

## **CARE Danmark comments to the Information Note regarding the Strategic partnerships between Danish civil society organisations & Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark**

CARE Danmark welcomes the draft Information Note and we appreciate the opportunity to share our comments and thoughts on the proposed modalities for a new model for partnerships between the Foreign Ministry and the Danish civil society organizations. In general, we find the draft Information Note sound and comprehensive, providing the adequate level of details needed for us. At a more specific level, we are glad to see several of our previous comments included in the Information Note, in particular a strong reference to the Policy for Danish Support to Civil Society and the fact that strategic partnerships will be based on the CSOs' own vision, goals, strategies and specific core competencies. However, CARE Danmark - in addition to the comments given by Global Focus - would like to raise a few areas where we believe that the strategic partnerships could be strengthened:

### **Linking national initiatives to global public goods priorities**

The draft Information Note underlines the importance of linking national agendas and civil society stakeholders to global agendas: "The assessment [of advocacy] will take into account the extent to which advocacy efforts are informed by evidence and based on knowledge of the processes and stakeholders that need to be influenced and whether a link exists between the organisation's global agendas/campaigns and evidence-based relevance at national and local level in partner countries, promoting civil society participation in local, national and international decision-making" (p. 15, 5.3.6). CARE Danmark fully agrees with this. However, we suggest that the SDGs prioritised in global public goods are given equal priority to the SDG priorities in the country specific categories (low-income, fragile states and fragile regions; low-income, stable countries; and transition and growth economies) when the national activities are integrated directly into international advocacy strategy and activities of the applying organisations. This will strengthen the potentials for coherence between local, national and international agendas. It will also foster better coherence with the Danish Global Public Goods priorities and hereby strategic alignment with the Danish Strategy for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Action. Therefore, we hope to see that the assessment criteria reflect priority given to global programmes addressing the SDGs related to the geographic category of global public goods.

### **Better reflection of added value of international networks**

CARE Danmark is glad to see that global connectedness is pointed out in the application form as a specific part of the strategic approach. However, we find that the potential and added value that an international network, such as CARE International, brings to the partnerships are not fully taken into account in the draft Information Note and the assessment criteria. By being part of a large

international network, an organisation has the opportunity to promote the Danish strategic priorities within the international network and in this way enhance the effects of the Danish aid, in more effective ways than organisations' taking part in loose networks and ad-hoc fora. We therefore encourage the Ministry to reflect this difference in added value, potential and multiplying effect in the assessment criteria.

### **Stronger nexus of humanitarian response and long-term development**

We fully support that the strategic partnerships aim to bridge humanitarian response and long-term engagement and can only encourage strengthening this nexus even further in the draft Information Note. This could be done by giving greater emphasis in lot CIV to resilience in vulnerable communities and regions, including prevention of climate-related disasters leading to humanitarian crises and social instability. In this regard, we encourage adding to the application format a section for descriptions of the organisations' approach to working across the development/humanitarian nexus, including concrete cases/examples showing the track record of the organisation, as well as inclusion of a nexus assessment criteria. Furthermore, a more flexible approach for organisations new to the humanitarian area could bridge the short-term and long-term efforts. One option is to allow new actors with existing strong and competent international humanitarian networks to phase in their own value addition to implementation of humanitarian interventions over a couple of years, even if the minimum threshold of DKK 15 million is maintained.

### **Clarity on approach and adequate space for description of strategic relevance**

The section on "Strategic relevance of the proposed partnership engagement" is allotted two pages in the application format. Considering that this section should present the overall strategy of our interventions across countries and themes as well as the alignment with the Danish Strategy for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Action etc. the two-page limit seems rather restrictive. We would encourage to increase this page restriction in order to allow for us to adequately describe the overall programme approach across countries and themes. Following from this, as well as taking the overall structure of the application format into consideration (i.e. the TOC per country etc.), it could seem that the intention of the approach in a strategic partnerships will be to *split* interventions into programmes across geographies and regions rather than an approach based on a holistic programme *across* regions and themes. This could signal an intentional or unintentional divergence from the approach, which has been promoted in recent years, within the framework agreements of having a solid overall encompassing programme across geographies and themes. We would encourage – especially considering the increased focus on the nexus between humanitarian interventions and the long-term development interventions – that the overall programmatic approach is kept as a key focus, and therefore practically is given bigger prominence in the format.