



## Project Selection Criteria

The purpose of this document is to outline the criteria for the consideration of a new project to benefit from COCO support. In order to increase the chances of success of a project, certain criteria are taken into account before putting a project forward for funding.

### Summary

COCO aims to relieve the suffering and distress of children throughout the world in areas affected by poverty, natural disaster or war. The charity prefers to contribute to specific projects where its assistance will make the biggest difference possible. COCO provides aid to people who are in desperate need of assistance but whose needs are not widely recognised.

### Essential project criteria

- The project should fit within COCO's strategic remit, outlined in the mission statement.
- The activities must focus directly on access to or improvement of health and/or education for children.
- Partner organisations must be registered as NGO's or CBO's or be able to provide management accounts for at least 5 years
- The project should be S.M.A.R.T.<sup>1</sup>
- There must be a critical need, which is ongoing but can be met.
- The local community and beneficiaries must have a high commitment and involvement in the planning, organisation, implementation and ongoing management of the proposed project.
- The project must benefit local economies wherever possible i.e. through purchasing local materials and labour for buildings.
- The project must have strong, accountable local leadership and should have an experienced project manager, responsible for monitoring, evaluating and reporting.
- The project should have the permanent involvement and influence of the beneficiaries.
- The implementation of the project is carried out in conjunction with a local NGO or CBO, in close partnership and cooperation with other organisations whenever necessary.
- The local NGO or CBO must prove themselves to be accountable and transparent either through the production of annual audited accounts or accurate records of income and expenditure.
- Social, political and cultural stability within the community must be confirmed through research undertaken by an international organisation such as the United Nations or through information available on the human development index.
- The project must be accurately budgeted in advance and there is a preference for revenue funding rather than capital funding.
- There should be governmental approval of the activity or project if it is required.
- There should be the potential for long term sustainability and recognition of its importance

***Acceptance of projects that do not meet the essential project criteria will be rare.***

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<sup>1</sup> SMART – Specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timed.

## **Preferred project characteristics**

COCO has a preference for projects that

- Fit with the United Nations Millennium Development Goals
- Produce innovative solutions that can be easily replicated elsewhere
- Focus on grassroots development.
- Reach marginalised children and youths, particularly those without family support, structured education or access to decent quality health services.
- Promote well-being to both girl and boy children
- Are located in Sub-Saharan Africa<sup>2</sup> due to
  - 1) The logistical benefits of being located in close proximity to existing projects
  - 2) The statistical evidence that shows global poverty to be concentrated in SSA

## **What we will not fund**

- COCO is a secular organisation and will not provide assistance to projects where the primary focus is evangelising one faith above others.
- COCO funds cannot be used, even in part, for promoting or evangelising religious faith.
- COCO will not fund retrospectively
- COCO is reluctant to work with organisations with a past history of associated with corruption and or misallocation of funds.
- COCO is reluctant to fund capital projects in war torn countries (including areas of conflict and civil war) due to
  1. The possibility that any building may be destroyed.
  2. The difficulties in monitoring a project in a war torn area.
  3. The possibility that a building could fall into the wrong hands.
  4. Any investment could be used for malicious purposes.
  5. The unlikelihood that a safe haven can be provided in areas of instability.

## **The procedure**

Once an application is received, the following procedure will be used to establish whether or not the project fits COCO's selection criteria.

### **Phase One**

If it seems that a project may fit the above criteria, a project proposal will be put forward to the Board of directors at a quarterly meeting.

### **Phase Two**

If the project is short listed for funding, a site visit is made in order to confirm that all necessary requirements are in place.

### **Phase Three**

A report is written as a result of the site visit and this report will be put to the directors for an official decision to be made with regard to funding.

### **Phase Four**

A plan for funding is confirmed and agreed upon by both COCO and the project partners.

### **Phase Five**

Work begins

Final funding will be submitted to those projects, which offer the best short-term results and long-term effects when measured against the project criteria and Millennium Development Goals within the funding capacity of COCO.

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<sup>2</sup> If a project outside of this geographical area fits with COCO's essential project criteria, it may be considered.