Sample table of contents for an NGO finance manual

Before you start the detailed work of developing or updating a finance manual, it is useful to agree a table of contents. This provides a framework to clarify the scope of work and what content will be included. The aim is to include all of the finance procedures, as well as supporting policies, templates and forms.

Below you will find a suggestion of some key items to consider including in your manual. Some of the sections may not be relevant, and will depend on your particular organisation or operating model. The example section on partners will only apply if you have local implementing partners. Those areas which are more relevant for the larger NGO are marked with an asterisk (*).

This document is designed to be used in conjunction with Mango's "Top Tips for developing a finance manual."

1. Overview
   1.1. Introduction
   1.2. Financial responsibilities of staff
   1.3. Delegation of authority
   1.4. Financial calendar *
   1.5. Donor rules and regulations
   1.6. Updating the manual

2. General accounting
   2.1. Recording transactions
   2.2. Supporting documentation
   2.3. Where no receipts are available
   2.4. Procurement process
   2.5. Payments - cash and bank
   2.6. Accruals & prepayments
   2.7. Accounting for partner expenditure *
   2.8. Staff payroll
   2.9. Salary advances
   2.10. Shared cost allocation and cost recovery

3. Bank & Cash management
   3.1. Bank and Cash Limits
   3.2. Setting up bank accounts
   3.3. Bank signatories
   3.4. On-line banking
   3.5. Cheques
   3.6. Closing bank accounts
   3.7. Petty Cash
   3.8. Staff advances/floats
   3.9. Credit cards *
3.10. Cash flow management
3.11. Currencies and foreign exchange

4. Month End
4.1. Month-end process
4.2. Month-end timetable
4.3. Timesheets/staff time accounting *
4.4. Monthly financial review
4.5. Cut off policy

5. Year End
5.1. Year-end process
5.2. Year-end timetable
5.3. Cut off policy
5.4. Annual Audit

6. Fixed Assets
6.1. Definition
6.2. Asset Register
6.3. Depreciation
6.4. Disposal of fixed assets
   6.4.1. Sales
   6.4.2. Donation
6.5. Annual verification

7. Financial Planning
7.1. Finance staff and budget holders’ responsibilities
7.2. Annual budget cycle – organisation
7.3. Project and donor budget development *
7.4. Budget revisions *

8. Budget Monitoring
8.1. Finance staff and budget holders’ responsibilities
8.2. Monthly budget monitoring
8.3. Financial reporting to donors

9. Internal Controls
9.1. Types of internal controls
9.2. Fraud and dishonesty
9.3. Record keeping filing and back-ups
9.4. Internal Audit *
9.5. External audit *

10. Partners *
10.1. Partner contracts/sub award agreements
10.2. Funds transfer to partners
10.3. Bank accounts & petty cash
10.4. Vouchers and documentation
10.5. Staff travel and expenses
10.6. Delegation of authority
10.7. Fixed Assets
10.8. Shared costs, administration and overhead costs
10.9. Currencies and foreign exchange
10.10. Partner quarterly/monthly reporting
10.11. Partner monitoring visits
10.12. Audit

11. Glossary

12. Appendices – Policy Documents
   12.1. Staff expenses or travel policy
   12.2. Procurement policy
   12.3. Cost allocation/cost recovery policy
   12.4. Document retention policy
   12.5. Reserves policy
   12.6. Audit policy *
   12.7. Fraud, bribery and corruption policy
   12.8. Whistleblowing policy *
   12.9. Anti-money laundering policy
   12.10. Accounting for grants to partners policy

13. Appendices – Finance Information
   13.1. Delegation of Authority document
   13.2. Chart of Accounts
   13.3. Finance roles and responsibilities – of finance and non-finance staff
   13.4. Organogram of Finance team
   13.5. Organogram of organisation

14. Appendices – Forms and Templates
   14.1. Expense claim form
   14.2. Supplies request or purchase requisition document *
   14.3. Purchase Order form
   14.4. Finance or Payment voucher
   14.5. Journal voucher
   14.6. Project budget format
   14.7. Monthly budget holder review and feedback form *
   14.8. Internal audit checklist
   14.9. Partner contract/sub award agreement
   14.10. Partner assessment format
   14.11. Partner budget template
   14.12. Partners reporting format
   14.13. Review and approval of partner reports template
If you would like further support with developing or updating your finance manual, please contact our approachable and friendly advisory team on consultancy@mango.org.uk.