

20 February, 2017

Re.: Input for the Information Note – DRAFT on Strategic Partnerships between Danish CSOs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Danish Family Planning Association – the leading organisation in Denmark working with SRHR nationally and internationally – appreciates the opportunity to provide inputs and comments on the Information Note – DRAFT, on Strategic Partnerships between Danish CSOs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

We welcome the strategic partnership approach outlined in the Information Note and appreciate the hard work put into striking the right balance between many different interests and stakeholders involved in this process.

We would like to highlight a few issues and make the following concrete recommendations;

1. Strategic partnership modalities with a stronger emphasis on the mutual value-creation between Danish CSOs and the MFA

The past decade has shown a multitude of ways in which Danish CSOs add value to development cooperation at the local, national, regional and global level. Danish CSOs build new and strategic advocacy alliances, contribute to private companies' social responsibility work, collaborate with authorities from local to global level, engage with popular movements and provide technical and strategic guidance to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Danish Parliament and other Danish decision makers. The potential to harness the many innovative and strategic ways in which Danish CSOs contribute to positive change in developing countries is one of the main reasons why the strategic partnership approach is such a good idea.

Unfortunately, the current phrasing of the objective for the CIV lot does not seem to capture this wealth in strategic reach and added value and fails to pave the way for exactly the kind of strategic and change-making partnership that the new Strategy for Danish Development Cooperation emphasizes.

We therefore recommend an adjustment in the phrasing of the strategic objective under the CIV lot in order to encompass the strategic potential of Danish civil society organisations working with a broad range of other stakeholders; including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, local, national and regional authorities, UN

organisations and other multilaterals as well as private sector stakeholders – i.e. companies, investment funds, business associations etc.

2. Budgetary considerations that consider organisation capacity and strategic relevance

The budgetary constraints described on page 17 in the Information Note has the unfortunate consequence, that applicants with substantial organisational capacity and particular strategic relevance but a somewhat limited annual turnover in 2014 and 2015 will not have the opportunity to unfold their full, potential added value in a partnership agreement with the Ministry. The RAM-assessment process of 11 framework organisations clearly showed that the size of the annual turnover does not necessarily match organisational capacity.

We therefore recommend, that the Ministry reserves the right to make the final decision on the budget of individual strategic partnerships based on the specific, strategic added value of the of the organisation in question and a concrete assessment of the organisational capacity. We also encourage that the initial budget level of a given strategic partnership can grow incrementally over the period of the agreement – based on an analysis of both strategic value added as well as organisational capacity.

3. Public engagement in Denmark – make room for innovation

We are like other organisations concerned that the information note describes a changed set-up for the public engagement work that strategic partners can implement. It seems like a lost opportunity to increase the awareness amongst the broader public of Danish development cooperation – and Danish CSOs are amongst the best positioned to do that.

We therefore recommend that strategic partners can reserve a minimum of 2% of the total budget for engaging with the public in Denmark. We also support that some organisations under the discretion of the Ministry can use up to 3%. We would further like to suggest that the 2% are seen in a 4-year perspective – allowing partners to spend more in a specific year, thus allowing for larger and more impacting campaign/ public engagement work.

Best regards,

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