An approach to Partner Assessment

These criteria are used by a UK donor. They are more appropriate for an established NGO.

1 Objectives and methodology
  1.1 Objectives of the assessment
      • Ascertain structure, management, resources and strategy
      • Establish level of technical capabilities
      • Establish financial position and processes

  1.2 Methodology
      • Review relevant documentation
      • Discussions with partner’s board/committee and management team
      • Discussions with field staff and beneficiaries

2 Assessment criteria
   The overall assessment is made against seven organisational criteria:

2.1 Organisational vision
      • Does the organisation share your vision?
      • Does the organisation have a mission statement or other statement of aims and objectives?
      • Does the organisation have a constitution/governing document?
      • Are the organisation’s activities consistent with its mission/objectives?

2.2 Overall organisational capacity
      • Does the organisation have a successful track record of working with you?
      • Does the organisation have a successful track record working with other organisations/agencies?
      • Does the organisation have an overall record of achievement in the relevant field?

2.3 General management
      • Is there an organisation chart/organogram showing the structure of the organisation and how posts and committee relate to one another?
      • Are there clear responsibilities for board/committee members?
      • Are there clear reporting processes to the board/committee?
      • Is there a manual of all administrative procedures which clearly assigns responsibilities?
      • Is there evidence of regular minuted board/committee meetings?
      • Is there a functioning office with adequate telephone and e-mail facilities?

2.4 Financial management
      • Does the organisation have current annual accounts?
      • Are the accounts independently audited?
      • Are there documented financial procedures clearly assigning responsibilities?
      • Do the procedures allow for an adequate level of internal control?
• Does the organisation maintain adequate financial records, including:
  ➢ A cash book detailing all cash transactions and cash in hand?
  ➢ A bank book detailing all bank payments and receipts
  ➢ Files of all purchase documentation including original receipts and invoices?
  ➢ A file of bank statements and a record of bank reconciliations?

• Is there an up to date budget for the current financial year including an indication of costs already covered by other partners/donors?
• Are regular financial reports provided to the board/committee?
• Does the accounting system make a clear separation of funds received from different partners/donors and how these have been spent?

2.5 Procurement
• Are there documented purchasing and procurement procedures specifying who is authorised to approve purchases?
• Is there a requirement for obtaining quotations/tenders for large purchases?
• Is there an inventory of all equipment owned by the organisation?

2.6 Human resources
• Does the organisation have skilled and experienced staff who will be able to successfully implement the planned project?
• Does the organisation have sufficient staff to meet its responsibilities effectively?
• Is there an open and participative working environment?
• Does the organisation have adequate recruitment and HR procedures, including:
  ➢ Transparent job advertising, short listing and interview procedures
  ➢ References for all new staff
  ➢ Employment contracts for all staff
  ➢ Regular staff appraisals
  ➢ Disciplinary and grievance procedures
  ➢ Annual leave entitlements

2.7 Project management
• Does the organisation have up to date project files containing:
  ➢ Background information including project design, baseline studies, stakeholder consultations
  ➢ Project plan/timetable
  ➢ Project budget
  ➢ Monitoring and evaluation reports
  ➢ Donor conditions
• Is the organisation able to demonstrate how beneficiaries are involved on the whole project process from design to evaluation?