

**Guidelines for Reporting, Monitoring and Evaluation of
Projects funded under the Civil Society Fund (CSF)**

1. Introduction

The purpose of these guidelines is to set out clearly the obligations of partners to monitor CSF funded projects, the reporting requirements of Irish Aid and the role of Irish Aid in project monitoring.

These guidelines are informed by the CSF 2010 Application Guidelines, particularly Section 7: *Accountability: Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation*, and must be read in conjunction with the terms and conditions established in the project contract.

Summary of Reporting Requirements:

- **Annual Narrative Reports**
- **Annual Financial Reports**
- **Audited Accounts to be submitted annually**
- **Personnel Report to be submitted annually (if applicable)**

2. Monitoring

Irish Aid monitors all of its funded projects for accountability, effectiveness and value for money. There are growing demands from citizens worldwide and in Ireland for greater accountability and for a more tangible and evidence-based demonstration of results from investments in aid.

Strong monitoring systems have a key role to play in creating evidence and learning for greater effectiveness of aid.

Programme monitoring is the responsibility of the recipient organisation. Monitoring relies on a strong baseline against which progress can be measured. Monitoring information tracks progress towards the achievement of objectives and results, and enables project management and other stakeholders to make decisions on necessary adjustments.

2.1. Importance of Partner Monitoring Systems

The primary responsibility for monitoring CSF funded projects lies with the project holder (the signatory to the legal contract). Irish Aid expects all of its funded projects to be based on a robust contextual analysis and to have a clear intervention logic (or theory of change¹) accompanied by a results framework.. The results framework sets out *what* the organisation intends to achieve (including baselines, indicators and targets for each year of the intervention) and *how* it will do so. Irish Aid further expects organisations to have a comprehensive system for monitoring which provides continuous information on the extent to which results are being achieved vis à vis baseline information. This information is vital for project management. Irish Aid does not require a set format for a results framework nor the use of particular terminology. As a guide, the following are typical elements of results frameworks, which should link logically together:

- Overall aim, embedded in a strong analysis of context
- Development outcomes and results expected from project
- Clear logic of programme intervention(s) (strategies, activities etc.)
- Specific indicators and targets (against a baseline)
- Risks

2.2 Annual Narrative Reports

The annual report must be submitted within three months of a project year ending. **The narrative section of the report must report against the agreed results framework and link closely to the financial report.**

If monitoring points to the need for changes to project strategy, these changes must be outlined in the narrative report. However, partners should note that if they are proposing major changes to the project which are likely to have a significant impact on the expected results, these should be notified separately and in a timely manner to Irish Aid. Reports must be presented electronically according to the format laid out in Appendix A.

¹ A theory of change, sometimes referred to as the logic of intervention, comprises how the organisation expects its intervention strategy(ies) to lead to its intended outcomes.

Reports should be concise and written in clear English in 12 point font. Reports must not exceed 15 pages. Reports which exceed this length or which do not use the above format will be returned to the organisation for revision and resubmission.

Further funding disbursements will be contingent on the receipt of a timely and satisfactory report and failure to submit a timely report may result in the termination of the funding contract. Partners should inform Irish Aid promptly if they anticipate any delay in the submission of their annual reports beyond the aforementioned deadline and should request an extension outlining the reasons for delay. Such requests will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

Please note that all organisations based in Ireland which send personnel overseas (both volunteers and development workers) are required to complete the annual personnel report form which is laid out in Appendix B of this document. **This report is required whether or not these personnel are directly funded under the current CSF grant.**

Partners are requested to respond in a timely manner to ad-hoc requests by Irish Aid for information updates regarding project progress, should these arise. However, it is expected that such requests will be made only in exceptional circumstances and that most information will be obtained from annual reports.

2.3 Annual Financial Reports

The Annual Narrative Report must be accompanied by a financial report in the prescribed format (see Appendix C). This financial report should show total income (including that from other donors) and expenditure against budget for the current year and cumulatively. A sufficiently detailed breakdown should be provided, which should be in the same format as the budget agreed with Irish Aid during the application process (i.e. the financial report should use the same expenditure categories and line items as the agreed project budget). In-kind donations should not be included in the financial report.

The financial report and narrative report must be completed so as to clearly illustrate the relationship between activities and expenditure.

Annual reports should, where appropriate, include an overview of any procurement procedures (including tendering) implemented. **Any variations in expenditure within individual budget lines or across the whole budget which are greater than 15%, where the variation amount also exceeds €1000, must be approved by Irish Aid in advance.**

The following attachments must be submitted with the financial report, without which, it will be returned for revision and resubmission:

- a) the most recent annual accounts for the organisation, in which ‘Irish Aid’ funding is specifically shown as an item and the balance of Irish Aid funds remaining at the end of the accounting year is detailed. Externally audited accounts are required if the organisation is legally obliged to produce audited accounts or if the organisational income is above €100,000 per year. (Organisations with lower income levels should submit organisational accounts, but it is not necessary for these to be externally audited.)
- b) The audited accounts as submitted should be posted on the organisation’s website with the link sent to Irish Aid within the annual report. (This stipulation applies to all organisations with websites). These accounts will also be shared with the Irish Non-Profit Knowledge Exchange (www.inkex.ie) in the case of Irish organisations not registered as companies².

In addition, Irish Aid reserves the right to ask CSF grantees for the following at any time during the period of the grant:

- a) The auditor’s Management Letter and the organisation’s Management Response to this.
- b) Management accounts with budget variance analysis and commentary
- c) A reconciliation between Irish Aid income per annual accounts (or management accounts) and the Irish Aid amount shown in the financial statement for the project/programme.

Irish Aid may request clarifications based on the reports submitted. Irish Aid will endeavour to request clarifications of the organisation within two weeks of the initial receipt of the report. If further disbursements are due to a partner, the annual report and attachments, as outlined above, and any ensuing clarifications, will be required before any payment can issue.

² In collaboration with the Department of Community, Equality and Rural Affairs, Irish Aid supports the Irish Non-Profits Knowledge Exchange (INKEEx). From the second half of 2011, INKEEx will publish information on Irish non-profit organisations on a public website for the purposes of enhancing the transparency of the Irish non-profit sector.

2.4 Irish Aid Monitoring Visits

Site visits are an important part of Irish Aid's monitoring strategy. On monitoring visits, Irish Aid will monitor the project's performance against the results framework. The team will also verify partners' progress reports and compliance with contractual obligations. The visit will be based on a shared Terms of Reference (TOR).

A monitoring report will be produced and shared with the grantee once approved by the Civil Society Section of Irish Aid. The grantee may submit factual corrections and clarifications to the draft report. The grantee is then requested to provide a management response to the final report.

Irish Aid will endeavour to notify organisations at least six weeks in advance of a monitoring visit and the precise time and date will be agreed. Irish Aid will bear the costs of its monitoring visits; however any expenditure incurred by partners on these visits should be agreed with Irish Aid in advance.

3. Evaluation and Audit

Irish Aid encourages partners to develop and deepen a culture of lesson-learning that contributes to enhanced future performance and provides evidence of effectiveness. Irish Aid thus strongly encourages partners to undertake evaluations to rigorously document the results of the project investment. The evaluation criteria and the Evaluation Quality Standards of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development provide a useful reference for evaluations.

When an evaluation is funded with the use of Irish Aid funds, partners are required to post this evaluation on their website and to send the link to Irish Aid.

Irish Aid reserves the right to evaluate and/or audit a CSF project, using Irish Aid staff or appointed consultants. Irish Aid will bear the costs of such evaluations/audits.

4. Freedom of Information

Any information provided to Irish Aid with respect to the CSF project may be subject to examination for possible release in accordance with the Department of Foreign Affairs' obligations under the Freedom of Information Acts.

Civil Society Section

October 2010

Annual Report Format

1. Overview Name of organisation Project name Country CSF Contract Number	Date Reporting Period Project year (for projects of longer than one year)
2. Organisational Updates <i>Briefly describe any significant updates at organisational level, which may include updates around governance, financial systems, strategic planning, organisational quality initiatives etc. as relevant.</i>	
3. Project Summary and Key Updates Briefly describe the nature and scope of the project. Any significant changes to the project design since the original application must be described and explained. This should include changes in risks, context, and partnerships since the original context analysis that affect the project's theory of change and, therefore, its intervention strategy.	
4. Summary of Project Progress Summarise what the project has achieved since the initial application or the last report (as applicable), in terms of the expected results or outcomes set out in the results framework submitted with the original application form (or subsequently agreed with Irish Aid). For each result area, this should include outputs and progress towards the planned targets. The agreed results framework for the project should be annexed to the narrative report as Annex 1, with the year's progress clearly marked against each result area, indicating whether/to what extent milestones or targets have been achieved. Any changes in indicators, activities etc. should be clearly signalled. This annex does not count against the page limit for the report. In describing the project's progress please also refer to how the principles of partnership, participation, and capacity building have been applied in the implementation of the project. Mainstreaming of Irish Aid thematic priority issues – Gender Equality, Environmental Sustainability, Good Governance/Promotion of Human Rights, and HIV&AIDS - in the project implementation should be highlighted through the report where applicable and should not necessitate separate description. Specific initiatives relating to these priority issues should be described.	

4. Sustainability and Exit Strategy

This section should describe how the benefits of the project are likely to be sustained, including the progress towards establishing the capacities, structures, and systems necessary for the project outcomes to be sustained, institutionally and financially, beyond the period of Irish Aid funding.

5. Lesson Learning

Summarise any lessons learned from the implementation of the project. The report should reflect how these lessons are being incorporated into the ongoing implementation of the project (if applicable) or into broader organisational processes. Describe any initiatives for sharing these lessons with a wider audience.

Appendix B

Personnel Report for Irish-based organisations which send personnel overseas (it is recommended that all personnel should be registered with the relevant Embassy)

a) Development Workers:*

Agency Name	
CSF Contact Number	
Period covered by this report	

Development workers						
Country	Total No. of DWs	Female	Male	IA funded projects**	Irish***	PRSI contributions paid if applicable (Y/N)
Totals						

* IA defines a development worker as someone who earns more than €18,000 per annum

** No. of development workers working on IA funded projects

*** Development workers who are either holders of an Irish passport or other Irish habitual residents

b) Volunteers

Agency Name	
CSF Contact Number	
Period covered by this report	

Volunteers									
Country	Total No. of volunteers	Female	Male	IA funded projects*	Irish**	0-3 months	3-12 months	Over 1 year	Social Welfare contributions applicable *** (Y/N)
Totals									

* Number of volunteers working on projects that are IA funded

**Irish volunteers are holders of an Irish passport or other Irish habitual residents

Appendix C

NGO Name:
 Irish Aid CSF
 Contract Number:
 Period Covered by
 this report:

Incoming Resources	Year 1: €	Year 2: €	Year 3: €
<i>Grant Funding received from CSF-Irish Aid</i>			
<i>End of Year Balance of Irish Aid Funds</i>			

Other Funding (list individual sources of funding)	Year 1 budgeted Year 1 actual		Year 2 budgeted Year 2 actual		Year 3 budgeted Year 3 actual	
Own Resources *						
Other Sources						
Total Funding Other Sources						

Total Incoming Resources (Actual)

Resources expended
€

Budget Item/Area (as approved by Irish Aid)	Year 1 Budget	Year 1 actual expenditure	Variance	Year 2 Budget	Year 2 actual expenditure	Variance	Year 3 Budget	Year 3 actual expenditure	Variance
1. Direct Project Costs									

Subtotal	€ 0	€ 0	#VALUE!
2. Indirect Project Costs			
Subtotal	€ 0	€ 0	#VALUE!
Grand Totals	€ 0	€ 0	€ 0

€ 0	€ 0	#VALUE!
€ 0	€ 0	#VALUE!
€ 0	€ 0	€ 0

€ 0	€ 0	#VALUE!
€ 0	€ 0	#VALUE!
€ 0	€ 0	€ 0

** In-kind resources or donations should not be included in this report.*

Link to Audited Accounts on Website:

Comments