

Guidelines for the Civil Society Fund – DRAFT

The Civil Society Fund is an independent support facility funded by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and managed by CISU – Civil Society in Development. The guidelines for the Civil Society Fund are made by CISU in dialogue with CISU’s members and users and approved by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose

The **purpose** of the Civil Society Fund is to *support the strengthening of civil societies to improve lives of people living in poverty¹ in the Global South.*

The Civil Society Fund supports partnerships between civil society actors and movements² in the Global South³ and Denmark. Global **partnerships are valuable** as they bring together actors with different capacities, perspectives, and allies that can collaborate and complement each other's work for reaching common goals. Good partnerships are built on mutual trust and respect.

The Civil Society Fund does not prioritise specific development issues over others but are guided by a human rights-based approach.

The Global South partners are closest to the problems and best situated to develop solutions. Therefore, the development and implementation of interventions funded by the Civil Society Fund must be **led by the Global South partners**, who must in turn be anchored in and accountable towards the communities wherein they work.⁴

The Danish partners typically contribute with experience, perspectives, and network, as well as access to decision makers and funds from institutional donors and private foundations in Denmark and Europe. Also, the Danish partners are strong allies and advocates for marginalised people in the Global South and can play an active role in cross-border solidarity work.

The partnerships must be meaningful and relevant to all partners involved and most importantly, the work done must be relevant for the communities benefitting hereof. This is ensured by **giving local communities a voice to express needs and power in deciding** the solutions addressing those needs.

Sustainability of the work supported by the Civil Society Fund is furthered **if local communities are the principal change agents in interventions and if the Civil Society Fund is not the only contribution of resources.** Communities and partners can contribute to the work themselves e.g. by hosting meetings in the community hall free of charge or supplementing agricultural inputs

Role of Civil Society:

The role of civil society is diverse. Civil society is often the framework for people fighting collectively for rights, improved living conditions, and a fair distribution of the resources of society. Civil society is an important counterbalance to the authority of the state and the private interests of the market as civil society holds both the state and the market accountable for their actions and priorities. At the same time, civil society is also a key partner and contributor in relation to the state and market in the pursuit of solutions to challenges in society.

Eligible countries for Civil Society Fund projects and programmes: All countries on OECD's DAC list, which can be found on www.cisu.dk.

Definition of Locally Led

Development: an ongoing development process where local actors have agency in framing, design, delivery (including control over resources), and accountability, with or without the support of international development cooperation.

¹ See the definition of poverty in section 1.1. Principles.

² The concept civil society is a generic denomination for those groups, movements, and activities in society that belong neither to the public nor the private sector.

³ 'Global South' is generally referring to a grouping of countries and people that experience economic marginalisation within the global system and have elements of a shared history of colonisation and exploitation ([Too Southern to be Funded](#))

⁴ Definition of local led development is inspired by the DAC paper () and the DAC working group meeting on Measuring progress on locally led development from 2 May 2024.

89 to a farming project with seeds gathered from local farmers. Thus, own contributions are more than money;
90 it is manhours, voluntary work, venue hosting, food, and other things. All interventions supported by the
91 Civil Society Fund are expected to include own contributions. However, it is only a requirement for larger
92 grants to contribute with financial resources.

93 **The Civil Society Fund supports a variety of work** by organisations and movements; from short-term
94 projects with a tight focus on a specific task, to longer development processes that require long-term
95 strategies and flexibility to react to opportunities as they appear. The Civil Society Fund recognises that
96 based upon context, priorities, experiences, and position different approaches and strategies can be applied
97 to achieve sustainable change.

98

99 1.2. Principles

100 The Civil Society Fund is based on the following principles, which all grants must comply with. The
101 assessment of compliance is based on the application. Additional resources related to the principles are
102 available at www.cisu.dk.

103 **Human Rights**

104 Fundamental human rights must be respected, protected, and fulfilled. A human rights-based approach
105 focuses on enabling people to demand their rights and holding duty-bearers accountable. The approach
106 focuses on eliminating unequal power relations and unequal distribution of resources. The approach rests
107 on four fundamental principles: Participation, Accountability, Non-discrimination, and Transparency (PANT).

108 *Applicants must demonstrate how the intervention use a human rights-based approach to work with rights*
109 *holders and/or duty bearers to promote the situation of the rights holders.*

110 **Do no harm**

111 It is important to be aware of the effect that any involvement has on others, and as such it is necessary to
112 analyse relations, consequences, and risks in the context in which an intervention takes place. Actors
113 working with people living in poverty and marginalisation must be aware of the position or role they play in
114 each context and acknowledge their own biases. The aim is to minimise any negative impact and increase
115 the positive impact on the situation.

116 *Applicants must demonstrate extensive knowledge of the context and understanding of how their*
117 *involvement has consequences for the affected people. Also, applicants must demonstrate readiness to*
118 *adjust an intervention if the context changes.*

119 **Poverty orientation**

120 The Civil Society Fund supports work that directly or indirectly secure participation, interests, and rights of
121 people living in poverty. Poverty has several dimensions and is not only about income but also personal
122 security, access to resources such as education and jobs, health and access to land and water, and the
123 possibility to influence decisionmakers. Many people are trapped in one or more forms of poverty in various
124 ways, and various types of poverty often affect each other.

125 *Applicants must demonstrate knowledge of the target groups and describe the form of poverty they face*
126 *and how the intervention addresses this.*

127 **Sustainability**

128 An intervention should not advance social justice at the expense of climate, environment, and nature. And
129 vice versa; interventions that advance climate, environment, and nature may not impair the conditions of
130 the people living in poverty and marginalisation.

131 *Applicants must justify how the work done is sustainable – socially and environmentally.*

132

133 1.3. The Development Triangle

134 The development triangle is a good tool to describe the different elements in a development intervention.
135 The triangle illustrates the elements and the potential synergies between them.

136 All three elements are central to good development work but the balance between them can vary,
137 depending on the context and the capacities and experiences in the partnership. It is not a requirement to
138 include all elements in an intervention, but it must be explained why some elements are chosen over others
139 to reach the goals.

- 140 • **Capacity building** strengthen the capacity of partners, networks, platforms and/or target groups.
141 Capacity can include strategic and organisational capacity, technical and thematical capacity to
142 conduct projects and programmes, as well as networks and alliances with other actors. Capacity
143 building is often a prerequisite for making sustainable change and can form the basis for engaging in
144 advocacy.
- 145 • **Strategic deliveries** can be tangible inputs such as goods and services, that strengthen or are
146 necessary to better work with the two other elements of the triangle. Strategic deliveries can be
147 necessary but will never in themselves create lasting and sustainable change.
- 148 • **Advocacy** is the planned action to influence formal or informal decision-makers and the public to
149 bring about lasting improvements for poor or marginalised groups. Civil society driven advocacy is
150 based on the capacity of civil society and the knowledge gained form strategic service.

151

152 2. Who can apply

153 The Civil Society Fund supports partnerships between civil society actors and movements in the Global
154 South and Denmark. There are different requirements to the partners and there must be a clear division of
155 roles and responsibilities in the implementation of the intervention. This division must be jointly agreed
156 upon and clear to partners as well as the target groups of the intervention.

157

158 2.1. Requirements for the Danish partner organisation

159 The Civil Society Fund accepts applications from popular, Danish organisations that meet the minimum
160 requirements for support laid down by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark:

- 161 ✓ The organisation needs to be private, and it must have legal domicile as well as activities in
162 Denmark.
- 163 ✓ The chairperson or most members of its governing body must be Danish citizens or foreigners with
164 their permanent address in Denmark unless the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark grants an
165 exemption.
- 166 ✓ The organisation must have an approved set of statutes.

- 167 ✓ The accounts of the organisation, including the annual accounts, must be subject to auditing.
- 168 ✓ If the organisation applies for up to DKK 500,000, it must have a minimum of 25 paying
- 169 contributors. If the organisation applies for more than DKK 500,000, it must have a minimum of 50
- 170 paying contributors. They may be members, volunteers in the association or other persons
- 171 providing a financial contribution. The contributions must have been given in the current year or
- 172 the latest financial year. There are no requirements to the size of the contribution. For umbrella
- 173 organisations, at least one of its member organisations must satisfy the above requirement.
- 174 ✓ If the organisation has existed for at least one year, it may apply for more than DKK 500,000. If the
- 175 organisation has existed for less than one year, it may apply for a maximum of DKK 500,000.

176 Responsibility

- 177 • The applicant organisation's governing body must be able to take on full responsibility for the
- 178 application and for any subsequent grant.
- 179 • If several Danish organisations apply jointly, there must always be one lead organisation which
- 180 holds the administrative and legal responsibility for the grant and contract with CISU. Only the lead
- 181 organisation needs to live up to the above requirement.
- 182 • If the lead organisation is an umbrella organisation, at least one of its member organisations must
- 183 fulfil the above requirement.

184 More information about the governing body's responsibility is available in the Grant Administration Guide

185 available at www.cisu.dk.

186 They cannot apply

- 187 • The Civil Society Fund is unable to support interventions eligible for support from other funds
- 188 funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark such as the Centre for Church-Based
- 189 Development (CKU), the Danish Youth Council (DUF), Disabled People's Organisations Denmark
- 190 (DPOD), the Danish Refugee Council's Diaspora Programme and the Danish Institute for Parties and
- 191 Democracy (DIPD).
- 192 • The Civil Society Fund does not accept applications from organisations that have signed a strategic
- 193 partnership agreement, fund agreement or similar agreement with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of
- 194 Denmark.
- 195 • The Civil Society Fund does not accept applications from foundations engaged in commercial
- 196 activity, consulting firms, educational establishments or entities set up by law, including the so-
- 197 called folk high schools (højskoler).
- 198

199 2.2. Requirements for the Global South partners

200 2.2.1. The Global South partner(s)

201 The Global South partner(s) must be based in the country where the activities will be implemented and will

202 be responsible for implementing the local activities. It can be from any country on OECD/DAC's list of ODA

203 recipients (link to the list).

204 The Global South partner(s) must be capable of taking on the necessary administrative and financial

205 responsibility of the grant as described in the Grant Administration Guide. If a partner is an informal

206 organisation, e.g., a social movement, or is otherwise prevented from being able to receive and administer

207 funds according to CISU's requirements for financial management, another organisation – even one that

208 does not belong to civil society or is based in a DAC country if this can be justified – may act as a link

209 between the Danish organisation and the Global South partners. This other organisation must be able to
 210 administer the funds according to CISU's requirements for financial management. This could be the case, for
 211 instance, in countries where civil society organisations in general or certain groups are subject to legislation
 212 that restricts their right to organise or their access to international funding or organisations that are forced
 213 to work underground.

GLOBAL SOUTH PARTNERS MUST BE	GLOBAL SOUTH PARTNERS CANNOT BE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Global South Partners MUST form part of civil society in the country and locality where activities will be implemented. ✓ The partner's management MUST be locally anchored. If the partner has a governing body, the chairperson, <i>and</i> the majority of members of its governing body must be citizens or foreigners with their permanent address in the country concerned. If managed differently, similar anchoring must be shown in the application. ✓ If the Global South partners are locally based chapters of international civil society organisations, including those to which the Danish organisation is affiliated, the partners MUST be registered in the country concerned and have its own governing body as described above. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individuals and families. - The national government or political parties. - Public authorities or bodies. - Private businesses. - On the UN's or EU's list of terrorist organisations, which are continuously updated. The Danish organisation is responsible for checking this.

214

215 2.2.2. Other actors as part of an intervention

216 Interventions may include cooperation with other actors such as *authorities, research institutes and*
 217 *educational establishments, or the private sector*. They may play a part in, for example, activities,
 218 assignments, training, capacity building, and advocacy that have specific relevance to and advance the
 219 purpose of the Civil Society Fund and of an intervention.

220 **For instance**, interventions aimed at economic development may include relevant private businesses or
 221 social enterprises as actors as long as this does not conflict with the rules on state subsidies. Activities with
 222 public institutions may also feature in the intervention if they are included strategically to ensure the rights
 223 of target groups. Cooperation with research institutes and educational establishments can support the
 224 accumulation of knowledge and documentation for the purpose of supporting interventions and advocacy
 225 with evidence-based knowledge.

226 It is also possible to cooperate with authorities that are duty bearers and who are key to succeed with an
 227 intervention and bring about sustainable change. However, the purpose of the intervention must target civil
 228 society, and civil society must play a significant role in that cooperation.

229

230 2.2.3. Several interventions in the partnership

231 The purpose of the Civil Society Fund is to strengthen civil societies. Strong, independent, and sustainable
 232 civil society actors in the Global South are central, and although the Fund supports long-lasting cooperation

233 between the same partners partnerships must work towards the objective that all partners are able to be
234 self-sustaining or secure additional funding from other sources.

235 If an intervention is an extension of previous cooperation it will be assessed based on the following:

- 236 • It does not merely repeat a former intervention. A new intervention that is an extension of a former
237 intervention must build on results and experiences and contain new desired changes, a new or
238 adjusted strategy or a new or extended target group.
- 239 • Interventions that are an extension of a former intervention build on results and experiences from
240 them. The expectations of learning, reflection, and positive changes are increasing with each
241 extension.

242

243 3. Types of support

244 Depending on the experience and capacity of the Danish organisation, partnerships can apply for the
245 following grants.

Type of applicant	Number of grants in <u>one</u> calendar year					Max total in grants per year (DKK)
	Small project	Large project	Small programme	Medium programme	Large programme	
No prior grants from CISU (or donors like CISU)	3	0	0	0	0	450,000
Has completed at least one CISU grant above DKK 200,000 or carried out a similar intervention with reporting requirements corresponding to those of CISU and/or the MFA.	3	3	0	0	0	2,550,000
Has received more than DKK 500,000 on average in grants in the last 3 years	2	3	2	0	0	5,000,000
Has received more than DKK 3 mio. on average in grants in the last 4 years	0	0	1	1*	0	5,000,000 (including own contribution)
Has received two medium programmes (above DKK 3 mio. per year) within the past 10 years	0	0	0	0	1*	8,500,000 (including own contribution)

246 * A Danish organisation can only hold one active medium or large programme at a time.

247

248 How much can be applied for?

249 To ensure sufficient experience among new applicants, the following grant ceilings apply to the Civil Society
250 Fund:

- 251 - A first-time applicant can apply for projects up to DKK 500,000.
- 252 - To apply for projects and programmes of more than DKK 500,000, the applicant organisation must have
253 completed at least one intervention with a grant of more than DKK 200,000 funded by CISU or a donor
254 with similar reporting requirements to those of CISU and/or the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
 - 255 ○ This requirement is also fulfilled when the applicant organisation as part of a consortium has
256 been responsible for at least DKK 200,000 of the total budget of a grant with similar reporting
257 requirements as CISU's and/or the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs'. It is the applicant

258 organisation that must prove to CISU that it has had budget responsibility of at least DKK
259 200,000 which includes implementation and narrative, financial reporting and auditing.

260 Organisational Grant Ceiling

261 Each organisation can obtain grants across the Project Support and Strategic Programme Support modalities
262 for a **maximum total amount of up to DKK 5 million per year**. Organisations awarded a large programme
263 can exceed the organisational grant ceiling. Grants for Funding Diversification and Capacity Analysis are not
264 included in the organisational grant ceiling.

265 For other funds administered by CISU, it is determined in the guideline for this specific fund, whether grants
266 from the fund is included in the grant ceiling of the Civil Society Fund.

267

268 3.1. Project support

269 3.1.1. Purpose

270 Project support enables the strengthening of organisations and partnerships for the benefit of local
271 communities in the Global South. The project modality can for example support organisations to:

- 272 ➤ Build partnerships *and/or*
- 273 ➤ Strengthen organisational capacities *and/or*
- 274 ➤ Try out new approaches *and/or*
- 275 ➤ Expand on impactful approaches *and/or*
- 276 ➤ Foster popular engagement.

277 Projects are defined by a set of goals that can be realized within a specified timeframe. Project goals should
278 be used to guide implementation and showing whether the approach is successful, or changes are required.
279 Projects must contribute to improving the lives of people living in poverty and marginalisation in the
280 communities wherein the project activities take place, as reflected in the purpose statement of the Civil
281 Society Fund.

282 **Organisations can apply for small projects up to DKK 150,000 or large projects up to DKK 700,000.**

283 Eligibility requirements and assessment criteria are different depending on the size of the project support
284 applied for. See illustration below.

285 3.1.2. Requirements

PROJECT SUPPORT		
	Small Project Up to 150,000 DKK	Large Project Up to 700,000 DKK
Eligibility	No requirements of previous project experience.	For projects below DKK 500,000 there is no requirements of previous project experience. To apply for projects above 500,000, the Danish applicant must have completed at least one intervention with a grant of more than DKK 200,000 funded by CISU or a donor with similar reporting requirements to those of CISU.

	No requirements of previous cooperation in the partnership applying for support. Danish organisations receiving strategic programme support from CISU cannot apply.	Previous cooperation in the partnership applying for support is required. Danish organisations receiving strategic programme support from CISU above DKK 3 million a year cannot apply.
# applications	Maximum 3 applications per Danish organisation per year. This number includes applications that are rejected and re-applications.	Maximum 3 applications per Danish organisation per year. This number includes applications that are rejected and re-applications.
Application deadlines	Three deadlines per year.	

286

287 3.1.3. What can be supported

288 Each organisation can obtain grants across the Project Support and Strategic Programme Support modalities
289 for a maximum total amount of up to DKK 5 million per year. Grants for Funding Diversification and Capacity
290 Analysis are not included in the grant ceiling.

CAN	CANNOT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities, including costs for mobilization, coordination, studies, materials, training, travel, security measures, salaries. • Monitoring, including costs for travel, meetings, salaries. • Investments, meaning the purchase of equipment that last beyond the project. • Administration, including costs for financial management, reporting, digital solutions, auditing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major constructions or the purchase of buildings. • Activities (e.g. training) only benefitting an individual/a few individuals. • Interventions with the partial or full objective of distributing a party-political or religious message. • Emergency aid or humanitarian interventions.

291

292 3.1.4. Assessment criteria

293 Each applicant is assessed using the below set of criteria. The assessment is also guided by three overall
294 principles: 1) There is no rigid formula⁵, 2) adaptability of requirements, and 3) flexibility when working in
295 fragile contexts.

296 *There is no rigid formula* means that there is always room for the assessment committee to look at the
297 overall picture in terms of an integrated assessment of applications in view of the purpose of the fund.

298 *Adaptability of requirements* means that the larger the budget, the stricter the requirements regarding the
299 capacity of the organisations involved and the desired changes of the intervention. There are also higher
300 requirements for organisations that have longer experience and more grants from CISU and/or the Ministry
301 of Foreign Affairs of Denmark compared to organisations that have less experience and have received fewer
302 grants.

⁵ In Danish: *Skøn under regel*.

303 *Flexibility when working in fragile contexts* means that the assessment of the interventions considers the
 304 context and risk analyses and the strategy and allow for greater flexibility in terms of cost types (e.g., for
 305 security measures or flexible funds) and balancing of the development triangle (e.g., a higher level of
 306 strategic services or less advocacy).

307

Overall weight	Criteria	Up to 150,000	Up to 700,000	Weighting of sub-criteria	
				Up to 150,000	Up to 700,000
1 Relevance 30%	1. Relevance	1.1 The project contributes to the purpose and principles of the Civil Society Fund.		50%	50%
		1.2 The project is relevant in the context in which it will take place and is based on local needs.		50%	50%
2 + 3 Capacity (= Partnership + Target group) 30%	2. Partnership	2.1 The Global South partner(s) have the relevant experience, capacities, and resources to implement the project and manage the financial and reporting requirements.		25%	15%
		2.2 The Danish partner has the relevant experience, capacities, and resources to support project implementation and manage the financial and reporting requirements.		20%	10%
		2.3 The Global South partner(s) is the primary decision maker in the partnership.		25%	25%
			2.4 The project strengthens the partners and/or the relationship between them.		20%
	3. Target group	3.1 The target group(s) are well defined and relevant.		30%	15%
			3.2 The target group(s) have been included in the process of designing the project.		15%
4 + 5 Approach/input (= Results + Cost level) 40%	4. Expected results	4.1 The results expected from the intervention are clear and there is a clear connection between the activities the expected results of the intervention. The project justifies their use of the elements of the development triangle.		30%	20%
			4.2 The strategy is coherent and builds on		10%

		learnings from previous projects or experiences in the partnership and by the partners.		
		4.3 The responsibilities and contributions of partners and other actors are clear and relevant.	20%	15%
		4.4 The intervention contributes to sustainable improvements for the target group and considerations regarding exit strategy.	25%	15%
		4.5 The monitoring approach clearly shows the ways of examining and following up on whether the intervention meets the expected results.		15%
	5. Cost level and community contribution	5.1 The cost level of the project and the total budget are well-founded and measure up to the activities and expected results of the project.	25%	20%
		5.2 The partners and local communities provide relevant non-financial contributions.		5%

308

309

3.1.5. Internal competition

310 Applications will be scored individually but will compete for the amount allocated for each round of
 311 applications. If there is applied for more money than available, the applicants with the highest score will
 312 receive a grant. In case, more than one applicant shares the same score, the applicant with the smallest
 313 budget amount will be granted and so forth. This is to allow for more grants being given.

314 See section 4.4 for more details on the scoring system used.

315

316

3.2. Strategic Programme Support

317

3.2.1. Purpose

318 Locally led development is at the centre of Strategic Programme Support. The funding modality provides
 319 strong partnerships with the possibility to engage with their target groups, strengthen civil society, and
 320 deliver on their strategy. It allows civil society organisations and movements to implement programmes
 321 based upon the strategic plans⁶ of the Global South Partner(s), thus, ensuring relevance and decision-
 322 making power of local actors.

⁶ The strategic plan can take different forms, e.g. vision/mission statement, strategy, organisational plans among other things. Essentially it states the goals of the organization/movement and the work to achieve these.

323 A programme is expected to have a **programme strategy** that brings together the array of expertise and
 324 strategies of all partners. The programme strategy should have a focus that can either be **thematic,**
 325 **geographical, or sectoral**. A programme makes it possible to work with a wider range of partners and
 326 enables dynamic learning across such a diversity of partners.

327 Working with locally led development and acknowledging the need for supporting processes of change
 328 beyond shorter project cycles, the strategic programme support provides the foundation to work in long-
 329 term partnerships. Partnerships can receive support for multiple programme periods⁷.

330 Engaging in partnerships over multiple years the partners can engage in the work to create sustainable
 331 change – both in the local context and in Denmark, and to strengthen and diversify funding to further
 332 reinforce the predictability and stability of funding.

333 Long-term partnerships also provide strong environments for learning and development for the Danish
 334 partners and a solid foundation for them to build popular support and engagement in Denmark.

335 Strategic programme support is divided into three modalities defined by the size of the grant (small,
 336 medium, large). Each modality has a set of requirements and assessment criteria.

337



338

⁷ Strategic Programme Support grants are given to the partnership, meaning that if a partnership is awarded a small programme and then later a medium programme, this second grant is considered phase two in the partnership.

339

3.2.2. Requirements

Strategic Programme Support			
	Small programme	Medium programme	Large programme
Eligibility⁸	Minimum DKK 500,000 on average in grants in the last 3 years. Previous experience from the context and cooperation with at least one of the partner(s).	Minimum DKK 3 million on average in grants in the last 4 years. Previous experience from the context and cooperation with at least two of the partners.	Having been granted two Medium programmes in the partnership within the past 10 years. Previous experience from the context and cooperation with at least two of the partners.
No of Global South partners	Minimum one	Minimum 2	
Max grant size (including own contribution requirement)	DKK 4 million in total / max DKK 0.8 – 1.3 million per year	DKK 18 million in total / max DKK 3 – 4.5 million per year <i>(divided in annual grants)</i>	DKK 34 million in total / max DKK 5.67 – 8.5 million per year <i>(divided in annual grants)</i>
Duration	3 – 5 years	4 - 6 years	
Possibility for the Danish organisation to apply for additional programme support	Yes, but only small programmes up to organisational grant ceiling. However, maximum 3 applications for small programmes per year. This number includes applications that are rejected and re-applications	Yes, but only 1 small programme per year up to organisational grant ceiling. This number includes applications that are rejected and re-applications	No.
Possibility for the Danish organisation to apply for project support	Yes, up to organisational grant ceiling. However, maximum a total of 3 project applications per year (small and large). This number includes applications that are rejected and re-applications.	No	No

340

⁸ There will be a transition period moving from the current Civil Society Fund to the new Civil Society Fund, including a structure for current partnerships and programmes so they do not have to start building their qualifying portfolio from scratch.

341 3.2.3. Own contribution⁹

342 The Civil Society Fund does not fully finance strategic
 343 programmes and therefore own contributions are required.
 344 For strategic programmes above DKK 5 million, only
 345 financial contributions (such as funds raised in the Global
 346 South or Denmark and co-financing) can count as own
 347 contribution. Co-financing can be included if the Danish
 348 organisation has had a role in securing the funds or plays a
 349 role in the grant implementation (*see information box*).

Own contribution can be in the form of:

- ✓ In-kind contributions, e.g. manhours (volunteer and paid), venue hosting.
- ✓ Funds raised in the Global South or Denmark, e.g. donations, membership fees, grants.
- ✓ Co-financing, e.g. grants from foundations or institutional donors supporting one or more partners in the partnership.

350 The own contribution requirement increases with each new
 351 grant for the same programme, as it is expected that the
 352 partnership can secure funding to an increasing extent, thus
 353 reducing dependence on the Civil Society Fund.

354 As illustrated below, the required level of own contribution
 355 remains static for small programmes, but for medium and large programmes the level increases by each
 356 programme period.

357 The own contribution requirement must be completed by the end of a given grant period. If the
 358 requirement is not achieved, the maximum grant amount for the next grant given under Strategic
 359 Programme Support will be reduced by a value of double the amount 'missing' in own contribution.

- Own contribution, small programme
- Own contribution, medium programme
- Own contribution, large programme

360

Step 1	CSF Funding, max 95%			5%
Step 2	CSF Funding, max 90-95%		10%	5%
Step 3	CSF Funding, max 85-95%	15%	12%	5%
Step 4 onwards	CSF Funding, max 80-95%	20%	15%	5%

361

362 *Large programmes will start at step 3 or later, as it is a requirement to have completed minimum two*
 363 *medium programmes in the partnership.*

364

365 3.2.4. What can be supported

366

CAN	CANNOT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities, including costs for mobilization, coordination, studies, materials, training, travel, security measures, salaries. • Monitoring, including costs for travel, meetings, salaries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major constructions or the purchase of buildings. • Activities (e.g. training) only benefitting an individual/a few individuals.

⁹ This means that e.g., a medium programme with a grant total of 18 million at step 2 is required to provide 10% of the total amount in own contribution, which means that they are required to provide DKK 1.8 million in own contribution and will receive 16.2 million from CISU IF applying for the maximum grant size.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investments, meaning the purchase of equipment that last beyond the project. • Administration, including costs for financial management, reporting, digital solutions, auditing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interventions with the partial or full objective of distributing a party-political or religious message. • Emergency aid or humanitarian interventions.
---	--

367

368 3.2.5. Assessment criteria

369 Each applicant is assessed using the below set of criteria. The assessment is also guided by three overall
 370 principles: 1) There is no rigid formula¹⁰, 2) adaptability of requirements, and 3) flexibility when working in
 371 fragile contexts.

372 *There is no rigid formula* means that there is always room for the assessment committee to look at the
 373 overall picture in terms of an integrated assessment of applications in view of the purpose of the fund.

374 *Adaptability of requirements* means that the larger the budget, the stricter the requirements regarding the
 375 capacity of the organisations involved and the desired changes of the intervention. There are also higher
 376 requirements for organisations that have longer experience and more grants from CISU and/or the Ministry
 377 of Foreign Affairs of Denmark compared to organisations that have less experience and have received fewer
 378 grants.

379 *Flexibility when working in fragile contexts* means that the assessment of the interventions considers the
 380 context and risk analyses and the strategy and allow for greater flexibility in terms of cost types (e.g., for
 381 security measures or flexible funds) and balancing of the development triangle (e.g., a higher level of
 382 strategic services or less advocacy).

Overall weight	Criteria	Small	Medium	Large	Weighting of sub-criteria
1 + 2 Capacity (= Capacity + Partnerships) 20%	1. Capacity	1.1 The Global South partner(s) have the relevant experience, capacities, systems, and resources to implement the programme and manage the financial and reporting requirements.			25%
		1.2 The Danish partner have the relevant experience, capacities, systems, and resources to support programme implementation and manage the financial and reporting requirements.			25%
	2. Locally led and equitable partnerships	2.1 The Global South partner(s) frames the challenges to be addressed based on their knowledge of and anchoring in local communities.			15%
		2.2 The Global South partner(s) is the primary decision maker in the partnership.			15%
2.3 Each partner takes on the role they are best suited for in the programme.			10%		

¹⁰ In Danish: *Skøn under regel*.

		2.4 Each partner contributes to and gain from participating in the programme.			10%	
3 Relevance 20%	3. Relevance	3.1 The programme addresses locally identified needs, concerns, and expertise.			50%	
		3.2 The programme contributes to the purpose and principles of the Civil Society Fund.			50%	
4 Approach and learning (= Strategy + Target group + MEL + Risks) 35%	4. Strategy	4.1 The programme strategy, including methods and approaches, builds on the strengths of each partner, and ensures a collective direction towards shared goals.			10%	
		4.2 The programme justifies their use of the elements of the development triangle and the strategy is based on learning from previous cooperation and the work of the individual partners.			10%	
		4.3 The programme strategy is based on the Global South partner(s) strategic plans.			15%	
		4.4 The programme strategy contributes to structural changes at the relevant societal level.			10%	
	5. Target group	5.1 The target group(s) are well defined and relevant.				10%
		5.2 The target group(s) have been included in the process of designing the programme				10%
	6. Monitoring, evaluation, and learning	6.1 The learning goals are relevant in relation to the programme strategy.				15%
		6.2 The framework for monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) is suitable for documenting the expected changes of the programme.				10%
	7. Managing risks	7.1 The programme considers likely risks in the contexts.				5%
		7.2 The framework for managing risks provide the Global South partners with the mandate to respond to changes in the context.				5%
8 + 9 Financial inputs and sustainability (= Financial and programme sustainability + Cost level) 20%	8. Financial and programme sustainability	8.1 The funding diversification plan is relevant, realistic, and can be based on previous experience.	8.1. Funding diversification is pursued through planned applications to several relevant donors and plans for or experience with raising funds from other sources.	8.1 Funding diversification is documented through realised funds from other donors.	30%	
		8.2 The exit strategy(ies) provide a realistic plan for partners to sustain their work beyond funding from the Civil Society Fund.			20%	
	9. Cost level	9.1 The cost level in relation to the programme strategy and size of the target group is reasonable.				25%

		9.2 The budget is clear and transparent and reflects a fair and relevant budget allocation for each partner based on their respective roles and responsibilities.	25%
10. Engagement in Denmark 5%	10. Popular engagement in Denmark	10.1 The approaches and activities to foster information and popular engagement in Denmark reaches diverse audiences and strengthen the understanding of and interest in global development challenges.	100%

383

384 3.2.6. Application process

385 The application process differs depending on the size of Strategic Programme support applied for, as
386 described in the following section.

387 **Small programmes**

388 There are two deadlines for applying for small programmes each year - one in March and one in September.
389 It is a one-step process, where applicants apply before the deadline (read more on how to apply under
390 section 4). Applicants must use fixed formats for the narrative application, budget, and relevant appendices,
391 which can be downloaded on www.cisu.dk.

392 **Be aware** that the Danish applicant can only submit two applications per calendar year – either two in one
393 round or one in each of the two rounds. A re-submission also counts as an application.

394

395 **Medium and large programmes**

396 There is an application round every second year for medium and large programmes. The application process
397 is divided in to three steps.

398 **Be aware** that the Danish applicant can only submit one application per round for medium and large
399 programmes. Further, Danish organisations with a large programme grant can only have one active
400 programme grant at a time. Danish organisations with an open medium programme grant can only apply for
401 small programme grants.

Steps	Deadlines
Expression of Interest (Eoi)	Before 1 January
Relevance and Capacity Assessment	February – April
Invitation to apply	May
Application submittal	Start October
Decision of the assessment committee	End November
Final decision by Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Start-mid December

402

403 *1. Step: Expression of Interest and Eligibility Check*

404 If an applicant is interested in applying for a medium or large programme, the applicant must submit a short
405 Expression of Interest (Eoi) that describes the partnership and the budget size of the desired grant. CISU will
406 check whether the applicant and the partnership fulfil the eligibility requirements. The check determines
407 whether the applicant will proceed to the second step of the application process.

408

409 *2. Step: Relevance and Capacity Assessment*

410 The assessment of relevance and capacity will be based on the following elements:

- 411 1) Track Record Documents on all partners.
- 412 2) External capacity analysis of the Global South Partners based on Terms of Reference developed by
413 CISU in dialogue with the partners.
- 414 3) Capacity analysis/mapping of the Danish Partner, conducted by CISU staff.
- 415 4) Short Concept Note describing the programme strategy.

416 **The assessment committee will assess** the relevance of a programme and whether the partners have the
417 capacities to implement the programme with the use of criteria 1-4 (see sub criteria above):

- 418 1. Capacity
- 419 2. Locally led and equitable partnerships
- 420 3. Relevance
- 421 4. Strategy

422 The assessment will result in a conclusion being either that the program is *relevant or not relevant*. Only
423 relevant programs will be invited to submit an application.

424

425 *3. Step: Application submittal*

426 Applicants will receive an invitation to apply by 1 May and will hand in their application by October 1. The
427 application formats are available at www.cisu.dk.

428 All applications for medium or large programmes need to be finally approved by the Danish Ministry of
429 Foreign Affairs.

430 **Be aware:** Organisations that have been awarded a programme and have unfinished projects under the Civil
431 Society Fund must terminate the project grants and incorporate the corresponding activities into the
432 programme as per the programme commencement date.

433

434 *3.2.7. Internal competition*

435 The applicants will be scored individually but will compete for a certain amount allocated for each round of
436 applications. If there is applied for more money than available, the applicants with the highest score will
437 receive a grant. In case, more than one applicant shares the same score, the applicant with the smallest
438 budget amount will be granted and so forth. This is to allow for more grants being given.

439 See section 4.4 for more details on the scoring system used.

440

441 *3.2.8. Addressing funding gaps*

442 For long-term partnerships, a rejected application can result in significant insecurity for all partners involved
443 and challenges to the continuation of the long-term strategic work of the partnership.

444 Whereas partnerships with a small programme can re-apply within a timeframe of 6 months, medium and
 445 large programmes can only re-apply every second year.

446 To address this potential funding gap, partnerships with medium and large programmes **will apply for a**
 447 **continuation of their programme two years prior** to the end date of the programme. In the case of
 448 rejection due to competition (e.i., the program is assessed to be relevant, and the application could have
 449 been funded if more money was available), the partnership is given two options:

450 1) the existing programme can be extended with one year (no additional funds), thus stretching the grant
 451 until the end of the next application process, *or*

452 2) the partnership is allowed to apply for small programmes in the last year of the programme in
 453 combination with project support. If awarded one or more small programmes, the partnership is also
 454 allowed to apply for a medium or large programme at the time of the next application process. If a medium-
 455 or large programme is awarded, the small programme(s) will be absorbed into the larger programme.

456

Year	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Phase 1	Programme start									
Phase 2			Application process for phase 2	Approved	Start phase 2					
				Not approved	New application process		Start phase 2 (if approved in year 5)			

457 *This above scenario is for programmes lasting 4 years. If 6 years programmes, each application process will*
 458 *lie two years later.*

459

3.3. Funding diversification

3.3.1. Purpose

460 The purpose is to support users of the Civil Society Fund to diversify their fund base with two types of
 461 support:
 462
 463

- 464 1. **Co-funding** can help partnerships obtain funding from other donors that require and/or favour
 465 applications with a co-financing element.
- 466 2. **Support for applications processes** aid partnership with developing applications to new donors
 467 such as private companies, foundations, or institutional donors.

468 For both types of support, it is not possible to use the grants to apply for funding financed by the Danish
 469 Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

3.3.2. What can and cannot be supported

Co-funding	Support for application process
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-financing can cover up to 35% of the total budget applied for to the main donor. • Up to DKK 2 million per grant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant expenses of the application process of each partner, e.g., salaries, consultant fees, workshops, and studies. • Up to DKK 50,000 per grant.

471

472

3.3.3. Requirements

	Co-funding	Support for application process
Eligibility	<p>The partners applying must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live up to general requirements as described in section 2. • Have previously managed at least one grant of more than DKK 200.000 from one of CISU's funds or a donor with similar reporting requirements. • Justify that there is chance of receiving the grant from the main donor by supplementing with Co-Funding from the Civil Society Fund. • Either be lead applicant or co-applicant of the application to the main donor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The partners must live up to the general requirements as described in section 2. • The total budget of the application to the non-CISU donor must be at least DKK 200,000.
# of applications	1 application per year	2 applications per year

473

474

3.3.4. Assessment criteria

Criteria	Co-funding	Support for the application process
Relevance	The application to the main donor generally contributes to the Civil Society Fund's purpose and principles.	The application developed will generally contribute to the Civil Society Fund's purpose and principles.
Need		It is clear how the application process will be strengthened from the support.
Chances of success	The probability of the application to the main donor being approved for support is sufficiently justified.	The probability of the application to be developed being approved for support is sufficiently justified.
Partnership		All partners will be included in the application process.

475

476

3.3.5. Application process

477

Co-funding

478

Applications can be submitted at any time of the year, but not after the application has been submitted to the primary donor. If the primary donor's application process contains a first stage of submitting a concept note, an application based on this concept note and a budget summary may be submitted.

479

480

481

Applications are processed as fast as possible and normally within four weeks. In case of a comprehensive application to the primary donor, the processing time can be extended for up to six weeks.

482

483

Applications for co-funding assessed worthy of support are awarded a grant commitment in advance, whereas the contract with CISU cannot be issued and the grant cannot be disbursed before the primary donor has given its final approval.

484

485

486 **Support for application process**

487 Applications for can be submitted at any time of the year. Applications are processed as fast as possible and
488 normally within four weeks.

489 For both types of support, fixed application formats must be used, which can be downloaded at
490 www.cisu.dk. The applications must be submitted via CISUs online grant management system *Vores CISU*, as
491 described in section 4.2.

492

493 3.4. Capacity analysis

494 3.4.1. Purpose

495 A capacity analysis targets Danish organisations that wants to get an external review of the organisation's
496 professional, organisational, and administrative capacity and its partnerships. A capacity analysis will
497 contribute to valuable learning in terms of strategy, management, and capacity development.

498 The focus of a capacity analysis is one or several specific areas on which the organisation wishes to shed
499 light to strengthen and further develop the organisation, such as:

- 500 • The Danish organisation's partnerships, including the number and nature of existing and planned
501 partners or approaches to entering into new cooperation.
- 502 • The Danish organisation's strategic and thematic work with Global South partners.
- 503 • The Danish organisation's popular roots, internal decision-making processes, and work with
504 information on global issues in Denmark.
- 505 • Other needs that can support the further development of the organisation.

506

507 3.4.2. Application process

508 A capacity analysis can be initiated by three different actors, but it is always the Danish organisation who
509 submit the application. The different actors are:

510

- 511 1) *The Danish organisation* can apply for a capacity assessment as part of a long-term strategy
512 development or process of change.
- 513 2) *CISU's Assessment Committee* can recommend or make it a precondition that an organisation carry
514 out a capacity analysis. That could be if the committee finds it necessary to obtain an assessment of
515 the organisation's capacity across the organisation's interventions.
- 516 3) *CISU's secretariat* may, in connection with its advisory services, in response to a report, or because
517 of a monitoring visit recommend a capacity analysis, which will then form part of the organisation's
518 track record and future applications from the organisation concerned. If CISU recommends or
519 requires a capacity analysis, the specific recommendations/requirements must be listed in the
520 application.

521 CISU receives applications on an ongoing basis and processes them as fast as possible, normally within four
522 weeks.

523

524 3.4.3. Conducting a capacity analysis

525 If an organisation is awarded a capacity analysis grant, CISU will make a contract with the organisation as
 526 well as with the external consultant, who will conduct the analysis. One of CISU's advisers and possibly a
 527 member of the Assessment Committee (if they have recommended the Capacity Assessment or have good
 528 advice) will cooperate with the grantee to draw up the Terms of Reference (ToR) that describe the focus and
 529 scope of the task. The ToR must be approved by CISU.

530 CISU pays all costs for the consultant and activities. An organisation in the process of a capacity analysis can
 531 still submit applications to the Civil Society Fund.

532 The consultant will prepare a draft report to be discussed with the organisation and one of CISU's advisers.
 533 Hereafter, the consultant writes the final report that must subsequently be approved by the an assessment
 534 consultant, one of CISU's advisers and CISU's management.

535 To follow up, the organisation must write a reply to the recommendations of the capacity analysis
 536 (management response), which must be approved by CISU. It is then the responsibility and duty of the
 537 organisation's board of directors to follow up on the capacity analysis. It is recommended that the
 538 organisation use the learning and the recommendations of the capacity analysis in future applications to
 539 the Civil Society Fund.

540

541 3.4.4. Assessment criteria

542 The application for a capacity analysis is assessed based on two criteria:

- 543 1. **Civil society relevance.** The organisation's work generally contribute to the Civil Society Fund's
 544 purpose and principles.
- 545 2. **Focus:** The proposed specific areas to be analysed are based on a thorough analysis of needs,
 546 wishes, and opportunities for the organisation, its partnerships, and/or interventions.

547

548 4. Application and assessment

549

550 4.1. Deadlines

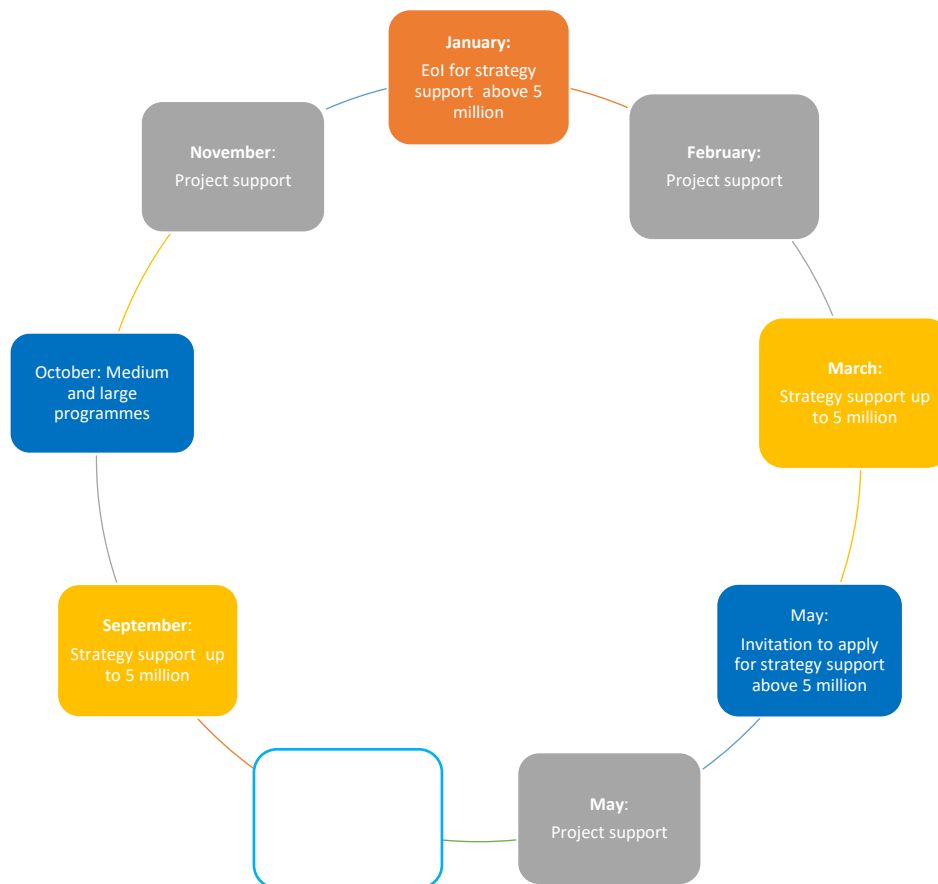
551 There are application deadlines for the Project and Strategic Programme support modalities. For project
 552 support, there are three deadlines a year to allow for more frequent and flexible opportunities to access
 553 funding.

554 There are no deadlines for funding diversification and capacity analysis, and these modalities can be applied
 555 for any time of the year until the budget set aside for these support modalities has been spent.

Modality	# of deadlines per year
Project support	3
Small programme	2
Medium and large programme	1 every second year

556

557 The illustration below shows how the deadlines are spread across a year. All deadlines are the first
 558 Wednesday in the given month at 12:00 (noon) Danish time.



559

560 The application processes for strategic programme support are described under section 3.2.6. Be aware that
 561 there is only an application round for medium and large programmes every second year. The reason for this
 562 is to get enough applications in a round to ensure a basis for competition.

563

4.2. How to apply

564 All applications are submitted via the online grant management system 'Vores CISU' (*Our CISU*) before the
 565 given deadline. The system will be open for applications two weeks prior to a deadline.

567 For each modality, there are formats for the application and the budget, as well as any required annexes.
 568 See www.cisu.dk/en/funding/funding-materials/

569

4.3. Screening and assessment

570 CISU will initially screen applications to ensure that they live up to all formal requirements. The lists used for
 571 screening is available at www.cisu.dk. If an application does not meet all formal requirements, it will be
 572 administratively rejected.
 573

574 When an application fulfils all formal requirements, it is forwarded to an assessment consultant and an
 575 assessment committee member. The consultant assesses each application up against the criteria set for the
 576 modality and recommend the application to approval or rejection for the assessment committee member.
 577 The assessment committee makes the final decision.

578 Each applicant will receive an assessment note, explaining the reasons for either approval or rejection. This
 579 note is useful to guide a potential re-application, as it provides comments on what is deemed critical and
 580 thus what can be improved.

581 Depending on the modality, the assessment will take a certain amount of time, which is shown in the table
 582 below.

Modality	# weeks of assessment
Project support	6
Small programmes	8
Medium programmes	<i>See process in section 3.2.6</i>
Large programmes	<i>See process in section 3.2.6</i>
Support for co-funding	4*
Support for application process	4*

583 *Note that the assessment process for these modalities will be prolonged when colliding with holidays
 584 (three weeks over the summer, and one week for Christmas, easter, fall and winter break).

585

586 4.4. Scoring

587 All applications are scored using the LEADS scoring 1-5. The assessment committee gives a score to each
 588 criterion, which are weighted in terms of what is most important in terms of contributing to the purpose
 589 and principles of the Civil Society Fund.

590 The score is used to prioritise between approved applications when there is not enough money to grant all
 591 approved applications.

LEADS SCORING METHOD

	LEADS STANDS FOR	SCORE	THE SCORE IS GIVEN WHEN THERE IS
L	Little action/evidence	1	Weak indication that supports the criteria
E	Some Evidence	2	Some indication that supports the criteria
A	Action taken	3	Indication that supports the criteria
D	Developed	4	Solid indication that supports the criteria
S	Sustainable	5	Comprehensive indication of implementation and/or indication of an established approach/system in supporting the criteria

592

593

594

595 4.5. Principles for administration and grant approval

596 Transparency and openness in the administration. This means, among other things:

- 597 • All assessment criteria and processes are explicit and available to all applicants.
598 • All applicants receive a written response explaining the reasons for the approval or rejection.
599 • All approved applications are publicly available (anonymity can be requested if reasoned).

600 Orderly administration applying the highest standards of administrative conduct (for instance, ensuring
601 impartiality, making decisions on an informed basis, writing in an understandable manner, complying with
602 deadlines and stating the reasons for decisions as detailed in the legal principles of CISU as set out in CISU's
603 Code of Conduct).

604 Clear separation between the advisory process/the advisers and the assessment process/assessment
605 system. Accordingly, CISU's advisers and the rest of CISU's secretariat are not in any way involved in the
606 process from the moment the application is submitted until the grant decision is made.

607

608 4.6. Budget commitments

609 Every year, CISU's Board determines, upon approval by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, what share of
610 the total Civil Society Fund will be allocated to the different types of support modalities.

611

612 5. Complaints

613 CISU's procedures for feedback and complaints are set out in CISU's Code of Conduct. More information is
614 available at www.cisu.dk/complaint

615

616 6. Central concepts

617 On CISU's website, a list of resources is available to learn more about central concepts within development
618 work. See www.cisu.dk/xxx