

Guidelines for the Municipal Partnership programme

DECIDED 2024-04-25

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DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL DEMOCRACY

Municipal Partnership is a Sida¹-funded programme that enables exchange of knowledge and experiences between Swedish municipalities and regions and their counterpart local governments in certain countries of cooperation. Participation in the programme entails no costs for the Swedish local governments. Participating Swedish actors are often municipalities and regions, but can also be primary devolved neighbourhood councils, city district councils, county councils, regional local government associations, statutory joint local authorities, joint local authority committees, regions and federative local government organisations such as local authority organisations.

Foundational for the Municipal Partnership programme is UN's Sustainable Development Goals (Agenda 2030) and the Policy for Global Development (PGU) decided by the Swedish parliament (Government Bill 2002/03:122). Swedish local governments, with their longstanding experience within self-governance, are important actors in Swedish development cooperation.

The ending of poverty in all its forms everywhere will require active involvement and strong commitment from the local level. The strengthening of local democracy- and capacity building in politically controlled organisations responsible for providing services for local communities will thus be a crucial tool in the fight to eradicate poverty. Participation in the Municipal Partnership programme means that the Swedish partner also gains new tools and experiences necessary to develop their home organisation. ICLD offers support in processes for organisational development, assists in setting learning goals and enables thematic studies, field visits and job-shadowing opportunities. Participating organisations will be offered trainings facilitated by the ICLD on issues related to human rights, environment and climate, gender equality and other relevant topics.

All ICLD's efforts must be guided by conflict sensitivity, meaning all activities must be designed with awareness of possible conflict situations and not risk contributing to the worsening of conflicts. Mutual relevance and joint ownership are central perspectives in the programme.

The overall objective of Swedish development cooperation is to contribute to equitable and sustainable global development. The starting point in this work must be the needs and interests of- and prevailing conditions for people who live in poverty. Poverty is not merely a question of insufficient material resources; it is also about lack of power, influence, and other opportunities for people to improve their living conditions. Through the exchange of methods and experiences, equity, participation, transparency and accountability are addressed in rights- and results-oriented projects within this programme. As the programme contributes to the fight against poverty through development of local democracy, ICLD provides support to change agents within local and regional politically controlled organisations to enable strong and sustainable results in local democracy. Municipalities and regions have a decisive role in the work to reach those goals and Agenda 2030. Swedish experiences of local self-government can become a valuable experience for Sweden's partner countries in development cooperation, while the local level in the partner countries can provide the Swedish municipalities with new knowledge. ICLD thus plays an important role in supporting municipalities and regions in meeting the global goals. Citizens in municipalities or regions are

¹ Sida – The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency is a government agency working on behalf of the Swedish parliament and government, with the mission to reduce poverty in the world. Through their work and in cooperation with others, they contribute to implementing Sweden's Policy for Global Development.

affected by all of the agenda's goals, directly or indirectly. ICLD's overall objectives clarify the focus on inclusion of marginalized groups, equal representation and strengthening of local institutions in line with core democratic values.

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES, COOPERATION AREAS AND COOPERATION COUNTRIES

Programme Objectives and Cooperation Areas

The Municipal Partnership programme aims to counteract and reduce poverty by promoting democratic and functional local and regional institutions, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. The programme seeks to provide citizens with opportunities to influence local and regional political processes and promote increased participation, equity, transparency, and accountability in local decision-making.

ICLD's theory of change is based on three levels: participant, organisational, and community. At each level, the programme measures the results that occur within partnerships and how they relate to ICLD's four democratic core values: equity, participation, transparency, and accountability. Results in local democracy are measured based on the changes that occur in these areas.

Results at Participant Level

Participants in the Municipal Partnership programme directly benefit from the programme's efforts by gaining relevant knowledge and increasing their capacity to translate this knowledge into concrete action. This empowers participants to influence their organisations in a democratic direction based on their understanding of the four democratic core values: equity, participation, transparency, and accountability. ICLD measures the impact of individual learning on the ability of participants to promote these core values within their organisations.

Results at Organisational Level

The Municipal Partnership programme also seeks to promote organisational development by fostering collaboration between participants and their organisations. ICLD measures the impact of this collaboration on the participating municipalities/regions' ability to address democratic challenges related to equity, participation, transparency, and accountability. For example, changes in political support, prioritisation of issues, and policy development or implementation are tracked. ICLD also assesses how municipalities/regions improve their internal processes and interactions with citizens based on a common framework for organisational development.

Results at Societal Level

At the societal level, the Municipal Partnership programme aims to create sustainable democratic change in the communities where participating organisations operate. The impact of this change on the citizens who make up the programme's final target group is measured. ICLD focuses on its priority intervention countries to track the impact of the programme at the societal level. Additionally, the programme works in collaboration with municipal associations and other organisations to spread democratic results beyond the municipality or region where results have been achieved. The programme seeks to create a critical mass of municipalities in ICLD's prioritised intervention countries that have achieved strong and sustainable democratic results. Furthermore, the programme aims to create useful methods and knowledge that can contribute to generating national,

regional, or global added value. For example, a method developed through a partnership in Africa could become the basis for a similar project in Latin America.

ICLD's objectives

Long term impact

People living in poverty have opportunities to improve their living conditions and exercise their rights.

Mid term effect (3-5 years outcome)

Increased opportunities for citizens to have a say in decision-making processes that affect them.

Local and regional politically controlled organisations funded by ICLD demonstrate:

- Transparent and accountable operations with mechanisms for holding them responsible.
- Measurable increases in the influence of marginalised groups and youth.
- A significant and measurable increase in the representation of women in decision-making bodies.

Short term effect (1-3 years outcome)

Participant level: Participants apply new knowledge and skills in implementing projects aimed at strengthening local democracy.

Organisational level: Organisations improve their ability to address issues of equity, participation, transparency, and accountability.

Community level: A significant number of municipalities in ICLD's priority intervention countries achieve strong and sustainable democratic outcomes.

These objectives are achieved:

By connecting politically controlled local and regional organisations in partner countries with Swedish municipalities and regions through the Municipal Partnership programme and offering thematic networks for partnerships that facilitate exchange between north-south, south-south, and north-north.

By providing international training programmes that strengthen politically controlled local and regional organisations through capacity building efforts aimed at change-oriented officials and politicians who promote the thematic networks in partner countries.

By supporting research aimed at the thematic networks, compiling data and documentation on local democracy in partner countries, and providing methods for measuring and evaluating results within partnerships through the Knowledge Centre, which also serves as a meeting place for researchers and practitioners.

Cooperation areas

Collaborations under the Municipal Partnership programme aim to strengthen the capacity of local organisations to work towards democracy development and human rights. This involves the promotion of Agenda 2030 and ICLD's democratic core values, which include:

Equity

Citizens must be treated inclusively and fairly, with equal opportunities to express their needs and be considered based on their different circumstances. Measures that ensure no discrimination and violations occur and take into account the needs of vulnerable groups, particularly the position of women, are seen as success factors.

Participation

Local and regional politically controlled organisations have a responsibility to actively promote high participation in local decision-making processes related to the design of public activities and services. This involves developing instruments for increased dialogue and responsiveness to civic needs and finding ways to increase participation in decision-making processes and forms of influence over important issues.

Transparency

Transparency in decision-making, planning, and the formulation of rules in public activities is crucial for people to participate in local issues in an informed way. It is another core value for a socially sustainable local democracy. For citizens, increased transparency means politicians and civil servants act openly and predictably. Measures that ensure increased transparency, openness, and predictability are desirable for strengthened local democracy.

Accountability

Power and responsibility relationships must be clear for a well-functioning democracy, with opportunities for sanctions and accountability. Since it is not always possible for citizens to participate directly in decision-making, responsibility must be visible so that it can be demanded during ongoing processes, not just during elections. Providing information that shows how decisions are made, who is responsible, how citizens can appeal decisions, and the consequences of errors is a sign that organisations give citizens increased opportunities for accountability.

This work can be applied across the entire municipal and regional area of activity. Reciprocity must permeate the project cycle from problem and goal formulation to execution and follow-up. The work must be based on the needs of the international partner. However, the collaboration must benefit both parties so that the Swedish partner also develops in relation to the programme's goals. The collaboration must have defined objectives aimed at the programme's goals.

Cooperation countries

Partner Countries

The Municipal Partnership programme aims to coordinate with other Swedish development cooperation efforts to strengthen and deepen the work with local democracy development in partner countries. The goal of the partnerships is to achieve long-term and lasting results, and they can serve as a foundation for continued cooperation between Sweden and international cooperation countries through various forms of contact with businesses and civil society organisations. To achieve strong and long-term results, efforts will be intensified in four geographical clusters.

Cooperation shall primarily take place with countries divided into four clusters covered by the OECD's DAC list. The partner countries of the program are decided by the country analysis of the ICLD Board (Dnr KC00091) which yearly is reconsidered based on selection criteria in the System and Criteria for selection of countries (Dnr KP002334).

The system for cluster selection shall be evaluated before the initiation of every new strategic period of ICLD. The decision on the clusters is made by ICLD's board, but it awaits comments from the Partnership Council and Sida before a final decision is made. The countries within a cluster are continuously subject to discussion and examination. The list of available partner countries must be adapted according to the principle "where ICLD, based on established criteria, can make the most and best use."

ROLE OF ICLD AND APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Support from ICLD

ICLD is responsible for assessing various types of applications for inclusion in different parts of the Municipal Partnership Programme, ensuring the quality of the process and making decisions. Additionally, ICLD administers and develops the programme and disburses funds. Through ICLD's funding, reciprocal international visits for peer learning are made possible. ICLD also offers various forms of support to partners with the goal of strengthening the municipalities' ability to fulfil their objectives. This includes providing municipalities with tools and conditions for learning within a municipality and exchanging knowledge between municipalities. Practical tools, methods, manuals, access to mentors, training and relevant research for development projects are also offered to municipalities.

Application procedure

ICLD's website contains detailed information about the necessary components of an application. Applications must be jointly formulated by the applicant parties and must be prepared according to the application instructions for Municipal Partnership for ICLD to process them. The opportunities available for different types of applications are advertised on ICLD's website.

PROGRAMME DESIGN

Municipal partnerships can be offered as an individual partnership with an international partner or as part of a thematic network in which several Swedish municipalities and their partners participate. ICLD facilitates the thematic networks. The programme design consists of different phases, which can be organised in various ways. The image below illustrates an example of how a partnership can be organised.



ANALYSIS PHASE

The components of the analysis phase are designed to help municipalities apply for a project and steering group in the next step. During this phase, municipalities establish the foundations for a future partnership.

Inception

The inception typically lasts for one year from the date of the granted application or signed agreement. Funding is provided to enable two meetings between the parties, one in each country, with approximately four participants. However, the parties themselves can decide on the number of physical meetings they wish to make, with fewer participants if needed. Two politicians, preferably one from the opposition and one from the majority from both parties, as well as the appointed coordinator and possibly one additional person, must be included as participants. Support to carry out an inception may only be applied for once per partnership.

The purpose of the inception is to plan a joint project by allowing the parties to get to know each other, understand each other's context and situation, map common challenges, and involve the target group in project planning. The goal is to complete a project and steering group application for a full-scale project with goals at the organisational and community level. During the inception, members of the steering and project group are appointed, and a letter of intent (LoI) is signed and attached to the application.

To support problem inventory and project planning during the inception, a project planning tool is provided, which is mandatory to use. The tool consists of two parts. During the inception, the entire inception team is expected to carry out the first part in their own organisation and then discuss the results with their partner during a partner visit. The second part is then carried out in the respective organisations with the entire inception team, and the results are discussed with the partner municipality during the next partner visit.

Before applying for the inception, the intended parties must have made initial contact and discussed ideas for potential collaboration. This can take place through digital meetings, email, or phone calls. ICLD can assist in mediating contacts with suitable cooperation partners.

Expansion

Partnerships that are already established can apply for funds for expansion if they wish to collaborate in a new area of activity with new participants. The purpose of the expansion phase is to lay the foundation for joint and relevant project planning and project application. During this phase, the parties agree on whether the existing steering group needs to be expanded to include any new person relevant to the new activity. The grant should normally cover the costs of travel for four participants from both parties. A coordinator responsible for contact with ICLD must be appointed for the expansion.

Expansion differs from inception in that it takes place within an already established partnership, between parties that already have a steering group. If the political anchoring is already established, the participants in expansion can consist solely of civil servants. It is also possible to apply for more than one expansion. The expansion phase within the programme can last up to six months.

The same approach to using the project planning tool as during inception applies in expansion, as described above.

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

The maximum duration for a project and steering group is three years, but it should be noted that activities and payments cannot continue beyond the end date of ICLD's agreement with Sida (Swedish International Development Agency). This means that project duration may be limited in the final years of an agreement period. The suggested number of physical meetings is provided below, but ultimately the parties can decide on the number of physical meetings required. For instance, it may be beneficial to have fewer physical meetings with a smaller group of participants. In some cases, digital participation may be sufficient, and not all members of the project group may need to travel.

Steering group

Partners must establish a joint steering group to manage and support their partnership. The group should consist of representatives from the political majority and opposition (where applicable), as well as leading officials from both parties. Any exceptions to this rule must be justified and approved by the ICLD. Each party must appoint a coordinator who is employed by the municipality or region and is also a member of the steering group. The Swedish coordinator holds the primary responsibility for communication with ICLD.

The steering group's main task is to ensure the partnership has the necessary support and broad political anchoring within the organisation. By representing both the majority and opposition, the group ensures a long-term and politically diverse collaboration. The steering group has several areas of responsibility, including:

- **Anchoring and continuity:** Continuously ensure that the partnership has the necessary support in the organisation and broad support among politicians and civil servants.
- **Governance:** Provide project participants with advice, support, and governance to ensure democratic development in line with the project goals. The group is also responsible for making assessments based on the Sustainable Development Goals (Agenda 2030).
- **Quality assurance:** Monitor the project's activities and results to ensure quality and effectiveness.

- **Rights, equality, and environment/climate perspectives.** Ensure that human rights, equality, environmental and climate perspectives permeate all parts of the project.
- **Sustainability:** Ensure the organisation's implementation capacity and make the necessary political decisions so that the project's results are documented and implemented in the organisation to achieve long-lasting results.
- **Dissemination:** Plan early in the project how the results can be disseminated to promote impact at the community level.

The steering group is mandatory while the parties are conducting projects and can lead and coordinate several projects. Those applying for a grant for a Municipal Partnership must enter into a cooperation agreement (memorandum of understanding, MoU) and attach it to the application for the steering group. During the project period, meetings must be held in both countries, in Sweden and at the international partner, and minutes must be taken during the meetings. Meetings can also be conducted digitally. Steering groups are encouraged to invite participants from the project team, such as representatives from civil society organisations, experts, or other relevant participants.

Project

Proposals for projects must be based on the work done during the inception or expansion, where the results from ICLD's project planning tool form part of the project application. The project must address a problem or a development need at an institutional level within the activities of the participating parties. The aim is to establish well-functioning and democratic local and regional politically controlled organisations where citizens are given the opportunity to influence local and regional political processes.

Each project application must clearly state the target group for the change, the organisational capacity and preparedness that need strengthening, the goals to be achieved, the activities to be carried out, and how results will be tracked. The project plan must also outline which participants will be part of the project and how the learning will take place between the parties.

Partnerships can apply for funds for several projects simultaneously. The parties must sign a letter of intent (LoI) together, which must be attached to the application.

Multiparty cooperation

In some cases, it can be useful for one or more Swedish parties and/or one or more parties in the partner countries to form a steering group and run a project together. A multiparty collaboration always involves three or more parties. This can be done when several parties share similar priorities, and there are advantages to cooperation, or when problems do not stop at local or regional borders. It can also be helpful when several smaller actors support each other.

When applying for multiparty collaborations, all parties must be represented in the steering group, including politicians from the majority and opposition (where there are politically elected representatives of the opposition) and a coordinator per party. One of the Swedish parties must be appointed as the main point of contact for ICLD. Budgets for these types of partnerships are established in consultation with ICLD, following the guidelines that apply to all parts of the programme.

Dissemination

Funding can be requested to share information about successful examples of new working methods and practices that have contributed to the development of local democracy through Municipal Partnership. The main carriers of knowledge in the programme are participants from municipalities and regions. The purpose of this component is to share new ways of working, methods, and knowledge gained by the parties within the programme. Applications can be made during ongoing projects or after their completion. Examples of dissemination activities may include gatherings with associations of municipalities and municipalities not included in the partnership in the international partner's country. Activities funded within this component do not replace the dissemination and communication work that must take place within each project. The primary target groups for the dissemination of information are other local and regional politically-controlled organisations in the international partner's country and confederations of municipalities. The dissemination period within the programme can last for up to six months.

Municipalities can also request facilitated support from ICLD. This support is not requested through an application but is provided by ICLD to the extent of financial and personnel resources.

PARTICIPATION AND FUNDING

Actors that can apply for funding from ICLD

Sweden's municipalities, regions, district or district boards, municipal federations, regional federations, joint boards, municipal collaborative organisations, for example municipal federations, can apply for funds for municipal partnerships together with corresponding organisations from an international partner.

If the international partner has a different organisation of responsibility and execution of community services than in Sweden, a municipal partnership can still be fruitful between a Swedish local or regional politically controlled organisation and the organisation that is responsible in the other country. The parties therefore do not have to represent the same local level.

Several Swedish and/or international municipalities can participate in one partnership, provided that one of the Swedish parties is responsible. More information can be found under the heading "Multi-Partner Partnerships."

If necessary, the funding for the efforts can take place directly by ICLD on behalf of the municipality/region, without the funds first being passed on to the municipality/region.

Participants

The Municipal Partnership programme is aimed at combatting poverty by strengthening the organisational capacity to work with democracy development at the local level. Therefore, it is imperative to include politicians and officials from the respective local organisations in the programme. The group members should consist of individuals with different connections to the problem that the project aims to solve. The diversity of experiences is a valuable resource in developing an effective action plan to address the selected problem. Project managers and coordinators must be employed in the municipality/region. Participants must have a mandate and appropriate qualifications to contribute optimally to the project. In the application, the parties are

required to justify the selection of each participant. The selection of participants must aim for a group composition of half women and half men.

To ensure broad community anchoring, people from outside the mentioned organisations can participate in the programme advantageously. Civil society organisations, colleges and universities, the local business community, government activities such as the local police or the employment service, pupils and students are some examples of such individuals. Reimbursement for travel and accommodation expenses can be paid to a limited number of individuals in certain cases. However, compensation for lost earnings is not provided.

Replacing any participant in the programme with someone who was not included in the application is not permitted without anchoring and justifying the change with ICLD. ICLD must approve the change in writing to the region/municipality before implementation. It is not allowed for relatives to accompany the participants in the programme.

Financing and anti-corruption

Funds approved are paid in advance to the Swedish partner. These advance payments are made in accordance with existing contracts and the need for funds, based on approved reports and updated activity plans. Projects must be reported with an audit certificate, and any remaining funds are returned to ICLD. The Swedish partner is responsible for the financial distribution of funds between the parties and for financial accounting. Activities started or completed before the funds were granted will not be reimbursed.

ICLD has the opportunity to facilitate and finance activities that support the partnerships, such as municipalities needing additional support to better achieve their goals. Knowledge and experience exchanges are created within the programme, made possible through funding from ICLD/Sida. An agreement is signed between ICLD and the Swedish municipality, which commits to following the narrative and financial guidelines for the programme. The application must justify the reasons for each participant's participation and role linked to the goals to be achieved. At the time of application, the Swedish party's internal documents regarding anti-corruption work, such as an anti-corruption policy, must be attached. All participants in any of the programme's components must also sign ICLD's Code of Conduct.

REPORTING AND ASSESSMENT

Reporting municipalities

The Municipal Partnership programme requires annual reporting by the municipalities involved in the programme, which includes reporting on inception, steering group, project, expansion, or dissemination. The report should provide details of the achieved results as well as a financial report. The reporting should follow the Municipal Partnership reporting template.

In the performance report, the achieved results must be compared against the stated goals in the application. In the financial report, actual costs should be stated and substantiated. The Swedish partner has the primary responsibility for financial reporting. The municipalities update their activity plan for the coming year and submit it to ICLD in connection with the report.

The accounts must be reviewed by an authorized auditor and must follow ICLD's instructions for auditors and budget guidelines. The audit must follow good auditing practices, and the auditor should give an opinion in accordance with the applicable standard for related services, ISRS 4400, stating whether the financial reporting is consistent with the municipality's accounting and agreed budget. The report on the audit must be submitted with the accounts for the inception, steering group, project, expansion, or dissemination.

After ICLD approves the accounting, the advanced amount will be reconciled against actual costs up to the decided maximum amount. Any unused funds must be returned to ICLD.

All parties should be familiar with the instructions for reporting Municipal Partnerships before starting the programme.

As a rule, no decisions are usually made about the funding of activities in a new application until some form of performance reports and/or final reports have been received and approved.

ICLD: s result reporting

At the start of each collaboration, ICLD will establish a baseline for each partnership to allow for monitoring of results at the participant, organisational, and community levels. Corresponding measurements will be taken at the end of the project to assess the results achieved. ICLD will also conduct measurements of knowledge at the individual level at the beginning and end of each collaboration.

ASSESSMENT AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

ICLD assesses applications, assures quality in processing, and makes proposals for decisions based on established assessment criteria. After assessment and processing, proposals for decisions are made. The board decides on framework allocation and then the general secretary decides on each individual application.

ICLD carries out calls in which municipalities receive information about the components they can apply for in the coming year and the dates for decisions. Although municipalities can submit applications to the programme at any time during the year, decisions are made collectively on two to three occasions in the years when calls are made. Before distributing available funds, ICLD makes strategic considerations based on prioritisation grounds, such as geography, theme, current challenge, or overall objective. Collaboration with ICLD's units for international training programmes (ITP) and Knowledge Centre (KC), as well as SALAR and SALAR-International, is always sought. The granting of applications is done in competition for available funds and is conditional on ICLD having been granted funds from Sida.

No decisions on the granting of funds may be made which would result in activities or payments being carried out after the end date of ICLD's agreement with Sida. Thus, opportunities to apply for certain components could be limited during the last years of an agreement period.

Assessment basis

ICLD checks that all formal requirements are met, as instructed in the application form and programme guidelines. ICLD's quality assessment of an application is based on relevance, feasibility, and persistence.

Important criteria for Sida are that all Swedish aid incorporates the following five perspectives: the poverty perspective, the rights perspective, the conflict perspective, the gender equality perspective, and the environment and climate perspective. ICLD will prioritise based on economic conditions and prioritised countries.

The most important criteria for an application to be granted is that it:

- leads to increased local democracy based on increased participation, equity, transparency and/or accountability, thereby contributing to the reduction of multidimensional poverty in the partner country.
- relates to a challenge or problem at an organisational level.
- promotes gender equality, environment and climate and human rights.
- benefits both parties in the project
- strives for coordination with other efforts with the aim of gathering strength and deepening the work with local democracy development.

The most important criteria when assessing the project planning are that:

- the project proposal relates to a clear problem picture.
- the project is concrete and can produce sustainable results.
- the project proposal is realistic and feasible within the project time.
- the activity plan is linked to the objective.
- there is a plan for follow-up with indicators linked to the objective.
- risks have been considered and there is a plan for spreading the project's effects.

Decision-making process

Upon receiving an application for inception, project, steering group, dissemination or expansion, ICLD processes it to ensure that all formal requirements are met in accordance with the application form and programme guidelines. Specially set assessment criteria are used to carry out assessments and quality assurance, and proposals for decisions on approving or rejecting applications for funds are drafted in consultation with ICLD's knowledge center and ITP unit. Additional expertise is obtained from Swedish embassies and/or other relevant actors, based on specific questions.

Partnership Council

The unit for municipal partnerships at ICLD prepares and collates the received applications for municipal partnerships, submitting proposals for decisions on approving or rejecting applications for funds. The proposals form the basis for consultation with a specially constituted council. A justification for each individual case appears in the documentation, and ICLD can address strategic considerations and priorities with the council. The council comprises four members, of which ICLD appoints a chairman and one member, and SALAR appoints two members. Programme officers are responsible as rapporteurs in the council.

Adjustments to the documentation based on advice received are carried out, and a final proposal for a decision to approve or reject the application for funds, along with a documentation of justification for the decision in each individual case, is drafted.

ICLD board

After the office has compiled recommendations and financial data, the board decides on the financial framework and strategic orientation. The board's decision is made per capsulam and must be determined by the board at the next board meeting.

Secretary General

The Secretary General establishes proposals for decisions for each individual application, informs the coordinators in the applicant Swedish organisations in writing about the decisions, and sends agreements. The coordinators are then responsible for communicating the decisions to the international partner. ICLD sends a copy of the decisions, along with summaries of applications, to Sweden's embassies in the relevant cooperation countries and/or other cooperation partners and actors that ICLD deems relevant. In connection with ICLD's regular annual report, Sida is informed of decisions made.

Simplified decision-making process when applying for an inception

In addition to the decision-making process described above, ongoing decisions can also be made regarding applications for funds for inceptions. However, no decisions on the granting of funds may be made that mean that activities or payments are carried out after the end date of ICLD's agreement with Sida. Thus, opportunities to apply for certain components will likely be limited during the last years of an agreement period.

- As soon as an application for inception is received, ICLD's unit for municipal partnerships produces a proposal for a decision to approve or reject the application for funds and a document with justification for the decision in each individual case to the Secretary General.
- The Secretary General decides on each individual application for inception, and then the chairman of the board determines the decision on the allocation of funds. The decision must be reported to the board at the next board meeting.
- The Secretary General informs the coordinators in the applicant Swedish organisations in writing about the decisions and sends agreements. The coordinators are then responsible for communicating the decisions to the international partner. ICLD sends a copy of the decisions together with summaries of applications to Sweden's embassies in the relevant cooperation countries and/or other cooperation partners and actors that ICLD deems relevant.
- In connection with ICLD's regular annual report, Sida is informed of decisions made.

OTHER

The application, report and budget must be written in English. Exceptions can be made if the international partner is not English-speaking, and translations are made from Swedish to the relevant language. The application and reporting is done digitally via ICLD's website - www.icld.se - where instructions and information about mandatory appendices and dates for application periods can be found.

for questions about the application process contact:

E-mail: partnership@icld.se

BUDGET GUIDELINES

Participation in the Municipal Partnership programme entails no costs for the Swedish partner as Sida funds all expenses related to collaborations within the programme. This includes travel costs, such as transfer costs, board and lodging, interpreter and audit costs, and labour costs for participants from Swedish local and regional politically controlled bodies. According to Swedish legislation, it is not possible to conduct international development cooperation with municipal tax funds. The international partner contributes their working time, and if possible, both parties contribute with the provision of premises and local transport.

The budget must adhere to ICLD's budget guidelines and be created according to ICLD's template.

The programme funds cover costs related to the work activities to be carried out. However, if the parties choose to stay an additional 24 hours or more beyond the required work activities during their stay in Sweden or in one of the cooperating countries, food, accommodation, or costs for activities will not be covered by programme funds. Additionally, costs for salary or allowances will not be financed by programme funds if the stay is extended. Any extension of the business trip should not lead to higher travel costs. If the partnership takes place in one of the Foreign Ministry's defined risk areas, costs for security training may fall within the framework of the guidelines.

Costs that are not mentioned in these guidelines and that may arise for various reasons are not financed through the programme.

Inception for Municipal Partnership:

Europe: Max SEK 240 000

Africa/Latin America/Asia: Max SEK 300 000

Inception for Municipal Partnership, multi-party cooperation:

Europe: Reference point SEK 300 000

Africa/Latin America/Asia: Reference point SEK 360 000

Budget level to be set in consultation with ICLD.

Steering Group, two parties:

Europe: Max SEK 300 000 per year

Africa/Latin America/Asia: Max SEK 350 000 per annum

Steering Group, multi-party cooperation:

Europe: Reference point SEK 400 000 per annum

Africa/Latin America/Asia: Reference point SEK 430 000 per annum

Budget level to be set in consultation with ICLD.

Project:

Europe: Max SEK 450 000 per annum

Africa/Latin America/Asia: Max SEK 500 000 per annum

Project, Multi-party cooperation:

Europe: Reference point SEK 600 000 per annum
Africa/Latin America/Asia: Reference point SEK 650 000 per annum
Budget level to be set in consultation with ICLD.

Expansion:

Europe: Max SEK 240 000
Africa/Latin America/Asia: Max SEK 300 000

Expansion, multi-party cooperation:

Europe: Reference point SEK 300 000
Africa/Latin America/Asia: Reference point SEK 360 000
Budget level to be set in consultation with ICLD.

Dissemination:

Max SEK 100 000

COSTS THAT CAN BE COMPENSATED

Compensatory wage adjustment/Fees

- Compensation for Swedish municipal/regional staff, i.e., municipal/regional employees (based on actual salary and social security contributions). The maximum amount that can be paid is SEK 5200/day.

Costs

- Experts, consultants, and international mentors hired by Swedish municipalities for projects in Sweden and in the partner country. The maximum amount that can be paid is SEK 6 400 a day. The costs for experts must be no more than 15 % of the total project budget. Any consultants/experts/mentors engaged must be justified in the project application, including a description of their role and significance for implementation of the project.
- Auditing costs. An auditor must be authorised. As a minimum SEK 10 000 must be budgeted. Higher costs may be approved.
- Travel
Foreign travel: Full compensation for travel in economy/tourist class for both parties. ICLD assesses the amount applied for on a case-by-case basis.

Local travels in both countries: Full compensation for travels by the cheapest available means. Necessity must be motivated in the application.

Environmental offsetting compensation costs in conjunction with flights (max. SEK 500 per person per return trip) may be approved.

- Accommodation and meals (soft drink)
Within Sweden for international participants: Compensation of up to SEK 2 000/person/day (actual costs to be reported).

Within the international partner country for Swedish participants: Full compensation for food and accommodation of acceptable tourist standard (actual costs to be reported) plus allowance. Acceptable tourist standard refers to simpler hotels/rooms that meet the municipality's safety requirements. ICLD never uses five-star hotels. In connection with ICLD facilitated educational efforts, amounts are decided in consultation with ICLD. The Swedish Tax Agency, Skatteverket, recommended amount per day for tax-free living allowance: www.skatteverket.se

- **Interpreters**
Compensation is only available if the need of an interpreter has been justified for in the application. Swedish interpreters/translators in Sweden: No more than SEK 5 600/day.

Interpreter accompanying a delegation on a visit to Sweden: No more than SEK 2 000/day.
Swedish interpreter accompanying a delegation on a visit to the international partner country: No more than SEK 2 000/day.
Local interpreter accompanying a Swedish delegation on a visit to the international partner country: No more than SEK 2 000/day.
- **Visa fees and any costs in conjunction with visa applications:** for both parties.
- **Insurance expenses for participants in Sweden.** No more than SEK 150/day.
- **Necessary vaccinations:** For both parties. Mandatory tests in connection with entry and exit between different countries, for both parties.
- **Communication (for example costs for telephone, SIM-card and postage costs):** Standard contribution of SEK 1100/annually.
- **Equipment and material**
These costs shall be justified in the application and its budget, and a clear specification provided of the equipment and material to be purchased, or the material to be developed must be provided. Minor equipment and materials purchases, or printing of materials: a maximum of 15% of the total project budget per annum. Costs may, for example, relate to the production of an information folder, printing of reports, or purchases of equipment/materials required to conduct the project. The application must also state how it is ensured that, for example, equipment/materials belong to the municipality.
- **Premises and conference costs**
A small amount of compensation for premises rental, e.g. in conjunction with workshops or conferences, may be payable if either of the parties are unable to supply premises. Funds for light refreshments in conjunction with the activity may also be included in this item.
- **Unforeseen occurrences**
All project applications must allocate at least 2 % of the total project budget for unforeseen expenses.

Costs in connection with training courses arranged by ICLD

ICLD can facilitate and finance activities that support the partnerships, for example when municipalities request it and have needs that contribute to them better achieving their goals. In connection with ICLD arranging trainings and/or workshops, facilities are sometimes required that have the capacity to offer facilitation and technology for larger groups. That type of facility can in some cases be more expensive in terms of food and accommodation, which is why the costs in addition to the above-mentioned financial framework can be approved by ICLD. In cases where this is financed through the partnership's own budget, approval must be made in writing from ICLD.