



**MS Nepal**

Danish Association for  
International Co-operation

MS Nepal  
Assessment Framework of Potential  
Partners

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# MS Nepal

## Assessment Framework of Potential Partners' Selection

### 1. Introduction

MS Nepal has been working since 1986, and follows the strategic direction of MS "MS in the South" (MSiS). MS pursues MS's Vision and operates in accordance with its Mission. The fight to reduce and ultimately eradicate poverty will contribute to global equity and improved livelihoods for poor and marginalised. The partnership approach is instrumental in creating opportunities for action based on understanding, dialogue and shared responsibility.

Recently, MS's democracy framework sets out five alternative themes to address MS's overall development goal of reducing poverty by promoting inclusive democracy in the South. Since the year 2008, as other MS country programmes, MS Nepal has chosen to concentrate on the three themes of **Building Local Democracy, Land Rights, and Conflict Management and Peace Building** for the duration of the MS Nepal Country Programme Strategy (MSN-CPS 2008 – 2012).

The MSN-CPS geographically focuses on four districts in Western, Mid Western and Far Western regions of Nepal. The four focal districts where MS programme is in operation are Kapilvastu, Palpa, Banke and Doti (with some limited activities in Rupandehi and Bardiya districts). MS Nepal also concentrates in Kathmandu (central region) with limited partnerships. MS Nepal applies a flexible partnership approach with short and long-term partnerships and projects with the Nepali NGOs. To proceed in partnerships, MS Nepal has an important aim to ensure right selection of organisations as MS partners to work with, based on the MSN-CPS themes and tangible objectives and outputs. MS Nepal will then develop a partnership agreement/document together with Nepali NGOs and provide finance to carry out partnership activities. A mixture of long and short term, broad based specialised and North/South Development workers placed with MS partners will assist several partner organisations with the implementation of the MS programme and projects.

### 2. Pre-requisites for Partnership

MS Nepal is one of the active members among 80 International NGOs working in Nepal in the Association of International NGOs in Nepal (AIN). AIN has recommended Guiding Principles for INGO-NGO Partnership in Nepal and Basic Partnering Requirements. MS Nepal respects the AIN guidelines and follows them while partnering with local organizations. Followings are the AIN guidelines:

#### 3.1 Guiding Principles for INGO-NGO Partnership in Nepal:

**Common purpose** of our organizations is working for poverty reduction, sustainable development, and protection and promotion of human rights.

**Commitment to equity and diversity** of people both within our organizations and among those we work with, in terms of age, caste, class, ethnicity, gender and religion.

**Grounded in civil society**, we honestly represent and respect the interests of the members of civil society we work with and they actively participate in the development, implementation and evaluation of our programs.

**Accountability** to stakeholders, including rights-holders, for the effectiveness and efficiency with which we use the resources we mobilize, and they are able to openly express their rights, choices and concerns.

**Transparency** to stakeholders about who we are, and how we raise and use our resources, maintain records and make decisions that affect all rights holders involved in our work.

**Performance oriented** to achieve the best results possible based on targets and achievements agreed with those we work for/with and those we mobilize resources from.

**Mutual learning and sharing** with implementing and funding partners to ensure benefits are maximized for the sustainability of communities and organizations.

**Longer term partnerships** to assist communities and organizations develop their capabilities to improve the implementation and sustainability of their programs.

**Coordination between donors, projects and local implementers** to ensure support provided to partners is well-coordinated and used efficiently so that resources are not duplicated, wasted or misdirected.

### **3.2. Basic Partnering Requirements:**

**Legal registration** of our organizations and our partner organizations with the government in order that administrative and financial transactions are in full compliance with all relevant legislation and regulations, including taxation and labor laws.

**Selection of partners** by our organizations is transparent and based on clear selection criteria.

**Written contractual agreement** drawn up together by the partners in a language understood by all, which specifies the minimum standards agreed, including the program objectives of the partnership, the agreed indicators, time-bound targets for performance, and the resources to be mobilized.

**Active board (executive committee)** which is independent of the management of our organizations, and exercises oversight according to the letter and spirit of each organization's constitution, including holding regular general assemblies and elections.

**Vision, goal and objectives** are publicly established by our organizations and we monitor our performance through clearly defined indicators, measurements and targets.

**Representation of community diversity** on the board (executive committee) and among the staff of our organizations

**Non-partisan** non-party political, non-religious, and non-violent

**Participation of community** in planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the programs of our organizations

**Stakeholder consultations and evaluations** are conducted regularly.

**Accurate financial accounting** of our complete financial transactions within the organization and with others

**Transparent reporting and policies** concerning the operations of our organizations and the progress of our programs are made available to stakeholders.

**Human resource management** best practices are applied to ensure personnel are clear on their responsibilities and their rights.

#### **4. MS Nepal Partner Selection Procedure**

The procedure of selecting partners in MS Nepal will be transparent to all stakeholders, including communities and partners themselves. In order to ensure that decision-making is unbiased, MS Nepal will, therefore, use the assessment system as framework of potential partners mentioned below, which evaluate dimensions such as management, human resources and work experience. The guiding principles and pre-requisites for partnership, mentioned above will also inform the decision. Followings are the MS Nepal procedure and criteria while partnering with NGOs in Nepal:

- MS Nepal CPS 2008-2012 concentrates on focal districts namely; Palpa, Kapilvastu (west), Banke (mid-west), Doti (far west) and some limited activities in Rupandehi, Bardiya and Kathmandu (central). Unless there are special circumstances MS Nepal does not extend its area of operation beyond the 4 focal districts.
- MS Nepal CPS 2008-2012 has chosen to concentrate on the three programme themes of **Building Local Democracy (BLD)**, **Land Rights (LR)**, and **Conflict Management and Peace-Building (CM&PB)**. MS Nepal gives first priority to the MS existing partner organisations to work with the MS Nepal new CPS themes. MS Nepal will also select some new organisations to work with the new CPS themes in the MS focal districts as well as in Kathmandu. Kathmandu based

NGOs are regarded mainly as strategic partners that will support the MS Nepal and its local partners to be effectively working in the new CPS themes.

- MS Nepal has established District teams in each of the four MS focal districts, consisting of MS Partner representatives, Development workers and Secretary/Translator for the district teams. The MS Nepal Programme Officer responsible for most partnerships in the focal districts is also a member in the district teams.
- The District teams, headed by a Programme Officer from MS Nepal, are responsible for coordinating the implementation of the objectives of the new CPS themes in each of the four focal districts as well as to explore, assess and recommend for final selection of NGOs by applying the "Assessment Framework of Potential Partners" (selection criteria) tool, refer 4.1.
- The District teams receive/develop profiles of the local district based NGOs/CBOs those are working on BLD, LR and CM&PB, and are interested to work with MS in the new CPS themes.
- There can potentially be many NGOs working in the district that have an interest to work with MS, and the selection of NGOs for the district teams will be difficult job. To make the transparent decisions in selection of organizations by the District teams, the MS Nepal Assessment Framework of Potential Partners (selection criteria) tool, refer 4.1 will be adopted while screening NGOs.
- In some special circumstances MS Nepal might need to direct contact to Kathmandu or district based organizations to work with MS Nepal in the new CPS themes as strategic partners. In the case, the selection procedure and criteria, the tool 4.1 refer below might not be exactly applied. In such situation, the MS Nepal Programme Officer (PO) who has been assigned to work with the specific theme as Thematic Coordinator will coordinate and explore NGOs in Kathmandu as well as in districts. Potential NGOs will be assessed by the thematic PO responsible applying the selection criteria, the tool 4.1 refer below where applicable or separate indicators can be adopted. The final selection of NGOs as strategic partners for MS Nepal will be made in close co-ordination and consultation with the MS Nepal Programme Officers and the Country Director.

#### **4. 1. Assessment Framework of Potential Partners (Selection Criteria)**

Selection of organizations will be decided after analyzing the organizations based on performance category variables. These performance variable categories are compiled /compressed to form the 11 criteria (indicators) of organizational effectiveness in order to provide recommendations to select organizations as MS partners to work with. The table as shown below is to be used to provide indicative information on the organizations as per the organizational assessment indicators.

**Scoring:** The weight age score in the variables of selection criteria, given below, will be the guiding questions to be followed by the District teams.

The scores in the variables will be summed up with that of the NGOs. Those NGOs having highest scores will be recommended/selected as MS partners to work with.

Criteria and Variables (Indicators)	Full Score	Potential Partners			
		<i>Score Marked: Please score for each answer with "2" maximum (precise) or "1" minimum or "0" for in correct answer respectively.</i>			
		<u>Org.1</u>	<u>Org.2</u>	<u>Org.3</u>	<u>Org.4</u>
<b>1. Clear defined legal charter</b>	<b>6</b>				
a. Is this NGO registered with the District Administration Office with annual renewal?					
b. Is this NGO affiliated with the SWC or other line ministries?					
c. Is this NGO registered with the Internal Revenue Office and received the Tax Exempted Certificate?					
<b>2. Nature and structure</b>	<b>16</b>				
a. Is this a membership NGO?					
b. Does this NGO include beneficiaries as members?					
c. Are there enough and balance number of female and male membership (Dalits, Janjatis and other disadvantaged groups) in staff and executive committee in the organization?					
d. Does this NGO hold Annual General Assembly timely and elect for membership?					
e. Does this NGO hold regular board meetings?					
f. Is the organizational structure clearly defined?					
g. Does NGO practice change in leadership?					
h. Is division of tasks and responsibilities clear and understood by board members and staff?					
<b>3. Clear strategic vision</b>	<b>8</b>				
a. Does NGO have a clear Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives?					
b. Does NGO have strategic plan?					
c. Is the strategy compatible to Vision, Mission, Objectives, Policies and Working Approach?					
d. Does this NGO have funding mechanisms (the outlook for interesting projects and financing possibilities)?					
<b>4. Decision-making process corresponds its vision</b>	<b>6</b>				
a. Does NGO make participatory decisions?					
b. Are decisions made based upon structure and clear division of responsibilities?					
c. Are decisions shared with the stakeholders including beneficiaries?					

<b>5. Beneficiaries/target group</b>	<b>10</b>				
a. Does this NGO address women, dalits, janajatis, youths and other poor marginalized groups as target groups?					
b. Does this NGO think the beneficiaries of the programme and funding agencies are generally satisfied with the results obtained?					
c. Is the NGO perceived as a good organization?					
d. Does this NGO have linkages with community, local government, line agencies and other like-minded NGOs, CBOs and networks?					
e. Is this NGO implementing any governance programmes in collaboration with local bodies and donors?					
<b>6. Programmes and Projects geared towards results</b>	<b>6</b>				
a. Does this NGO have distinct features with regard to programmes and projects?					
b. Does this NGO have a special programme for women and youths?					
c. Does this NGO obtain satisfactory results?					
<b>7. Work modality and experiences</b>	<b>10</b>				
a. Does this NGO practice participatory programme planning, monitoring and evaluation?					
b. Does this NGO give priority to mobilize local resources?					
c. Does this NGO have working experiences on Building Local Democracy? Land Rights? Conflict Management and Peace Building?					
d. Does this NGO have experiences working with local bodies?					
e. Does this NGO have experiences working with donors and expatriates?					
<b>8. Management system is in place</b>	<b>12</b>				
a. Does NGO have clear policies and rules on the management of staff (staff recruitment, staff promotion and capacity enhancement of staff)?					
b. Does NGO have sufficient resources (office building, furniture and basic office equipments etc.)?					
c. Does NGO have competency of human resources?					
d. Does NGO have a process for programme planning and budget for casting?					
e. Does NGO conduct social audit?					
f. Does this NGO have segregation of duties for management staff and board members?					
<b>9. Financial management system is in place</b>	<b>14</b>				
a. Is the accounting system in the organization appropriate?					
b. Is there a financial control system in place?					
c. Are budgets based on programme plans, expenses in					

line with budgets and as such reported upon?					
d. Is annual external auditing done and the audit report is made available to all concerned?					
e. Does NGO have consistency of financial policies and procedures with practices?					
f. Are overheads within acceptable limits and reduced to maximum extent?					
g. Does NGO conduct public hearing?					
<b>10. Donor and community feed back</b>	<b>8</b>				
a. Does NGO implement programme timely based upon programme plans and budgets?					
b. Does NGO practice transparent programme management and financial administration?					
c. Does this NGO provide quality and timeline reporting?					
d. What about NGO accountability to donors, target community and its collaboration with line agencies?					
<b>11. NGO commitment and willingness</b>	<b>4</b>				
a. Does NGO have willingness to abide by the Guiding Principles for INGO-NGO Partnership in Nepal?					
b. Does NGO have willingness to abide by the MS policies and guidelines (e.g. NGO community radio support policy, gender policy, financial policies and procedures etc.)?					
<b>Final score received</b>	<b>100</b>				
Grading of the organizations A/B/C/D based on the score received by them.					
<b>Remarks and Recommendations by the District Team:</b>					