017
- Phase 2: 23:59 on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2017

**How do you expect partners to come together in a consortium and submit a programme design within such a tight deadline?**

We do not expect consortia to submit proposals with a fully designed programme. A strong proposal will demonstrate quality ideas that are directly

relevant to addressing the development problem set out in the terms of reference and will answer the question of why the problem is best answered by your consortium. It will also articulate how the ideas will bring about lasting change in innovative ways. The ambition of those ideas is more critical to selection than very specific programme detail.

If a consortium is successful, and following the award of a grant, DFID policy teams will work alongside the consortia to further develop the programme design during a six-nine month co-creation phase.

## **11. Budget**

### **What is the proposed level of funding?**

We anticipate that grant awards will be for circa £3m per year up to four years. The exception to this is Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, where the funding levels will be circa £9m per year up to four years.

### **In respect to preparing our budgets, can DFID clarify what core staff costs are eligible?**

Eligible staff costs include all costs associated with staff either working directly on the delivery of the intervention or indirectly e.g. a percentage of costs of HQ staff costs (HR, finance etc). It does not cover the costs of staff not involved with supporting or directly delivering the programme.

### **We understand that we have to budget for the co-creation phase. Could DFID provide some more guidance so we understand what to budget for?**

We are interested to see how you want to use the opportunity of the co-creation phase. All costs, including staff costs, should be budgeted for. You should also factor in country visits as part of the design phase, if you are planning to co-design the programme with in-country partners but all meetings with DFID will be in the UK. The DFID Policy Lead for each thematic area will be engaged throughout the co-creation phase.

### **Can you give some more guidance on what is expected in terms of the co-creation phase, for example, are meetings to be budgeted for in both the UK and programme countries, frequency of meetings etc? Is there any guidance on the amount of the funds available that should be used for the co-creation phase and what costs can/should be included? For instance are staff costs allowed for the co-creation phase?**

All staff costs and associated operational costs should be included. Significant travel costs, such as to liaise with country-based consortium partners, should be justified.

### **Are there any rules or guidance around size of grant vs size of organisational budget?**

There are no specific rules. All costs need to be justified and an explanation of why they are needed to meet the objectives of the programme.

**If payment is in arrears, as suggested in the ToR, purely on the basis of quarterly budgets, or is there a need for quarterly reports on actual spend?**

Disbursements will be made on the basis of quarterly reports accounting for actual spend and will be accompanied by a quarterly narrative report on progress against agreed milestone outputs.

**Do you have any thoughts on the potential ratio between size of consortium leader vs the budget? How small an NGO might you consider to lead a consortium?**

There is no set ratio, but we would look for an organisation that would have the capacity to lead the consortium. It would be for the consortium to decide how the budget is apportioned.

**From reading the initial guidance and templates, DFID state no core costs can be included; does this mean no Indirect Cost Recovery (ICR) can be added by CS partners for UKAC? There is a mention that some administrative costs can be included but this seems to indicate different costs.**

All items of administrative expenditure which support the delivery of the programme should be included. This may include an appropriate proportion of indirect<sup>1</sup> staff costs, office running costs, for example, rent, utilities and insurance that contribute to the delivery of the programme. All should be listed as separate line items. We will not cover any costs that can't be explained or attributed to programme delivery.

**For the purposes of the yearly indicative budget which is to be broken down by "components", can you give some more guidance on how a "component" is to be defined?**

Components in this context are classified as high level work streams.

**Is a Non Project Attributable Costs (NPAC) budget line allowed as part of this call?**

No. All costs that can be attributed to the delivery of the programme should be itemised and justified.

**I notice that capital costs are not included as a section within the inception phase budget. Are capital costs eligible for the inception phase providing there is a clear rationale outlined in the narrative?**

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<sup>1</sup> This could include a proportion of support staff costs, for example, HR and Finance staff

Yes, capital costs are eligible and can be included. We probably wouldn't expect significant capital investment though before mobilisation of the programme (we appreciate the impact this will have on timing) and anything you include will need to be justified.

**The template requests figures in sterling. Can I develop my budget in Uganda shillings with its equivalent to Euro and dollar column and exchange rate affixed? Will it be accepted for review?**

The budget has to be set in UK pounds sterling – we will only be awarding grants in sterling and not in a local currency. In this context, we will also expect grant recipients to absorb exchange rate variances during the lifetime of a programme.

**The UK Aid Connect webpage states that the necessary project budget should be £ 1,000,000? What if it is less?**

The £1,000,000 figure you mention is the figure that is triggered on our website to show that funding is set at over that amount. We can't change this automated field. The proposed amount of funding for each thematic area is included in the individual Terms of Reference (TORs). The objective of UK Aid Connect is to deliver exciting, innovative approaches that can be used around the world to produce rigorous evidence of effective approaches that can be used globally and will probably require work in a number of countries. Therefore, we would expect, because of the anticipated global impact, that the budget would be around the figures we are proposing in the individual TORs. However, that is not to say we wouldn't consider a really excellent proposal for less.

**We note that the ToR as well as the budget template indicate a 4-year period for the total project duration following the DFID fiscal years. The inception phase is estimated to last for a maximum of 9 months.**

**When planning our activities, the consortium is calculating that the co-creation phase will start 1 January 2018 taking into consideration initial contracting and the holiday period. This means that the co-creation phase will cover the last 3 months of fiscal year 17/18 and 6 months of fiscal year 18/19. Given this, can you please confirm that we are right to assume that the actual time for full implementation is 30 months (2.5 years)?**

The programmes can run for up to 4 years (48 months), including the co-creation phase of 9 months. So you are looking for an implementation phase of 39 months, taking you into the fiscal year 21/22. You can add additional columns.

**What percentage of total budget is allowed under admin costs?**

We are not looking at a specific percentage. All items of administrative expenditure which support the delivery of the programme should be included. This may include an appropriate proportion of indirect staff costs, office

running costs, for example, rent, utilities and insurance that contribute to the delivery of the programme. All should be listed as separate line items. We will not cover any costs that can't be explained or attributed to programme delivery.

**From the call, it is clear that the DFID team will be working closely with the selected consortium during the co-creation phase, also you mentioned that meetings with DFID representatives will be in UK. Please confirm that consortium members who are highly involved in the project shall include the round trip, per diem in the budget of this phase? Also, how long will these meetings take in term of days? And what level of staff and how many you are willing to accommodate?**

All staff costs and associated operational costs should be included. Significant travel costs, such as to liaise with country-based consortium partners if needed, should be justified.

It is up to the individual consortium to decide what you think is the appropriate and proportionate amount of days you will need and what staff you feel should attend. All cost should be clearly apportioned and justified in the budget.

**We intend to submit proposal in response to DFID call for proposals for Disability Inclusion. In this regard, we need a detailed list of permissible and non-permissible costs for preparing the budget.**

We do not have a definitive list. Your proposed budget should include all costs associated with the establishment of consortia, co-creation costs, management and programme costs. The "Preparing Your Budget" guidance can be found on the UK Aid Connect webpage (link above); this provides points to consider under each of the key areas.

**Are costs core staff that would not directly implement the programme but will provide an oversight/guidance/finance monitoring & reporting etc. eligible?**

Eligible core staff costs include all costs associated with staff either working directly on the delivery of the intervention or indirectly e.g. a percentage of costs of HQ staff costs (HR, finance etc). It does not cover the costs of staff not involved with supporting or directly delivering the programme.

**Eligibility of profit: Given that the desired mix of consortium members includes companies, who will be profit making, on therefore make a proportion of profit within their role in the programme, please can you confirm that this will be considered eligible within the costs presented within the budget?**

Profit is an eligible cost. We would expect CSOs to apply good practice and ensure that the private sector organisations are not proposing excessive profit margins.

I understand that there is no ICR available for the consortiums overheads, and that all administrative support costs need to be itemised, however, I would like to request further clarity on the following:

- If as above profit for companies is acceptable within the programme, it seems that the lack of ICR may therefore unfairly affect INGOs to be able to adequately recover all their costs. It is often difficult for NGOs to provide the detailed breakdown and clearly identify, monitor and report against every type of administrative cost associated with supporting the programme.
- I understood that DfID was currently revising its approach to overhead costs for NGOs, and within this was planning to support NGOs to agree a methodology of calculating overhead rates, with more standard rates agreed for organisations, and that this would be an eligible cost for NGOs responding to grant opportunities going forward. Therefore the lack of ICR for AID Connect seems to be contradictory to this, and so I was wondering if you were able to clarify why the ICR is not eligible for AID Connect? And how DfID expects NGOs to cover the indirect costs associated with delivering the AID Connect programme which are real costs, but that cannot easily be attributed directly to the programme.

As you have already noted, DFID will be revising its approach to overhead costs with CSOs. We will shortly be sending out the revised policy and templates. The guidance will ask CSOs to itemise actual direct and indirect costs in the first instance – we will be applying standard budgetary principles.

**Please can you confirm how staff costs should be presented? Will it be acceptable to include daily fee rates for individuals? And within this what would be the eligible costs that will be accepted?**

Daily rates/staff costs should be included. The daily rate should be broken down into actual costs paid to staff, indirect costs and any other component. All costs should be itemised according to direct and indirect.

What we are requesting through UK Aid Connect does not contradict or undermine DFID's approach to overhead costs going forward.

**Which items are to be included in inception/co-creation phase costs (is it the cost of activities of implementing partners); and also which items are to be included in implementation phase costs (is it the cost of activities of consortium lead applicant)?**

We are interested to see how you want to use the opportunity of the co-creation phase. All costs, including staff costs, should be budgeted for. You should also factor in country visits as part of the design phase, if you are planning to co-design the programme with in-country partners, but all meetings with DFID will be in the UK. The DFID Policy Lead for each thematic area will be engaged throughout the co-creation phase.



The cost of activities are the costs that are generated for the programme as a whole, not just that of the consortium lead applicant.

**Is there any own share for the project, or may budgeted expenses be covered 100% from the UK Aid Connect grant?**

We do not require match funding and all programme and associated costs can be covered by the grant. Of course, if you were able to leverage additional funding sources, it would be welcomed but it's not a pre-requisite and it's not part of the scoring criteria.

## **12. Proposal Format**

**Should we submit a concept note prior to the full proposal?**

We are asking for consortia to submit a proposal rather than a concept note. We do not expect consortia to submit proposals with a fully designed programme. A strong proposal will demonstrate quality ideas that are directly relevant to addressing the development problem set out in the terms of reference and will answer the question of why the problem is best answered by your consortium. It will also articulate how the ideas will bring about lasting change in innovative ways. The ambition of those ideas is more critical to selection than very specific programme detail.

**The guidance on the proposal form states no changes to be made to the formatting of the form and guidance note. Section three (Background and Track Record for consortium members) is maximum two pages, yet the template itself is over a page. Can I remove for example, in section 3.11, the text that explains what should be included in that section to allow a bit more space?**

Yes, what you propose is fine.

**The call guidelines stated that the application should be in font 12 and that templates should not be altered. However, for form 3 BACKGROUND AND TRACK RECORD: CONSORTIUM LEAD AND ALL CONSORTIUM MEMBERS (Max 2 pages each), a large part of the form is occupied by multiple lines of guidance of what to write in the boxes); some 12 lines. Can this guidance be deleted to allow more documentation of an organisation track record or does it have to stay?**

As long as you address each of the points in the guidance for this section only then it is fine to delete the actual guidance and keep the headings only.

**We are developing a project proposal under the UK Aid Connect-SRHR call and we were wondering if we are allowed to insert screenshots and/or graphics in the text of our proposal?**

You can do but we would ask you keep these to a minimum and make sure they can be clearly read and understood.

**Regarding the consortium call, are references included in the 15 page proposal limit?**

If you need to use footnotes, please do so in a smaller font and include these in the page limit for the individual sections. Please do not use hyperlinks.

### **13. Thematic Dialogue Meetings**

**What happens if my organisation is unable to attend the thematic dialogue discussions hosted by DFID during the w/c 24 July?**

DFID will upload the presentations, summary of the discussions and list of attendees on [UK Aid Connect - GOV.UK](#) after each event.

Your organisation can also send questions or seek clarifications by emailing the UK Aid Connect Team on [UKAidConnect@dfid.gov.uk](mailto:UKAidConnect@dfid.gov.uk)

**Can I join the thematic dialogue meetings remotely e.g. by dialling in or on a live stream?**

DFID is unable to provide this facility for the events. However, the presentations, summary of the discussions and list of attendees will be uploaded on [UK Aid Connect - GOV.UK](#) after each event.

Your organisation can also send questions or seek clarifications by emailing the UK Aid Connect Team on [UKAidConnect@dfid.gov.uk](mailto:UKAidConnect@dfid.gov.uk)