

GUIDE FOR PROJECT LEADS

DO_GU003ENG_v01 Guide for project leads



EXPERTISE
FRANCE

EXPERTISE FRANCE

GUIDE FOR PROJECT LEADS

DO_GU003_v01 Guide for project leads

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Operations Department Operational Management Support
Unit

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This guide is intended for all project leads that want to submit a project or have a grant contract with Expertise France.

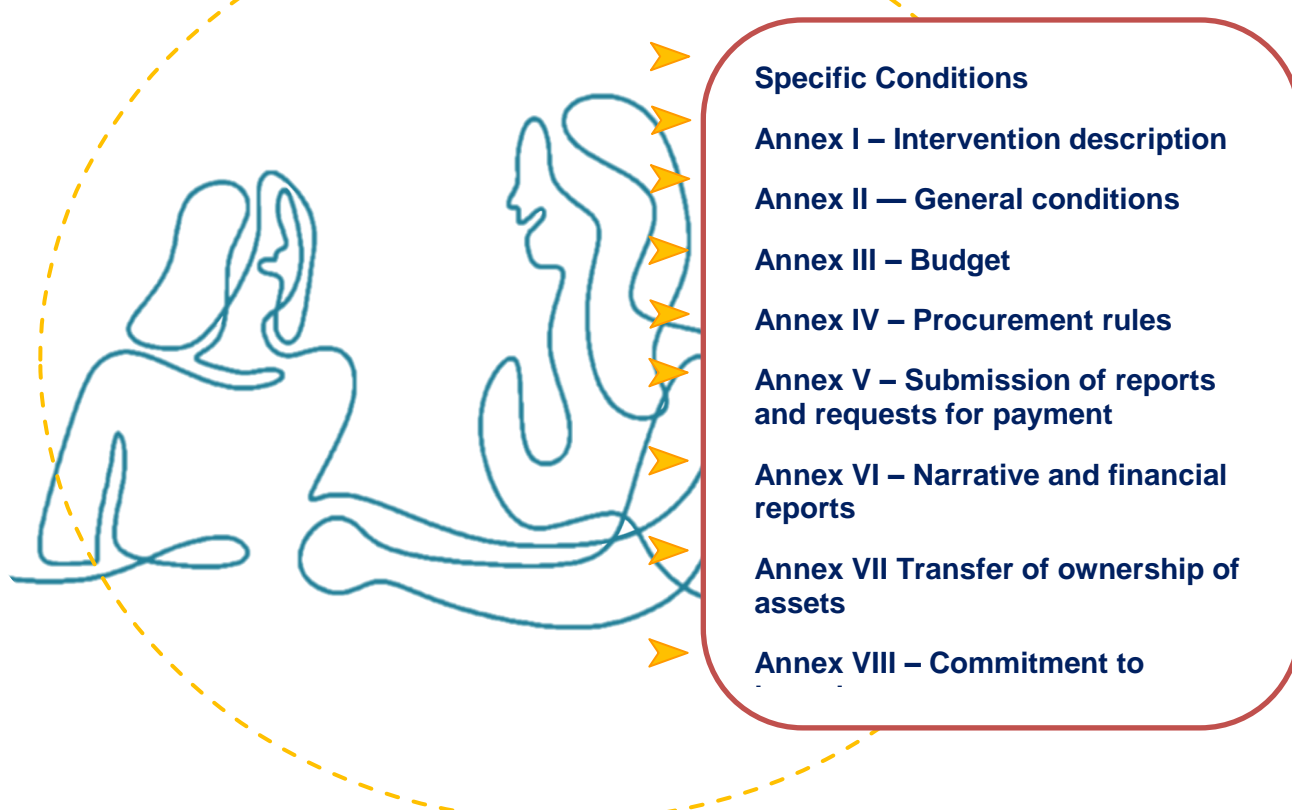
It sets out methodology for designing projects and highlights obligations for leads signing grant contracts.



This guide has no contractual value - only the contractual documents signed between Expertise France and the project lead are contractually valid: the grant contract, the General Conditions and the annexes.

It is therefore important to always refer to the contractual documents.

Contractual documents are generally structured as follows:



This guide aims to support project leads to design and implement their interventions and ensure optimal conditions for project management through:

- Providing information to guide **development of the project and the budget**.
- Setting out the **responsibilities** of contracting parties.
- Providing comprehensive information relating to contract **management**.
- Providing details of **mandatory and contractual procedures**.
- Providing information to plan for project **evaluations, audits and checks**.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Expertise France

Expertise France (EF) is a government agency and inter-ministerial stakeholder for international technical cooperation. It is also a subsidiary of the French Development Agency (AFD) group. As the second largest agency in Europe, Expertise France designs and implements projects that sustainably strengthen public policies in developing and emerging countries. Governance, security, climate, health, education...

Expertise France works in key areas of development and alongside its partners contributes to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For a world in common.

Find out more: www.expertisefrance.fr

As part of its work, Expertise France awards grants from public funding. Projects financed in this way aim to meet the development objectives outlined above and contribute to the emergence of innovative solutions adapted to local contexts. As public funds are used for granting, they must be well managed.

1.2. Our areas of intervention

Project requests must relate to an intervention area led by Expertise France. Although not an exhaustive list, the Agency works on the following issues:

State reform, rule of law and democracy	Support the processes of reform and modernization of central government and public service. Support the implementation of decentralization and devolution processes Promote the development and implementation of training strategies
Mobility and international migration	Provide support for the development and implementation of appropriate migration and asylum policies Support dialogue between mobility stakeholders Strengthen the protection and defense of migrants' rights.
Public finances	Support fair and efficient collection of domestic public resources Support the efficient allocation and management of public funds Strengthen public accountability mechanisms
Public and development statistics	Improve countries' statistical capacities through knowledge transfer and ownership of new skills
Business climate and economic integration	Contribute to the implementation of economic policies aimed at consolidating the private sector, developing trade and diversifying local economies. Enhance legal and fiscal certainty and encourage the transition from informal to formal economies Support the emergence and securing of public-private partnership (PPP) projects
Prevention, reduction and adaptation to crises	Strengthen cooperation between governments and international partners to effectively address chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) risks Combat the accumulation of weapons and the proliferation of methods of mass destruction
	Prevent and combat terrorism and violent extremism;

Global threats and organized crime	<p>Protect critical infrastructure</p> <p>Support the integrated management of border areas and combat trafficking and transnational organized crime.</p>
Stability and strengthening of states	<p>Strengthen inclusive governance and access to justice</p> <p>Ensure access to basic and social services</p> <p>Support the development of income-generating activities</p>
Security and peacekeeping	<p>Support national security system reform processes</p>
Climate and land	<p>Support the definition of development policies integrating climate change adaptation and mitigation interventions</p> <p>Support strategic land planning processes and strengthening of institutional frameworks of local and regional authorities to meet the needs of populations and promote the resilience of land to environmental challenges</p> <p>Strengthen the governance of central and local governments in charge of land management to promote the inclusion of all stakeholders</p>
Energy and infrastructure	<p>Support public actors to consolidate the institutional energy framework and support the private sector to promote access to sustainable energy for all.</p>
Agriculture and natural resources	<p>Contribute to the development of more productive and economically efficient agricultural and aquaculture sectors</p> <p>Promote effective management of natural resources</p>
Health systems strengthening	<p>Strengthen health systems in close collaboration with partner countries to support them in implementing the priorities set out in their national health plans.</p>
Combating pandemics	<p>See the 5% Initiative to fight HIV, Tuberculosis and Malaria</p>
Respond to public health priorities	<p>Strengthen health systems (international health security, non-communicable diseases and reproductive, maternal and newborn health) and public health priorities.</p>
Education and socio-professional integration	<p>Support capacity building of public authorities in charge of primary and secondary education</p> <p>Strengthen the professionalization of training and promote links between universities and companies in order to improve the alignment of training/employment.</p> <p>Improve the integration of young people into the labor market</p>

Social protection and health financing	Promote the implementation of social protection thresholds in developing and emerging countries
	Support the development of collective pension schemes for social risks (old age, sickness, disability, accidents at work and occupational diseases, family responsibilities)
	Develop mechanisms for the payment of contributory and non-contributory social benefits
	Promote social inclusion policies and social service provision for vulnerable groups
	Organize the principles of sustainable financing of health and social protection systems
	Develop tools for evaluating and monitoring social policies
	Support the expansion of health and social coverage to all populations.

1.3. You as project owner and lead

This guide uses the term "**Project Lead**" to refer to the organization responsible for implementing the project and signing contractual documents. This corresponds to the term "Beneficiary", which is used in contractual documents. This is to avoid any confusion here with beneficiaries of interventions.

If a project is implemented by a consortium, the Project Lead is the sole contact point for Expertise France throughout the project.

The project lead is:

- The sole signatory of any contractual documents.
- Responsible for ensuring that the project is carried out effectively and for ensuring compliance with the contractual conditions.
- Responsible for all operational and financial information sent to Expertise France.

This means that the lead is responsible for facilitating the network of partners involved in implementing the project and for setting up the information feedback systems required to ensure effective reporting to Expertise France.

Periodic financial and narrative reports must include activities carried out and expenses incurred by implementing partners and the project lead must account for this when planning the administrative and financial management of the project.

Payments made by the lead to its partners correspond with pre-financing / advances: they cannot be included in financial reports in place of project expenses.

The project lead must also gather and maintain all supporting documents relating to the project (including copies of expenses and procedures implemented by its partners) to be ready for audits (mid-term and / or end-term).

1.4. Your obligations

You must make the necessary internal arrangements to organize the coordination and representation of the project.



Implementation

You must take all necessary and reasonable measures to ensure interventions are undertaken in accordance with their description.

Accounting

You must be able to keep accounts that clearly identify the expenses attributable to the project and ensure its traceability.

Information

You must ensure that all vital information in the management of the project is sent to us as soon as possible.

2. MY PROJECT

A project is a set objective to be achieved, by actors, in a specific context, within a given time frame, with specific resources.

The chapter below provides a methodology for thinking through and designing a project.

2.1. How do I design my project?

The first step is to design a logical and coherent project structure by defining the overall objective to be achieved. The specific objectives will contribute to achieving this. Then develop your theory of change and the best strategies to achieve the desired results, identifying indicators of success, assessing risks and developing a budget.

OVERALL OBJECTIVE			
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE			
TARGET GROUP A		TARGET GROUP B	
RESULT 1		RESULT 2	
ACTIVITES	INDICATORS	ACTIVITES	INDICATORS

Develop the overall objective for the project

The overall objective reflects the large-scale changes that the project wants to bring about. It describes the economic, political, social or environmental changes that the project hopes to contribute to. The overall objective is a long-term objective, the achievement of which

is beyond the capacity of the project alone. It must be broad and inspiring enough to remain valid over time, regardless of changing circumstances.

Identifying your specific objective

The specific objective describes how the project intends to support the overall objective. It sets **out the specific areas the project will focus on to move towards the overall objective**. It is an idealistic statement of how the project will contribute to its vision of success.

The specific objective must be plausible and realistic – it must focus on changes within and between people, groups, and institutions that you can realistically influence.

To identify the specific objectives, try to imagine your answers at the end of the project of the questions below.



Which people have benefited directly from the project (target groups)?

How do they behave? How different are their lives?

Analyze the context and environment where the project takes place

The activities carried out in the context of the project influence and are influenced by the context and environment in which they take place. Analyzing this also makes it possible to verify the relevance of the project and the strategies that have been adopted.

Carrying out an analysis therefore aims to acquire a thorough knowledge of the environment where the project will be developed and enables us to establish the root causes and real problems to be addressed by the interventions. It also aims to identify and involve all stakeholders (people, groups, organizations, institutions, etc.) and to take into account synergies and obstacles between stakeholders.



What authorization, approval or support do I need to achieve my goal?

Who is directly involved in the project?

Who will benefit? Will anyone experience any damages or losses?

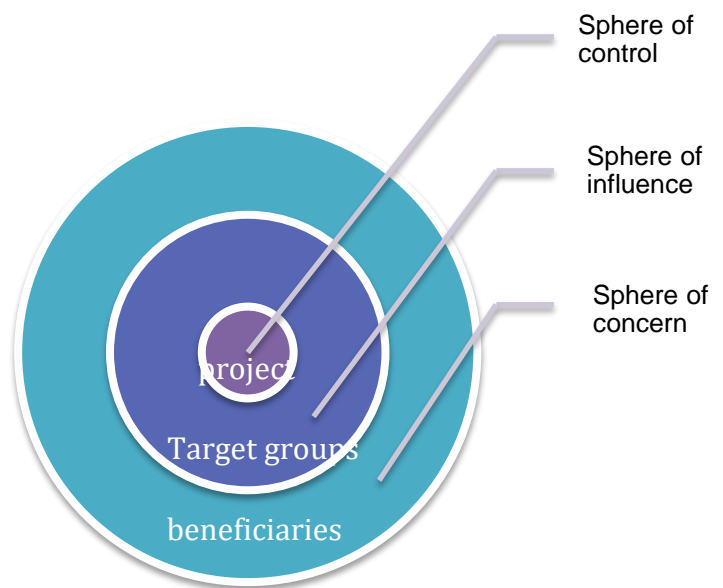
Who is indirectly involved?

Who is not directly involved but can influence opinions?

Identify the target groups and beneficiaries of the project

As projects are limited in terms of timeframe and budget, they will probably not be able to work with all the project actors and stakeholders. It is therefore necessary to prioritize the interventions and target groups the project will seek to influence by linking them to a specific objective.

When listing the project's target groups, focus on the actors the project will work with directly. If the project cannot directly influence an actor, the organization must determine who it can influence and who in turn will influence that actor. If an actor can be influenced, they are then included as a target group. In this way the project focuses on its sphere of influence but with a broader vision.



Identifying the results to be achieved

The results must be proportionate to the project resources and formulated in such a way as to be measurable and realistic.

So, the next step is to think about the impact of the project. Take each of your target groups and think about how they would behave if the problem they face suddenly disappeared.

How will the target groups/institutions behave after being influenced by the project?

How might the physical and social conditions of target groups/institutions be different?

How might each of these groups or institutions think, act or relate to each other?

What attitudes and values might people have?

What might the public policies that affect them look like?

What new capacities might specific groups have?

What new opportunities might exist and for whom?



The results are not the consequences of each activity. They must be formulated in such a way as to demonstrate the usefulness of the activities undertaken.

Project indicators

An indicator is a specific observable and measurable quantity that can be used to show the changes achieved or progress made by a program towards achieving a specific outcome.

Each activity can have “progress” indicators to measure the progress of the project and establish intermediate milestones. Other “success” indicators are linked to the implementation of activities. “Impact” indicators are useful to monitor and assess the influence of the project over longer periods. Even if the project length does not allow for these indicators to be fully informed, it is useful to project into the future and imagine the expected outcomes on changes in policy or behaviors.

Indicators can be quantitative or qualitative. They must be consistent with the project and the related resources.



Does the indicator effectively represent the importance of the issue being measured?

Is data available? If not, what resources and work would be required?

Develop project activities

You need to think about the different activities you will carry out to achieve each of the results you have already identified. You must be strategic about the activities you select, and avoid selecting only those activities that will serve a given purpose and not others. Here are some questions to keep in mind when identifying your activities:



What will be carried out to directly influence specific individuals or groups?

What will be carried out to produce immediate outputs (guide, report, study, etc.)?

What will be carried out to strengthen capacity (training, workshops, etc.)?

How will the support, guidance or mentoring of the target group be carried out? And by whom (creating networks, technical expertise, peers, etc.)?

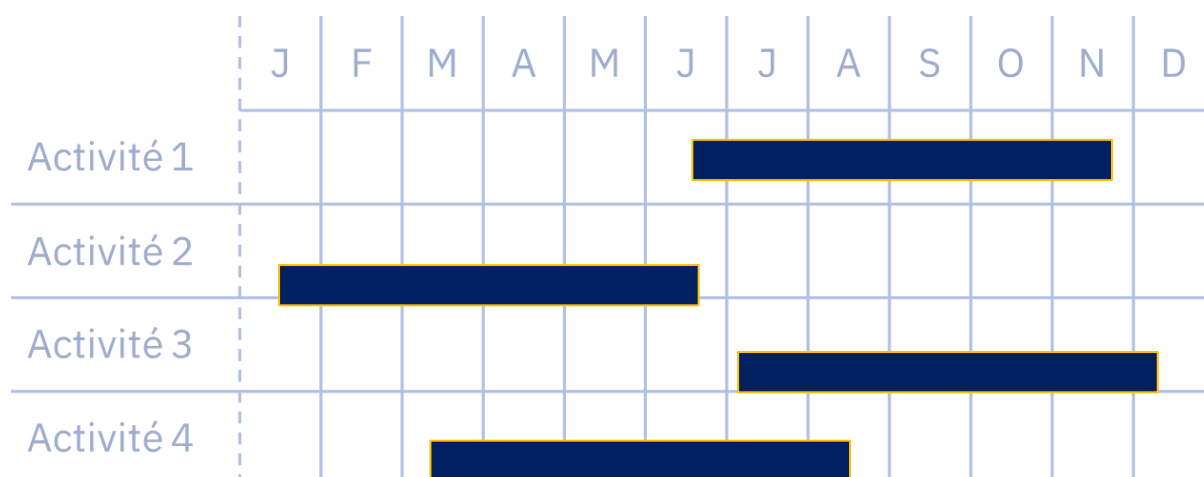
What will be carried out to influence the environment in which individuals, groups or organizations operate? What will be carried out to change the physical or political environment (regulations, guidelines, access, etc.)?

How will you use media or publications to promote your work (awareness, communications, etc.)?

What networks / relationships will be established or used (forums, etc.)?

2.2. Develop a timeline of interventions

The timeline is a key tool to visualize your project. It provides a visual representation of the key stages of the project, to check consistency of the proposed activities with the lifetime of the project. It shows key steps on a timeline (e.g. study, field visit, technical report, procurement of equipment...) of the approach implemented.



What are the key stages and dates?

What are the main milestones?

What are the main deadlines?

When should the project start?

When should it end at the latest?

2.3. Estimating the project budget

The call for projects regulations and the budget annexes provide valuable information on eligible project activities and associated costs. The budget sections are described later in the document. Ask the following questions:



Which interventions are planned in the logical framework?

What are the eligible expenses and what is the eligibility period for expenses?

Are there sufficient human resources to cover the various project management roles (communications, monitoring and evaluation, administrative and financial monitoring, etc.)?

2.4. Identifying and measuring risks

Identifying risks

All projects involve risks: environmental, context-related, implementation of public policy, lack of human resources, etc.



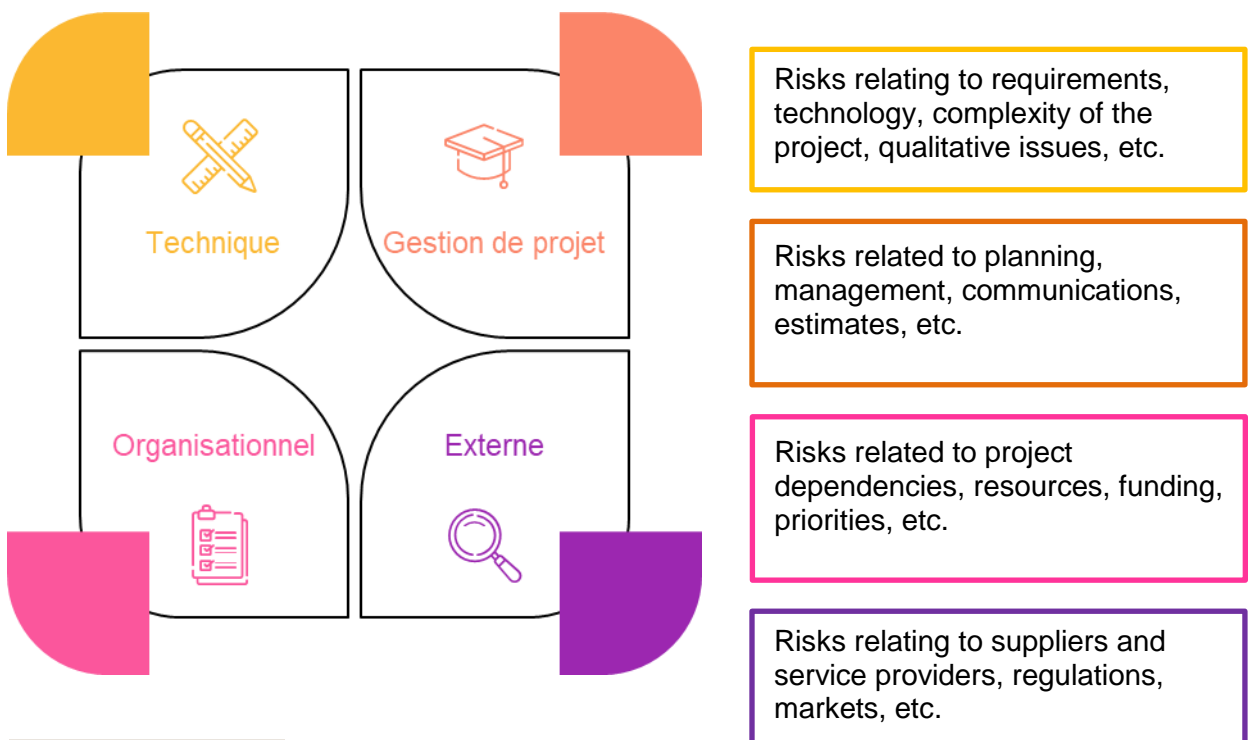
What are the risks?

What are the weaknesses? Areas of vulnerability?

What are the constraints?

What happens if....?

The Project Management Institute defines risk as "an uncertain event or condition that, if it occurs, has a positive or negative effect on one or more project objectives.¹" The guide establishes risk categories and a risk breakdown structure, according to risk type: technical, external, organizational, environmental or project management.



Measuring the risks

Risks can be measured based on the probability and potential impact on the project.

The probability of the risk is the risk that it will occur. The impact measures the consequence for project implementation. The matrix below can be used to cross-reference the data.

Risk severity matrix					
5 Severe					

¹PMI, Project Management Body of Knowledge, 3rd edition (2004) p. 245

4 Major					
3 Significant					
2 Minor					
1 Insignificant					
Severity	1 Rare	2 Unlikely	3 Moderate	4 Likely	5 Almost certain

- **Green area:** The risk is considered minimal and does not require any action. However, be aware that you will need to be vigilant, because a risk can evolve over time and move from one area to another.
- **Yellow area:** Risks in this area are considered manageable. You can plan preventive and/or corrective actions for these risks.
- **Orange area:** The risks in this area are considered to be significant. You must plan preventive and/or corrective actions for these risks.
- **Red areas:** These risks are considered dangerous and require intervention.
- **Black area:** Risks that are considered to threaten the implementation of the project and the safety of actors.



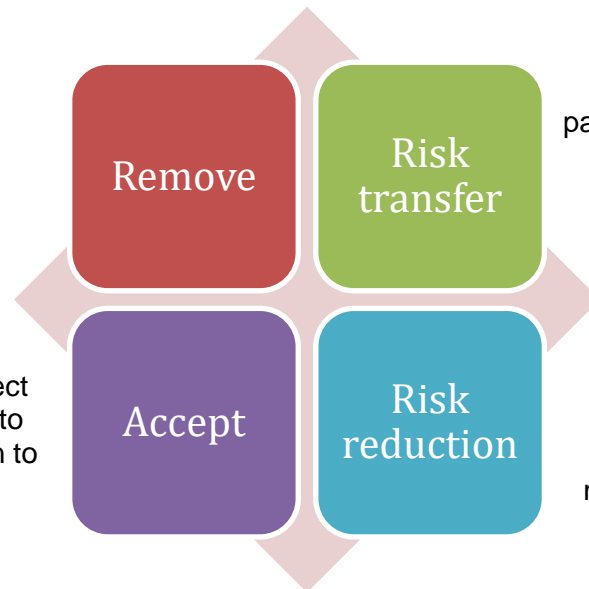
The risk matrix should not be static, it is important to update it and monitor the evolution of risks (impact and probability) as well as mitigation measures.

Managing the risks

Depending on the impact and likelihood criteria, it is necessary to provide a risk management response in order to reduce the threats that may affect project implementation. This requires identifying the parties or individuals who will be assigned responsibility for each of the approved response strategies. This process ensures that identified risks are appropriately managed. How effective planning of response strategies is will have a direct influence on the increase or decrease of the overall level of risk of the project.

Removing a risk involves modifying the project plan to eliminate the risk or circumstance, or stop the achievement of project objectives of the project from being impacted by it.

Accepting a risk indicates that the project team has decided not to modify the project plan to address the risk, or is unable to find suitable alternative mitigation strategies.



Transferring a risk is intended to transfer the impact of a risk to a third party and the responsibility for the corresponding response strategy.

The purpose of reducing a risk is to mitigate the probability or impact of a risk to an acceptable level.

3. MY GRANT

3.1. Completing the grant application form

The grant application form is a key document, which will later be annexed to the contract to highlight what is outlined in *the intervention description*. It is therefore the central document of the grant application.

It provides a summary of your project, so it is important to give the project a name.

It is also important to clearly identify the strengths of the intervention and to highlight key areas of the evaluation criteria.

Part 1: Information

The first part of the grant application form provides an overview of your organization and your partners, if applicable.

Part 2: Summary project information

This section is only used for submissions to restricted calls for projects. It contains key information about the project.

It describes the intervention to provide project geographical and sectoral context. The objectives and the intervention logic must be clear.

The relevance of the intervention describes what is expected of the project result in terms of efficiency in relation to the objective. It is important to understand the starting point of the project and how it will allow objective(s) to be achieved with the target populations.

In **the lead applicant's statement**, the project lead agrees to be responsible and undertakes to respect the contractual implementation conditions, annexed to the call for project regulations.

The **lead applicant mandate is used for** consortiums, whereby implementing partners agree to the lead applicant signing the contract on their behalf.

The **form to list partners participating in the project** must be completed for each declared implementing partner.

Part 3: Full proposal

The full proposal includes information on the project lead, their potential partners and a detailed description of the project.

A full overview of the information included in the project summary should be given here.

It sets out the overall objective of the project and the specific objectives it aims to achieve.

To demonstrate project relevance, a detailed analysis of the environment and the project's fit with themes included in the call for projects should be given.

The methodology should present the approaches and methods used to carry out interventions and the different synergies sought between the identified stakeholders.

The action plan is usually a timeline providing a visual overview of milestones and key dates during project implementation.

The beneficiaries section should highlight the direct and indirect beneficiaries of the project.

It should also describe the expected results and planned activities to achieve the results.

The monitoring and evaluation section describes the monitoring and evaluation system (data collection, supervision, evaluation of activities) that will be put in place and the necessary resources (HR, budget, strategy, etc.) to implement it. It also makes it possible to make the link between the project activities and the indicators identified in the logical framework.

The project management and financial monitoring section describes the specific methods for managing finances and resources related to the project, particularly human resources, for the lead organization and partners. Estimate the percentage of the budget managed by each partner. Describe the procedures and processes for financial monitoring and reporting where budget is delegated to partners, if relevant.

Project management and coordination relates to governance issues (frequency, composition of steering and/or scientific committees, number and status of members) and coordination arrangements between partners. Diagrams can be used.

The visibility and communication section outlines the communication tools (for awareness-raising, prevention, promotion, etc.) that will be developed as part of the project as well as communications activities (media, press, conferences, events, etc.) that will be undertaken during the project. A dedicated communications and visibility plan can be developed later, as necessary.

The indicative action plan should include the project timeline. It is important to show the consistency between activities.

The sustainability section should give an analysis of risk and also explain how sustainability will be ensured when the project ends.

The proposal should also include a budget and a logical framework.

3.2. Developing the logical framework

A 'logical framework' is a matrix that sets out the results, assumptions, indicators, objectives, baseline references and sources of verification related to a given activity. The intervention logic shows how, in a given context, the activities will achieve the results, the results will achieve the outcomes and the outcomes will achieve the expected impact. The key assumptions developed in this reflection process should be integrated into the logical framework matrix.



What results do you intend to achieve through the project?

What activities will be carried out to achieve these results and objectives?

What resources will be needed?

How will project progress and success be measured and verified?

The fundamental principle is to go from the general to the specific. In this sense, it is necessary to start with a synthesis of the objective at each level and the key assumptions, and then to try to include indicators and targets for each objective.

- **The overall objective** is the goal the project seeks to contribute to (e.g. this may be a common objective for several projects).
- **The specific objective** describes the expected outcome that guides the activities and expected results.
- **Results** are what the project intends to achieve. These are the expected achievements that should constitute the key objectives of the project terms of reference. Results are what the project team is accountable for and resources are allocated to.
- **Activities** determine how the project will be carried out. These are the interventions implemented on the ground to achieve the results and required resources.
- **The assumptions** made at each level of the logical framework are the necessary conditions or events that the project has little or no control over.

Indicators need to be targeted in terms of quality, quantity and time. These indicators and the means of verification must be concrete and constitute an effective basis for monitoring and evaluation.



Tool in annex: "developing a problem tree"



Tool in annex: "developing a logical framework"

The budget is usually divided into **6 sections**, which can vary according to the program needs.

- **1. Human resources:**
 - 1.1 Salaries (local staff)

Information must be entered for each person working on the project. Personnel costs must be calculated on the basis of the actual monthly salary multiplied by the number of days/months worked on the project, which is captured in a payslip. Where relevant, this figure should include all usual employer contributions, such as social security contributions. For part-time staff, the percentage of time worked must be indicated next to the title/name of the staff member and it must be applied to the number of units, not to the cost of the unit.

- 1.2 Salaries (international staff)

This relates to international consultants who will support you with specific activities during the project, such as external evaluations, training, etc.

- 1.3 Per diems for trips/travel

This section relates only to costs incurred by project staff and excludes costs related to conferences and seminars, which should be included under line 5.7 'Costs for conferences/seminars'. Per diems under this heading refer to all costs (accommodation, daily meals and costs for local travel, such as local transport costs during trips and incidental expenses). Subsistence allowances for staff participating in activities must be calculated on the basis of daily allowances or actual costs. They cannot exceed the daily or per diem allowance per person defined and applied by the organization that the person travelling belongs to or set out in the contract rules. Travel-related insurance can also be included and needs to be justified.

- 2. Travel:

- 2.1 International travel

Costs under this heading relate to international travel from country A to country B. They include: cost of air transport (second class), train or boat, visa costs.

- 2.2 Local journeys

This includes travel from city A to city B within the same country. Expenditure under this heading relates to travel costs for local staff to reach the destination (by bus, train, boat, vehicle and domestic flight) where the activity takes place.

- 3. Equipment and supplies

This section relates to new or used equipment procured for the project. Please note that you can only procure items that are fully justified in the narrative part of your application form.

- 4. Local office

- 4.1 Cost of vehicle(s)

Cost for using vehicles (gasoline, insurance, repairs, etc.) should be included here.

- 4.2 Rental of offices

You can usually only include rental costs for local offices, i.e. offices located in the country where the project is taking place. Include only the percentage of the rent that corresponds to the work carried out under the project.

- **4.3 Consumables – Office Supplies**

Consumables and supplies relate to actual costs for activities carried out specifically under the project Costs such as office equipment (pens, paper, records, ink cartridges, computer disks, postal services, computer software, etc.) can be included under this heading.

- **4.4 Other services**

The costs of consumables and supplies (telephone, heating, etc.) are eligible, provided that they are identifiable and assigned to project interventions. In the same way as with rent, you can only include a percentage of the cost. Therefore, if the project activities represent 50% of the work carried out by the local office, you can only include 50% of “other services”.

- **5. Other costs, services**

The costs for external contracts – outsourcing project activities (research, technical feasibility, implementation costs for an activity) – should be indicated here. The sub-contractor must be a legal entity. Any sub-contractor whose costs will be covered by the project must be contracted in line with the best price-quality ratio principal.

- **6. Other**

These are costs that do not fall under any other heading. Do not use this budget line unless you are absolutely sure that the item in question is not included under another budget line.

Specific costs linked, if necessary, to project monitoring and evaluation (e.g. study relating to a mid- or end-term evaluation, dedicated tools for monitoring projects, etc.) can also be included.

- **7. Subtotal of the 6 budget lines**

- **8. Administrative costs**

You can include a maximum of 7% of the total eligible direct costs (the amount shown under budget line 9).

- **9. Total eligible direct costs of the intervention (7. + 8.)**

- **10. Contingency allowance (maximum 5% of 7 - total direct intervention costs)**

A contingency allowance not exceeding 5% of the direct eligible costs may be included in the Intervention Budget. These funds may be used for any unforeseen costs related to project activities that may not have been included when calculating the budget. This may apply to costs that you did not identify when preparing the budget or to new costs resulting from changes in the project

that may occur during implementation. Use of this line requires prior written authorization from the contracting authority.

3.4. Grant contract – specific conditions

The grant contract is drawn up and sent by Expertise France. It sets out a clear framework for grant management methods that the project lead must refer to as required.

In particular, it includes a table with deadlines for report submission and pre-financing requests:

This document, drawn up by Expertise France, provides an overview of deadlines for the project lead.

It outlines the indicative funding periods (or “Period covered by the report”) and deadlines for sending the corresponding reports. It is essential for project planning, management and monitoring.

We recommend that the lead shares it with its implementation partners, or provides them with an adapted version, including the submission dates and the consolidation periods for information and supporting documents from all stakeholders.



Always refer to the specific conditions in the contract that may contain clauses that are specific to your project.

3.5. Complete the contractual annexes

Intervention description (Annex I)

This contract annex relates to the project description. It contains information developed by the project lead in the full proposal.

It sets out the overall objective of the project and the specific objectives it aims to achieve. The relevance of project interventions, the methodology, an action plan and a timeline. It should also describe the expected results and planned activities to achieve the results.

Related to this are the sections on governance and project management, namely monitoring and evaluation, resources required for project management and financial monitoring.

The logical framework is the cornerstone of the project and should be as detailed as possible. The logical framework tool allows for the consolidation of project development, implementation and evaluation. It is therefore a reference document for developing the project but is also a monitoring tool for Expertise France.

General Conditions (Annex II)

These are the general conditions applicable to contracts agreed between you and Expertise France. They cannot be amended. Any deviation from this must be set out in the specific conditions of the contract.

The articles are organized as follows:

- 1. General Provisions
- 2. Narrative and financial reporting requirements.
- 3. Responsibility
- 4. Conflict of interest, good conduct, ethics and fraud
- 5. Confidentiality and data protection
- 6. Visibility
- 7. Ownership and use of the results of the intervention and assets

- 8. Evaluation and monitoring of the intervention
- 9. Changes to the contract
- 10. Implementation
- 11. Extension and suspension
- 12. Termination of contract
- 13. Applicable law and resolution of disputes
- 14. Eligible costs
- 15. Payments
- 16. Accounting and technical and financial checks
- 17. Final grant amount
- 18. Reimbursements and Recovery

Activity budget (Annex III)

This is the contractual budget for the intervention that will be used as a reference tool for financial monitoring and the project audit.

Procurement regulations (Annex IV)

Procurement regulations are presented in Annex IV of the contract. It sets out the thresholds and minimum procedures to be followed for service, supply or works contracts.



We recommend organizing a joint workshop at the beginning of the project on contractual obligations and procurement regulations

Submission of reports and requests for payment (Annex V)

This template should be used for interim and final reports and requests for additional cash advances or to request the final project balance.

Narrative reports (Annex VI-A)

The reporting timeframe is set out in the general specific conditions of the contract.

Reports must describe implementation of the intervention in accordance with planned activities, any difficulties encountered and measures taken to overcome them, any changes introduced, and the extent to which results have been achieved (impact, results, or achievements) in line with the indicators used to measure them. Reports must be presented to allow monitoring of the objectives, planned versus actual resources, and budget details of the intervention. The level of detail for reports must correspond to both the intervention description and the budget.

Financial report (Annex VI-B)

The reporting timeframe is set out in the general specific conditions of the contract.

The financial report presents detailed expenditure and resources for the period in question. It must relate to the estimated budget annexed to the initial contract, or to any amendments signed during the implementation period.

The headings used in the contractual provisional budget must be the same in the financial report. The level of detail for each line must be respected. Reports must justify any discrepancies between the actual and forecasted costs in the estimated budget.

The financial report must be presented in the contract currency and meet contract requirements in terms of exchange rates.

Please note: the financial report template annexed to the contract must be configured by the project lead so that the list of expenses is automatically fed into the annual and overall financial

report. If you have problems with Excel or with using the template, you can contact Expertise France.

Transfer of assets ownership (Annex VII)

Equipment, vehicles and materials financed from the intervention budget must be transferred to the end beneficiaries of the intervention, at the latest upon submission of the final report.

Commitment to integrity (Annex VIII)

It is mandatory to sign this before implementation begins. This document relates to integrity and combatting corruption at the project outset when signing the grant contract.

3.6. Signing the grant contract and annexes

Read the grant contract and annexes carefully. They include all the information relating to your project and the obligations you are bound to.

No activity can begin until the contract is signed by the stakeholders.

4. MY CONTRACT

By signing the contract, you commit yourself to and are solely responsible for project implementation.

- You must take all necessary and reasonable measures to ensure interventions are undertaken in accordance with the intervention description.
- You are responsible for complying with all obligations set out in the Grant Contract
- You must ensure that all vital information relating to management of the project is sent to us as soon as possible.
- You must make the necessary internal arrangements to organize the coordination and representation of the project.
- You must also complete the monitoring indicators and any changes made to the intervention strategy.



Overall responsibility (including financial) for the intervention sits with you, and it is your responsibility to reimburse Expertise France for any costs that are declared ineligible.

4.1. Financial support to third parties

Financial support to third parties to help achieve the project objectives is allowed in the context of interventions financed by Expertise France. It must therefore be reflected in the project objective.

Financial support must be clearly identified in the budget and the conditions for granting and calculating it must be set out (categories of eligible persons, maximum amount, method of calculating the exact amount).

4.2. Co-financing

If the Beneficiary has a contractually agreed co-financing amount, they must include this in the contract. All co-financing must be entered separately, indicating the name and the anticipated amount for each.

If the actual project costs to be financed by several parties are lower than the estimated costs, the Beneficiary must inform Expertise France before submitting the final report. The grant then may or may not be reduced by the same proportion as the actual costs are reduced compared to the estimated costs.

4.3. Integrity, combatting corruption and proper use of funds

Annex VIII of the grant contract commits you to acting with integrity and combating fraud and corruption. In the event of misuse of funds, the Agency may require partial or full reimbursement of the funds paid.

Where procurement is planned under the project, Annex IV also commits you to doing your utmost to combat fraud, money laundering and corruption.

4.4. Narrative and financial reporting;

Frequency of reporting is set out in the specific conditions of the contract. For all project schedules, project leads must submit:

- Interim narrative and financial reports, within 60 days, throughout the project.
- Simplified annual financial reports on 31.01 of each year following each implementation period.
- A final narrative and financial report, within 90 days.

Interim reports

Interim narrative reports describe the work carried out, in line with planned activities, difficulties encountered and measures taken to overcome them, potential changes needed, and to what extent results have been achieved. Reports must justify any discrepancies between the actual and forecasted costs in the provisional budget. The following documents, completed over the same period, should be submitted with the report:

- Updated procurement plan.
- Updated communications plan.
- Updated monitoring and evaluation tool or at least an updated dashboard included in the report.
- Documents / deliverables / tools produced.

The interim financial report sets out detailed expenditure and resources for the period in question. It must relate to the initial budget or the last amended version. The headings used in the contractual budget must be the same in the financial report. The level of detail for each line must be respected. The project lead must submit the report in the contract currency, and meet contract requirements in terms of exchange rates. Reports must justify any discrepancies between the actual and forecasted costs in the provisional budget.



The report should include an update to indicators in the logical framework.

Simplified annual financial reports

A simplified financial report is required at the beginning of the year, covering the previous year (from 1 January to 31 December), as we are required to close out the previous calendar year. You must therefore send us, **before 31 January each** year, a statement of expenditure for the previous calendar year, in a simplified format annexed to the grant contract.

Final report

The **main difference** for the final narrative report compared to other reports is that it is intended to provide an overview of the project and a full description of the activities undertaken, results achieved, impact on the environment, successful experiences and lessons learned. This report must clearly show whether the anticipated project objectives have been achieved.

It is very important that you take the time to think about the genuine impact of the project on the environment and local actors, the long-term effects of project implementation, and the sustainability of the results beyond the end of the project. In this section, you must therefore explicitly indicate whether the project can be considered a success (has it achieved its objectives?) and why, and whether it could be replicated elsewhere.

It must be accompanied by the completed transfer of assets ownership table signed by all stakeholders (project lead and those receiving the transfer of ownership).



The final report should therefore include proof of transfer of assets ownership as well as the logical framework with updated end values for the project.

The **format of the final financial report** is the same as for the mid-term reports, annexed to the contract. It is a one single document, to be completed as the project progresses (cumulative). The final financial report therefore covers the entire funded period.

Reports must be sent within 90 days of the end of the project but before the start of the audit and evaluation. They are a pre-condition for planning and starting up the final audit. It is a reference document for auditors and evaluators. Consequently, Expertise France may request an amended version to be sent at the end of the audit and evaluation process, so that any requested corrections are taken into account.

4.5. Compliance with procurement procedures

The procurement procedures are explained in Annex IV of the grant contract.

You undertake to award contracts necessary for the implementation of the project (supplies, equipment or works) in compliance with the principles and rules for the award of public contracts, namely: transparency; equal treatment; non-discrimination; fair competition and avoiding conflict of interest.

Procurement plan

A procurement plan must be completed at the beginning of the project for Expertise France to give a no objection notice. The plan covers procurement by all partners implementing interventions.



Tool in annex: "procurement plan"

No Objection Notice using AFD funding

If the project is financed using funds from the French Development Agency (AFD), all procurement over 200,000 Euros must be subject to a No Objection Notice before publishing the consultation outline and before signing the contract.

Subsequent expenditure verification

Be sure to file all procurement documents - compliance with the principles and rules set out in Annex IV of the contract will be verified.

Nationality rule and origin of supplies

Participation in invitations to tender you initiate shall be open on equal terms to all natural and legal persons established in a state, country or territory expressly eligible under the European instrument from which the funds come. Tenderers must indicate their nationality in their tender and present the usual proof of nationality in accordance with their national legislation.

Where financing of this grant contract comes from the European Union and where other applicable instruments require it, the tenderer shall be required to prove the origin of supplies with a value of more than €100,000 excluding tax procured under the grant.

Early detection system and contract award exclusion system

You must undertake to do your best to ensure that potential candidates or tenderers are excluded from participation in a procurement procedure if

they fit into one of the categories outlined in the "Declaration on honor of candidate/tenderer involved in implementing a grant funded by Expertise France".



The declaration for subcontractors can be found at the end of Annex IV of the grant contract.

Common rules

The rules and thresholds are available in Annex IV. We highlight here:

- The market as a whole must be considered in order to define relevant thresholds.
- Deadlines for submitting applications and / or tenders must provide enough time for interested parties to have a reasonable period to prepare and submit their tenders.
- An evaluation committee must be set up to assess applications and/or tenders of 40,000 Euros or more based on the exclusion, selection and award criteria previously published in the tender documents. The committee must have an odd number of members (at least three) with all the necessary technical and administrative expertise to assess the tenders.

Applicable thresholds

	Service contracts	Goods contracts	Works contracts**
> or = 1,000 EUR	Direct award		
> 1,000 and < 40.000 EUR	Competitive negotiated procedure without publication of contract notice (3 quotes)		
> 40,000 and < 200.000 EUR*	Open tender published locally		
= or	Restricted international tendering after publication of a contract notice		

* < 5,000,000 Euros for works contracts

**If it is funded by AFD, the notice must be published on the www.afd.dgmarket.com [website](#)

4.6. Request an amendment to the contract

The grant contract may be changed by means of an amendment as long as this does not call into question the decision to award the grant (for example, the eligibility and selection criteria of the project).

When is an amendment to the grant contract necessary?

An amendment to the grant contract is necessary when the terms and conditions of the grant contract or the annexes need to be changed. The amended clauses then become an integral part of the grant contract, and all other clauses remain unchanged and still stand.

Who initiates amendments to the grant contract?

In general, amendments are made at the project lead's request, to meet the need for changes to implementation methods, but they can also be suggested by Expertise France.

What is the procedure?

A project lead wanting to amend their grant contract must submit a signed amendment request at least 30 days before they want the change to come into effect.

This request should include:

- The reasons for the request
- Supporting documents
- If applicable, the amended annex(s) impacted by the requested changes.

In what circumstances is it necessary to do an amendment?

In general, we recommend contacting Expertise France directly to discuss ahead of making an amendment request: if the desired change does not affect the fundamental purpose of the project and if it involves a budget variation between headings <25%, it may be that a simple justification is sufficient and that a formalized amendment is not necessary.

Here is a non-exhaustive list of cases where an amendment is necessary:

- A partner or end beneficiary of the project is no longer involved.
- Adding a new end beneficiary to the project
- A change to a budget heading > 25% or reorganizing the budget (including creating a new line(s) or heading)
- Adding an activity
- Request an extension of the implementation period.

Changes to the project budget

The budget annex in the contract includes a tab to submit a budget modification proposal.

- Budget variations between lines within the same heading, **less than 10%** of the total budget of the heading (1.2.3.4.5.6.) in question: not necessary to inform Expertise France in advance. These changes should be explained when submitting financial reports but do not require prior approval.
- Budget variations between lines within the same heading **between 10.01%** and 25% of that heading must be justified in the financial report.
- Budget variations between lines within the same heading **greater than 25%** are not authorized and *therefore require* a discussion with Expertise France and, potentially, an amendment.
- All other modifications, including adding new lines, must be subject to an amendment.

Any changes to the budget made outside these parameters may be declared ineligible during the audit (mid-term and / or final), meaning the project lead will need to reimburse the corresponding amount to Expertise France.

Amending the project length

Any change to the duration of the project must be subject to an amendment. The budget must then be reviewed (usually without any additional resources) to take this extension into account. Extension requests must be accompanied by a letter from the project lead explaining the reasons for the extension request.

Changes to project activities

Any change impacting project implementation (adding or removing an activity, changing the objectives or beneficiaries, etc.) must be made in writing to Expertise France for advice and potentially an amendment.

This cannot be done retrospectively, so it is necessary to await a signed amendment before implementing the activities. These requests must be sent to Expertise France one month before the date on which the change should take effect, except in cases justified by the project lead and accepted by Expertise France.

In the event that the requested change requires a signed amendment to the grant contract, the project lead will be asked to produce a revised version of all the annexes related to the project that are affected by the change. For example, if a project objective is being reworded for justified reasons, the project lead will need to modify the corresponding part of the action plan, as well as the monitoring tool, the timeline, and most likely the provisional budget.

4.7. Financial management of the contract

Exchange rate

By default, the exchange rate used in the financial report must be that used by the bank when pre-financing payments are made.

Where expenditure is recorded in another currency, the exchange rate to be used shall be that of https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/procedures-guidelines-tenders/information-contractors-and-beneficiaries/exchange-rate-infoeuro_en.

Any other method must be validated and set out in the specific conditions of the contract.

Eligible costs

To be eligible, intervention costs must meet the following criteria:

- They are visible during the intervention period.
- They are mentioned in the overall estimated budget for the intervention attached to the grant agreement.
- They are necessary for implementation of the intervention the grant relates to.
- They are identifiable and verifiable, and in particular are recorded in your accounts and determined in accordance with the applicable accounting standards of the country in which you are based and your usual cost accounting practices.
- They comply with the requirements of relevant tax and social legislation.
- They are reasonable, justified, and comply with the requirements of sound financial management, particularly with regard to economy and efficiency.

Costs for staff assigned to the intervention, corresponding to the actual gross salaries including social security contributions and other costs included in the remuneration package - this must not exceed the salaries and costs normally received, unless there is justification indicating that the additional costs are essential to deliver the intervention.

Travel and subsistence expenses for staff and other persons involved in the intervention, as long as they correspond to the usual practices of the beneficiary and are in accordance with their rules and regulations. However, the rates for these expenses must not be higher than those of Expertise France.

The costs of procuring equipment (new or second-hand) and supplies specifically intended to respond to the needs of the intervention.

Cost of consumable goods.

Costs related to services arising from other contracts awarded by the beneficiary for the purposes of implementing the intervention.

Other costs arising directly from requirements of the contract (dissemination of information, evaluation of the intervention, audits, translations, printing costs, insurance, etc.), including costs for financial services (in particular the cost of transfers and financial guarantees when required in accordance with the contract).

Duties, taxes and any other taxes or charges, including value added tax, paid and not recoverable by the beneficiary, unless otherwise provided for in the specific conditions.

Ineligible costs

The following expenses are ineligible and excluded:

- Contributions in kind: these are contributions that are not subject to invoicing, for example voluntary work or the free provision of equipment or premises.

- Return on capital.
- Debts and debt burden
- Bad debts
- Provisions for potential future losses or liabilities
- Interest due
- Exchange rate losses
- VAT, unless you can prove that you cannot recover it under applicable national law.
- Excessive or reckless spending
- Costs covered by another funding source.

Bank interest

Final reports must be accompanied by a statement indicating whether bank interest has been received, following receipt of pre-financing during the funding period. If interest has been received, it will be deducted from the balance to be paid. This statement must be accompanied by the corresponding bank statements.

If bank charges have been taken, these cannot be charged to the project's direct costs if they have not been budgeted: it is up to the project lead to ensure effective management of its cash flow.

4.8. Request payment of pre-financing instalments

The term “pre-financing” applies to all payments requested during the project. The grant is only considered “closed out” and the expenditure deemed to have been accepted after the final audit.

The term “pre-financing” differs from that of financing or granting because it implies a provisional allocation of funds, which is only confirmed at the end of the project.

The payment schedule and the amount of pre-financing are set out in the specific conditions of the grant contract.

The grant contract sets out pre-financing instalments depending on forecasts and project progress. The final balance is paid on the basis of actual and certified



expenditure supporting documents; therefore, you must be able to pre-finance your project and have sufficient cash flow.

Third party identity sheet and bank account identification document

At the point of signing the contract, it is necessary to share the third-party identification document to register you in the Agency's accounting software. This document contains all of the international banking information that Expertise France needs for funds to be paid securely.

The form is provided to the project lead in Excel format. It must be completed and signed and attached to the bank account identification document. If a full bank account identification document is not available (that provides at least the IBAN² and BIC codes³), the third-party identification form must also be signed by the bank where the account is held for funds to be transferred to.

Requesting the first pre-financing payment

The first payment is made at the beginning of the project to start up project activities. It can only be made once the Contract and related annexes have been signed. The following documents must be submitted:

- Copy of the grant contract signed by both parties.
- Third party form completed and signed.
- Annex V of the signed contract (payment request).
- Estimated budget for the period covered by the pre-financing request.
- Timeline of planned activities.

Requesting the next pre-financing payment

Payment of the next pre-financing installment is subject to semi-annual and/or annual financial reports being sent using the templates annexed to the Contract.

The next installment of pre-financing will only be made if:

- 70% of the previous pre-financing installment has been spent; **and**
- 100% of the previous pre-financing installment has accounted for.

You must send:

- Narrative and financial reports for the period covered by the previous pre-financing installment.
- Annex V of the signed contract (payment request).
- Estimated budget for the period covered by the pre-financing request.
- Timeline of planned activities.

All payment requests must be accompanied by a narrative and financial report for the period during which the funds were spent. These reports do not replace the semi-annual reports requested by Expertise France, except when the periods overlap. The dates for sending these reports do not impact on the schedule for subsequent reports.

²IBAN code: The International Bank Account Number is an international standard used for bank accounts numbering. It allows for the exact identification of the account and the bank, which facilitates international transfers and makes them secure.

³BIC code: The Bank Identifier Code is the international identifier for the bank. It is sometimes called SWIFT (Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication).



The total amount of pre-financing may not exceed 90% of the budget. This means that you must be able, where the full planned budget has been spent, to advance 10% of the budget pending the payment of the balance of the grant.

4.9. Requesting the final balance

Payment of the balance takes place at the end of the project after the narrative and financial reports and audit reports have been sent and validated.

You must send:

- Narrative and financial reports relating to the entire project.
- Annex V of the signed contract (payment request).

If the audit identifies ineligible expenditure (because of the type of expense, a lack of supporting documents, non-compliance with procurement rules or because they were not included in the budget, etc.), then they will be deducted from the balance to be paid (or refunded if the total is greater than this).

The calculation of the amount of the balance is as follows:

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{Total expenditure incurred (amount shown in the audited final} \\ \text{financial report)} \\ - \text{Total pre-financing received} \\ - \text{Any interest received} \\ - \text{Any ineligible expenditure identified during the final audit} \\ \hline = \text{Final balance} \end{array}$$

The final amount of the grant therefore corresponds to the actual expenditure incurred and audited.

5. MY INTERVENTION

5.1. Ensuring operational monitoring of the project

Monitoring is a structured process to collect, analyze and systematically use on an ongoing basis data to support effective decision-making. It involves regular reviews to monitor project progress in terms of resource use, implementation of planned activities, delivery of outputs, achievement of results at all levels (output, outcome, impact) and risk management. It is an essential management activity that allows for rapid intervention relating to the project, to

anticipate or mitigate unwanted events occurring and/or if changes in the context influence the performance of project interventions.



Are the planned measures adapted to the current context and emerging needs? (Relevance)

Are activities implemented on time and within budget? (Effectiveness)

Do the activities lead to the expected results? (Effectiveness)

Have the pre-identified outputs been achieved as planned and effectively? (Effectiveness and output?)

Are finances, personnel and materials available on time and in the right quantities and quality? (Effectiveness)

Do the outputs lead to the achievement of the results? (Effectiveness)

What do the beneficiaries think of the intervention? (Effectiveness-Impact)

What are the problems, risks, challenges and unexpected outcomes that the project faces? (Effectiveness-Impact)

Is there anything that should cause the project to change the operational implementation plan? (Effectiveness-Impact)

Are the intended results still relevant and effective for achieving overall national priorities, objectives and impacts? (Impact)

There are generally 4 types of monitoring in projects supported by the Agency:

- **Monitoring of results** looks at the outcomes and areas of impact of the project. This is where monitoring merges with evaluation to determine whether the project is on track to achieve the expected results (outputs, outcomes, impact) and whether there may be unintended effects (positive or negative).
- **Process (activity) monitoring** tracks the use of inputs and resources and the progress of activities. It looks at how activities are carried out in terms of efficiency (time and resource management).
- **Context (situation)** monitoring looks at the project's operating framework, in particular when it affects the risks and assumptions identified, but also any unexpected considerations that may arise (political, institutional, financial context, etc.).
- **Financial monitoring** looks at the costs per input and activity within predefined expenditure categories. The administrative and financial teams for interventions are

responsible for this type of monitoring, which is a complementary exercise to report on the progress of achievements and expected results.

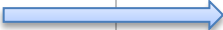
Managing your action plan and schedule

Actions relate to the activities the project will undertake to achieve results.

The action plan therefore provides a template to assess and provide a graphic representation of project activities. It helps to identify the expected length of each activity as well as the logical sequencing and the conditions required to carry them out.

The action plan needs to give an overview of the deadlines set for each activity and whether some can be carried out simultaneously. Delays can have a significant impact on achieving the project objectives.

The plan must also make it possible to assign tasks and responsibilities between the partners in the most relevant way possible within an agreed timeframe.

Results	Activities and resources	Who is responsible	Progress	Planning	Planning	Status	Timeline	
							Week 1	Week 2
R.1	A.1.1							
	A.1.2							
R.2.								

A sample action plan outline is provided as an annex to the guide to help you plan your operations.



Tool in annex: "my action plan"

Identifying and warning around delays

Operational and budget planning allows you to monitor project implementation and be alert to operational or financial drift. Aligning several different tools (budget forecasts, deadlines in the



Are human resources available and operational? How long does it take to recruit?

Are health-related and security conditions conducive to carrying out field visits?

Does the procurement plan align with projections? Can the identified timeframes be met / are they realistic? Are contracts published or is the need already identified and reflected in a terms of reference?

Are the interventions and costs related to activities already planned?

procurement plan, deviations from the action plan, etc.) will allow you to correct your action plan.

Developing a dashboard

When your project reaches a critical size, a monitoring and evaluation plan may be needed to set out your methodology and ensure that you have the necessary tools for project management and decision-making.

A monitoring and evaluation plan enables you to hone the intervention logic that sets out the objectives and expected results for the project, to define them in a specific way and clearly articulate the type of anticipated changes in relation to the baseline context.

Indicators, data collection methods and means of verification are defined.



Tool in annex: "Indicator descriptions"

If there is no monitoring and evaluation plan, a dashboard is necessary for all projects that have several components and several activities.

Identify the monitoring method for each indicator

It is necessary to capture in one document, to ensure a good understanding of the indicators, the data collection methods and ways of evaluating them.

The methods must be realistic, feasible and the related cost must be in line with the resources



Who is responsible for monitoring each indicator?

When will indicators be updated?

How will information be collected?

What tools need to be developed?

available.

Establish a "baseline" and report in reference to the baseline context

It is important to be able to rely on the data/information coming from the initial assessment and to take into account the indicators presented in the logical framework. It is therefore essential from the beginning of the project to establish a baseline for the duration of the project.

Progress in terms of results and outcomes can only be measured and justified against a baseline context at the very beginning of the project.

Ideally this database should be completed before the start of the project. The target values are then updated if necessary and current values are added during the lifetime of the project.

Training on objectives and tools

To ensure strong understanding and ownership by the various actors involved, it is necessary to hold workshops focused on project monitoring and evaluation and ensure a good

understanding of the indicators and the project data collection and monitoring methods at all levels.

Collecting and recording data

Using the Logical Framework developed as part of the project submission, which may have been reworked during the negotiation period, you can develop simple tools to collect data and monitor the project. Digital tools can be used for this purpose, but they must be consistent with the needs analysis and tools.

Data must be collected and updated regularly, ideally each month, or at least every 3 months. A suggested dashboard can be found in the annex to monitor indicators if your organization does not have dedicated tools or has not been able to budget for a dedicated monitoring and evaluation tool.



Tool in the annex: "developing my dashboard"

Evaluating the project

In the same way as monitoring, evaluations are a management tool that are an integral part of project management. Planned evaluations are outlined in the technical bid and budget included in the financial bid, if applicable. This may include self-assessments, internal reviews, mid-term evaluation, ad hoc evaluation and final evaluation.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) states that evaluation aims to:

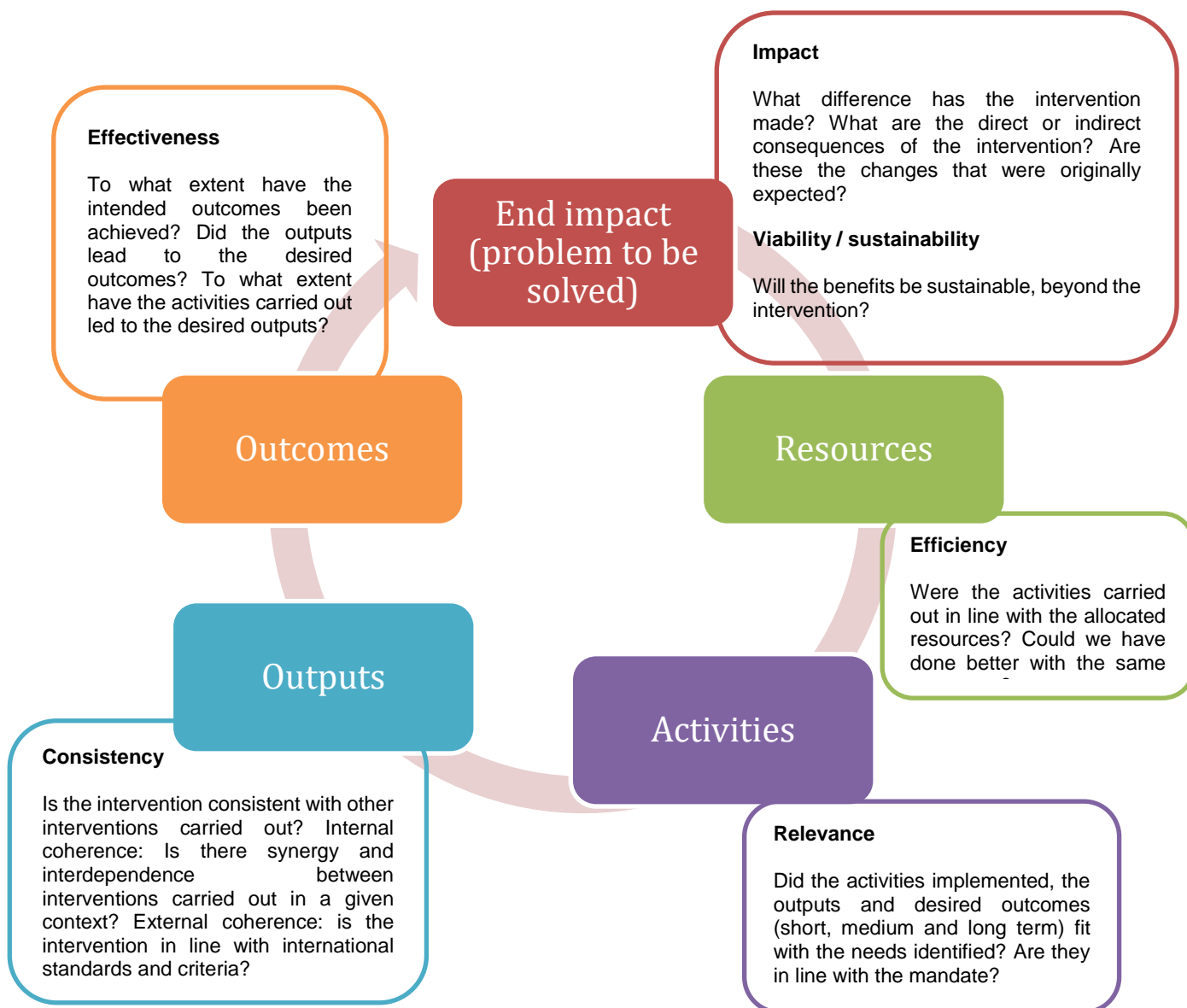
- Verify the relevance and coherence of the initial objectives.
- Assess the implementation of resources and their suitability to the objectives.
- Measure the effectiveness of the intervention, i.e. the degree to which the objectives have been achieved.
- Assess the sustainability of the observed outcomes.

Findings from evaluations enable managers, beneficiaries, partners, donors and other project/program stakeholders to learn lessons and improve future interventions.

An evaluation is a one-off activity that aims to verify the success of a project using various criteria aimed at assessing the intermediate results, the specific objective and the overall objectives of the project. These criteria generally include Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria: relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability⁴. Cross-cutting evaluation areas can be added, such as gender, value addition, innovation, participation, etc.

The diagram below summarizes key evaluation questions and how they link to the objectives in the logical framework. The focus is on how the interventions were delivered and what difference they have made.

⁴Criteria and definitions: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/revised-evaluation-criteria-dec-2019.pdf>



The actual terms and conditions around evaluations and conclusions drawn from them should be discussed with Expertise France and partners, if possible as part of a project steering committee meeting or a relevant committee focusing specifically on the evaluation. Holding a meeting of this kind should make it possible to address key points to frame the mid-term evaluation:

- What exactly is being evaluated (the whole project or specific components)
- The criteria that will be investigated during the evaluation.
- Evaluative questioning (questions the evaluation will have to provide answers to) in relation to the evaluation criteria identified.
- Evaluation implementation schedule
- Evaluation management (roles and associated actors, setting up an evaluation steering committee)
- Resources that can be used for the evaluation (budget allocation, data, resource people, etc.)
- Evaluation dissemination methods and use

Following this meeting, specifications for the evaluation are formalized to ensure that the evaluation is carried out effectively. The specifications can be used for the external evaluation call for tenders, as relevant.

The evaluator identified may then specify the evaluation questions and evaluation methods. Information gathering and analysis is carried out over several weeks and may involve field visits. Primary data collection can take the form of interviews (qualitative data), focus groups (qualitative data) or surveys (quantitative data) in particular. The collection of secondary data includes reviewing internal and external documents (qualitative and quantitative data).

At the end of the data collection phase, the evaluator consolidates all the information collected. For each source, the evaluator synthesizes the information required to answer each evaluation question and writes a mid-term evaluation report.

The project lead ensures that a meeting to review evaluation recommendations is organized within two months of the report being submitted. Recommendations must be followed up.



For projects of over 200,000 Euros and longer than 24 months, it is strongly advised to include the cost of doing a project evaluation in the budget.

5.2. Communicating about your intervention

It is your responsibility to respect the rules of visibility and communication. A communications plan must be developed at the beginning of the project. Funder information must be clearly identifiable.

Developing a communications plan

A communications plan is a document that structures and formalizes the implementation of communication activities throughout the project's lifetime. It must be developed at the outset of the project and can, if necessary, be refined or revised during project implementation.

It should align to the following communication areas:

- Those that are directly related to the strategic and operational objectives of the project.
- In accordance with Expertise France guides and instructions on communication and visibility and, if applicable, the initial donor.
- In accordance with the context of the beneficiary country / countries.
- Internal to the project.
- External to the project.
- Cover the entire implementation period.

Respect the graphic charters

The communications plan must comply with the graphic charters. You can get in touch with Expertise France to check the current graphic charter.

6. CLOSE-OUT

Depending on the terms and conditions set out in the Grant Contract, a mid-term audit and evaluation might be required in addition to a final evaluation and final audit. Check if this is relevant for your project.

The mid-term audit and evaluation provide an opportunity to make changes to the project if necessary and to verify that checks and management activities are happening.

Mid-term audit procedures are the same as final audit procedures, with the difference being that it only covers a set period that is outlined in the article " Other specific conditions applicable to the project" in the grant contract. Expertise France organizes and pays for the mid-term audit, so it does not need to be included in the project budget.

Expertise France may ask for a dedicated report from the project lead at the end of the mid-term audit depending on the outcomes of it: They must present the measures taken following the recommendations made during the audit to be approved by Expertise France.

The mid-term evaluation is implemented by the project lead and may lead to changes or a programmatic shift to be discussed with Expertise France. The terms of reference and selected evaluator require prior approval by Expertise France. The cost of the mid-term evaluation should be included in the project budget.



As a grant recipient you must comply with any checks to verify proper use of public funds. An expenditure verification audit is carried out systematically for projects over 40,000 Euros.

6.1. Justifying my expenditure

Throughout the project, and in preparation for the final audit (and mid-term, if applicable), and any other subsequent checks, the project lead must comply with Expertise France's rules around keeping supporting documents.

Expenditure charged to project implementation must be evidenced by invoices or equivalent supporting documents in order to be considered as actual expenditure.

Expenses must be verifiable and easily traceable.

Evidence of commitment is verified (compliance with procurement thresholds, contracts, purchase orders, etc.), as well as proofs of procurement (approved deliverables, attendance sheet, delivery notes, invoices received, etc.) and proofs of payment (bank statement, proof of acknowledgement, etc.).

This involves:

All stakeholders involved in implementing the project (lead and partners) keeping the originals of all supporting documents corresponding to their work in relation to the project for a period of 10 years:

- Account statements (hard or soft copy) from the project lead's accounting system.
- Evidence of procurement procedures.
- Proof of supplier commitments, such as contracts and purchase orders.
- Proof of receipt of supplies, works, etc.

- Proof of purchase.
- Proof of payments (such as bank statements, confirmation of debit, proof of payment, etc.).
- For fuel and lubricant costs: a summary list of mileage traveled, average consumption of vehicles used, fuel price and maintenance costs.
- Staff registers.
- All other documents that prove that expenditure took place within the context of the project.

6.2. Inventory and transfer of ownership

Under the project budget, valuable goods may be procured (vehicles, laboratory equipment, educational tools...).

It is important for end project beneficiaries that these assets are used for their intended purpose and are kept in a safe place.

It is therefore essential to properly manage project assets, both to ensure sound financial management and to prevent irregularities or fraud.

What might happen?	Managing the risks
<p>The asset register may be inadequate or non-existent.</p> <p>Without a suitable asset register, it may be impossible to know where project assets are located.</p>	Maintain a clear and up-to-date asset register with accounting records that allows for easy identification.
<p>Physical asset checks may not be carried out regularly.</p> <p>This may make it impossible to know if assets still exist and are still in working order.</p>	Inspect assets regularly (at least once a year).
<p>Assets might not be clearly identified as project assets.</p> <p>Project assets might be mixed with other assets, and it may be impossible to recover them</p>	Ensure that all project assets are properly and physically identified (e.g., stickers, label numbers...)
<p>Asset usage may not be properly supervised</p> <p>Usage of consumables may not be monitored, meaning that assets may be misused</p>	Ensure that appropriate tools are in place to monitor the use of project assets and consumables.

6.3. Carrying out the final project audit

An external final audit covering the whole of the funded project and organized by Expertise France within 60 days of the date of submission of the final report.

All projects over 40,000 Euros may require a final audit.

The auditor carries out a comprehensive or partial review of expenses incurred by the project lead in the context of the grant awarded by L'Initiative. In particular, they check:

- **The auditor verifies that the** expenses entered in the audited financial report(s) were actually incurred by the project lead or their partners and that they relate to the project. In this regard, the auditor reviews the supporting documents for expenses (invoices, receipts, contracts, payslips, timesheets, etc.) and the proofs of payment (bank statement, cash journal). The auditor also reviews the supporting documents for work carried out, goods received, or services provided. Finally, they check that the expenditure declared is allocated to the corresponding budget headings.
- **Procedures specified in the reference documents have been applied.** *Among other things*, the auditor will check:
 - That fungibility rules have been observed.
 - That the exchange rates used by the project lead are compliant.
 - That the taxes and / or VAT owed by the lead and their partners to the various countries of implementation have been paid, and that proof of these payments is available.
 - That all modifications to the contract budget have been made in compliance with the general conditions.
- The auditor will also check that the project was carried out in **accordance with the various policies and regulations applicable** (accounting rules, tax law, labor law, etc.) in the country or countries where the expenses were incurred (place of the assignment and the organization's head office, etc.).

The auditor produces a factual, detailed, justified audit report, which is assessed by Expertise France and may lead to questions for the project lead.

6.4. Determining the final grant amount

The final grant is calculated based on the actual eligible expenditure by applying the percentage of eligible costs and the maximum amount mentioned in the grant contract and monitoring compliance with the non-profit and co-financing rule.

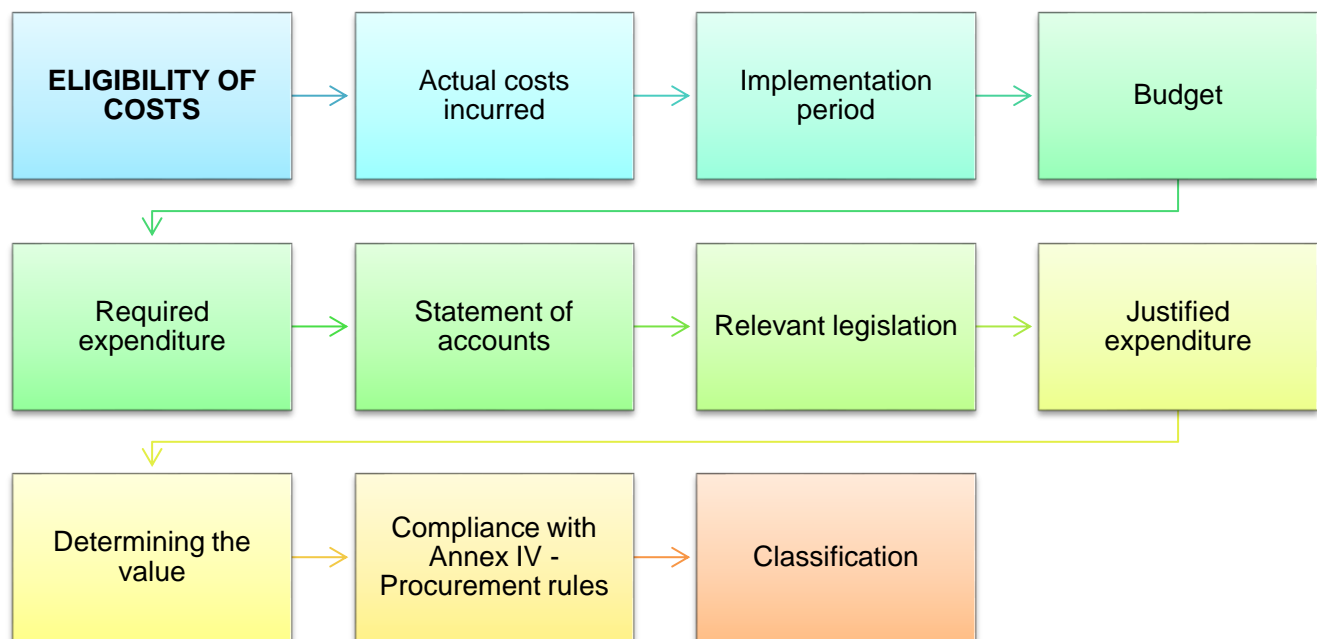
As a result, if the actual spend is found to be less than your budgeted spend, the actual grant amount will be reduced accordingly.

If actual expenditure exceeds budgeted expenditure, this amount will be declared ineligible.

The final amount is agreed after validation of the final audit report.

If the audit concludes that some expenses are ineligible (due to the type of expense, a lack of supporting documents, or because they were not included in the budget), and that the responses provided by the project lead are not adequate, they will then be deducted from the balance to be paid.

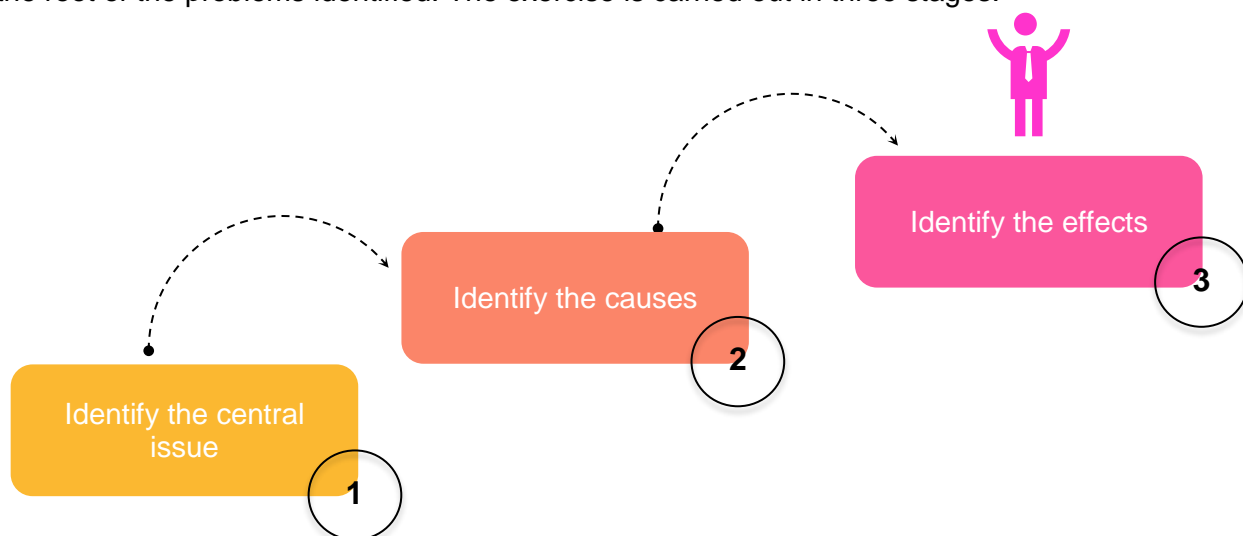
In the event that the audit identified a total amount of ineligible expenditure greater than the amount of the balance to be paid, the project lead will be asked to reimburse the relevant amount.



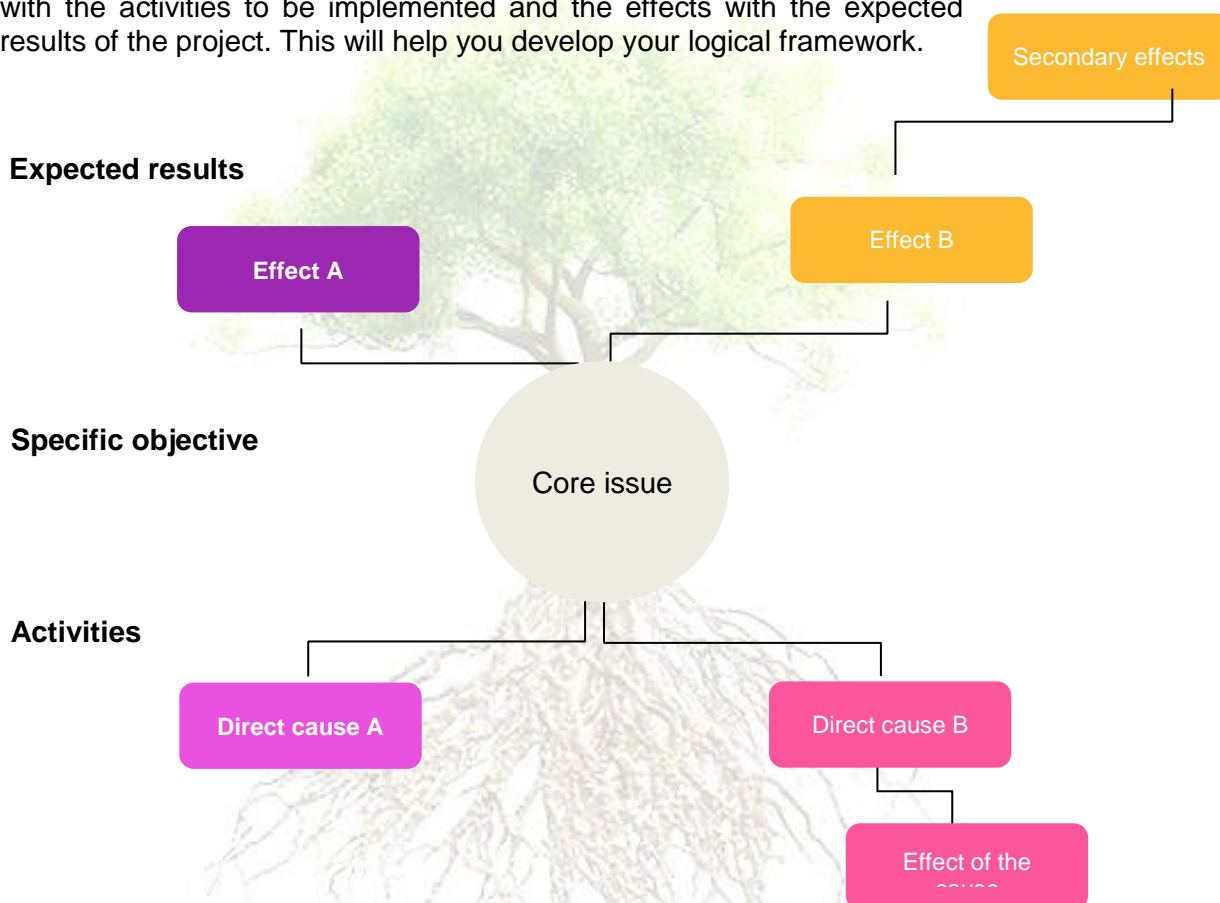
ANNEX I – DEVELOPING YOUR PROBLEM TREE

The problem tree is a very simple methodological tool, which makes it possible to present a problematic situation as a diagram and be able to better analyze it.

It helps to think through the cause-effect relationships between the various factors that are at the root of the problems identified. The exercise is carried out in three stages:



Once the causes and effects have been identified, you can set out relevant solutions. Once the exercise is complete, you can replace the problem with the project objective, the causes with the activities to be implemented and the effects with the expected results of the project. This will help you develop your logical framework.



The exercise can identify several possible strategies. It is therefore a question of choosing the most realistic intervention strategy and focusing on a factor that will limit the causes of the problem.

ANNEX II – DEVELOPING A LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Results chain	Indicators	Baseline value (year X)	Target value - end of project (year X)	Current value (date XX/XX/XX)	Means of verification	Assumptions
Goal (overall objective):						
The overall long-term change that the intervention contributes to at the national, regional or sectoral level, in the global political, social, economic and environmental context, which results from the interventions of all relevant actors and stakeholders.	Indicator 1	0	0	0	To be taken ideally from the partner or donor strategy.	No assumptions at this level
	Indicator 2					
	Indicator 3					
					
Outcome(s) (Specific objective(s)):						
Key mid-term outcome of the intervention focused primarily on changes in behavior and institutional changes as a result of the intervention (it is good practice to only identify one specific objective, however for large scale projects other mid-term outcomes can be included)	Indicator 1	0	0	0	Sources of information and methods used to collect data and report (e.g. survey, beneficiary's annual report, etc.).	External factors that are outside the project's control but are likely to affect the link between impact and outcome(s).
	Indicator 2					
	Indicator 3					
					
* Other outcomes / components (* where relevant)						
Where relevant, other intermediate outcomes of the intervention, focusing on behavioral changes and institutional changes resulting from the intervention (intermediate outcomes can be included here)	Indicator 1	0	0	0		External factors that are not within the project's control but are likely to affect the link between the specific objective and the other outcomes.
	Indicator 2					
	Indicator 3					
					
Achievement (output) 1.1:						

The direct/tangible outputs (infrastructure, goods and services) resulting from the activities implemented by the implementer. (*in theory, the outputs should be linked to the corresponding results using clear numbering)	Indicator 1	0	0	0	Sources of information and methods used to collect data and report (e.g. post-training questionnaire, attendance lists, workshop reports, etc.)	External factors that are outside the project's control but are likely to affect the link between the outcome(s) and the outputs.
	Indicator 2					
	Indicator 3					
					
Achievement (output) 1.2:						
The direct/tangible outputs (infrastructure, goods and services) resulting from the activities implemented by the implementer. (*in theory, the outputs should be linked to the corresponding results using clear numbering)	Indicator 1	0	0	0		External factors that are outside the project's control but are likely to affect the link between the outcome(s) and the outputs.
	Indicator 2					
	Indicator 3					
					
Achievement (output) 1.3:						
The direct/tangible outputs (infrastructure, goods and services) resulting from the activities implemented by the implementer. (*in theory, the outputs should be linked to the corresponding results using clear numbering)	Indicator 1	0	0	0		External factors that are outside the project's control but are likely to affect the link between the outcome(s) and the outputs.
	Indicator 2					
	Indicator 3					
					
Achievement (output) 2.1:						

ANNEX III – DEVELOPING A PROCUREMENT PLAN

The procurement plan is a mandatory tool to ensure compliance with procedures but primarily to ensure alignment of the timeline and the expected activities. Designed as a dashboard, it lists all the contracts to be awarded, in the process of being awarded or already awarded (in the event of refinancing), as well as the key information relating to them.

It must be updated for each narrative report.

<u>Contract name</u>	<u>Estimated amount and currency of the contract (excluding tax)</u>	<u>Type of contract⁵</u>	<u>Type of consultancy⁶</u>	<u>Selection method</u>	<u>Checks⁷</u>	<u>Estimated publication date for the Invitation to Tender</u>	<u>Estimated launch date for Offers or Proposals</u>	<u>Estimated date of contract signing</u>	<u>Estimated contract completion date</u>

Selection method

Specified budget selection

A ceiling budget is indicated in the Request for Proposals and the technical proposal that obtains the highest score is selected, provided that the financial proposal is less than or equal to the ceiling. The ceiling budget must be determined in a relevant way (it should not be overestimated or underestimated, and should be based on careful analysis of the necessary resources - person months/days - and market prices). With this important caveat, this method can be used normally for small studies and simple assignments.

Selection based on Quality Only

The contract is awarded to the service provider whose technical proposal receives the highest score. Financial proposals can be submitted at the same time as the technical proposal (if they are they should be submitted separately) or later on during contract negotiation. This method can be used for (i) one-off recruitment of individual consultants or for (ii) complex or highly technical assignments. For the latter, it is necessary to be cautious when using this method because it involves a risk of technical outbidding and requires a very good knowledge of market prices on the part of the awarding organization, to carry out financial negotiations effectively.

Selection based on Quality-Cost

The selected proposal is the one that has the best technical-financial weighted average. This selection method is recommended for intellectual services contracts. The weighting factors must be around 70% - 80% for the technical outline and 20% - 30% for the financial outline.

Selection of lowest cost option

The contract is awarded to the eligible proposal with the lowest cost. Eligible technical proposals are those that have obtained a technical score greater than or equal to the minimum threshold required. This selection method is only possible for standard services, with a limited budget that are low risk.

⁵Consulting, Equipment, Supplies, Works, etc.

⁶Direct award, competitive negotiated procedure without publication of a contract, open tender published locally, restricted international tender following publication of a tender notice.

⁷Under AFD financing, all contracts over 200,000 Euros require a Non-Objection Notice before publication and signature.

ANNEX IV – DEVELOPING MY ACTION PLAN

The action plan is a central component of project management. It allows you to look ahead and ensure that tasks and activities align to achieve your goal. You can use a Gantt chart, an Excel table, a Microsoft Project document or a document designed using another project management software.

It contains critical information such as activities, who is responsible, planning and progress of interventions. It must be realistic and updated regularly to be useful to the project.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND KEY ACTIVITIES	Who is responsible for activity implementation	OPERATIONAL PLANNING																								MONITORING																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
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Activity X.1 - Assess the context and project documents and adapt the ToC/logical framework if necessary. Activity IN.2 - Develop the M&E plan and identify indicator <i>baseline</i> values Activity IN.3 - Assess partner capacity and develop a strengthening plan Activity IN.4 - Develop required project capacity: recruit and train staff, procure equipment																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																											

ANNEX V – INDICATOR DESCRIPTIONS

If you have to develop a monitoring and evaluation plan or communicate the indicators to ensure that everyone understands them, you can write a description as per the below.

Indicator name	<i>Example: Average satisfaction level (percentage) among participants in relation to the quality of capacity strengthening activities carried out.</i>
Baseline value	0
Target value	80% of the target groups trained (XXX people trained) say they are satisfied with the quality of capacity strengthening activities delivered
Indicator definition	<i>This indicator makes it possible to monitor satisfaction levels among target groups that are trained. Data are gathered by interviewing (e.g. post-assessment questionnaire) trainees at the end of each capacity strengthening activity.</i>
Data disaggregation	<i>Data is disaggregated by geographical area, organization, gender, age, etc.</i>
Sources, data collection method	<i>Evaluation questionnaires are collected during each session, activity reports, etc.</i>
Data flow <i>Please describe the data flow process for the indicator, answering the following questions:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Where is the data collected from (data source)?</i> <i>2. What data is collected and in what format is it collected at source (paper, electronic, other)?</i> <i>3. When is personal data collected?</i> <i>4. Who collects the data (responsible person)?</i> <i>5. Where is the data stored?</i> <i>6. Who enters the data into the database?</i> <i>7. Who does the quality control of data (integrity, completeness, etc.)?</i> <i>8. Who consolidates and analyzes the data?</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Post-assessment results, training reports 2. Satisfaction rate from paper and/or online sources 3. End of each training (data collection), monthly (data collection report) 4. Staff assigned to the task 5. Database to be developed at XX 6. XX 7. XX 8. XX

ANNEX VI – DEVELOPING MY DASHBOARD

The dashboard includes indicators to monitor project progress and performance. This overview tool makes it possible to monitor the project's status and facilitates management and decision-making. It is generally based on data from the logical framework but can be developed in line with your needs. Below is a simple suggested template with project indicators in the rows and the objectives in the columns.

Objectively verifiable indicators (OVIs)	Baseline value		Mid-term target 1		Mid-term target 2		End of project target		Mean(s) of verification, (+ methods / tools for collecting information)	Data collection				
	Value	Date	Value	Date	Value	Date	Value	Date		How it is calculated	Frequency	Who is responsible	Archiving	
OVERALL OBJECTIVE:														
Indicator 1	0	Jan.- 20	5	Dec.- 20	10	Dec.- 21	20	Dec.- 22						
Indicator 2														
Indicator 3														
....														
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE(S):														
Indicator 1														
Indicator 2														
Indicator 3														
....														
EXPECTED OUTCOME 1:														
Indicator 1														
Indicator 2														
Indicator 3														
....														

