

Terms of Reference

How to promote local leadership in civil society support

Best practices and lessons learnt from Danish pooled funds

1. Introduction

Center for Church-Based Development CKU, Disabled People's Organisations Denmark (DPOD), the Danish Youth Council (DUF) and Civil Society in Development (CISU) (hereafter referred to as the pooled funds or fund managers) have supported equitable partnerships, local leadership and locally-led development for many years. With the recent Strategy for strengthened Danish engagement with African countries (2024) and the coming development of the next Danish development policy strategy, it is relevant to enhance the understanding, document best practices and identify where improvements can be made in supporting local leadership and locally led development through the pooled funds.

While the pooled funds are similar in many ways, there are also important differences in constituencies, approaches and experience. The fund managers therefore believe a lot can be learnt from each other, both at partnership and community level as well as in the ways the four fund managers work provide capacity building and manage grants.

2. Background

Local leadership¹ in Denmark's Development Cooperation

With the decolonization and shift-the-power movement, there is a change towards “*new behaviours, mindsets and work approaches that shift power and resources, and promote more equitable and people-led development²*”. This change impacts the methods and approaches of Danish support to civil society and calls for more data and joint reflections.

Support to civil society organisations in the Global South/majority world makes up 20-25% of the Danish bilateral development assistance given through the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)³. Civil society is a key actor in promoting democracy, developing future leaders, reducing poverty and reaching the marginalised, and it is an end in itself to ensure a strong civil society that organizes citizens. The structures and approaches of Danish support to civil society in the Global South/majority world is increasingly attentive to the agenda of locally-led development.

In Denmark, the MFA focused on localization as a key topic in the latest evaluation of Danish support to civil society (2020-22). Furthermore, localization and local leadership are key priorities in the Danish

¹ In these TOR we use the same terminology and definition as the one used by Globalt Fokus, where ‘local leadership’ is more than just equal partnerships and also reflect a situation where national and local actors have decision making power to take ownership and lead interventions, projects and programs in their own context.

² <https://www.civicus.org/index.php/media-resources/news/interviews/4196-shiftthepower-exciting-possibilities-and-challenges-for-resourcing>

³ Danish resumé, evaluation of Danish support to civil society, DANIDA (2020-22)

support to civil society as reflected in the How-to note for implementation of “The World We Share” on Danish support for civil society. Likewise, the recent “Strategy for strengthened Danish engagement with African” countries emphasizes the importance of partnerships through civil society (among others) in support of human rights, democratic values, and local ownership.

At an overarching level, localization is often equal to a %-age spent at partner level/implementing country level, but localization as a term needs to be more fully unfolded in all the aspects of partnership collaboration that is practiced among the eco-system being supported by the Danish pooled funds. Hence, there is a need to understand more in detail what can be promoted to **support local leadership**, expressed through equitable partnerships and locally-led development based on the local needs where the interventions take place.

Partnerships should be reciprocal and in keeping with the localisation agenda. Accordingly, they need to underpin local leadership. This calls for paying attention to the various dimensions of local leadership, including the South partners’ ownership, as well as coordination, capacity development and financial transfers to local partners." (How to note on Danish support for civil society, 2022, pp 8).

What characterizes the pooled funds and the partnerships they support

Approximately 398 million DKK⁴ of the official Danish development assistance is annually channeled through the four pooled funds. The pooled funds support partnerships between Danish civil society organisations and likeminded partners in the Global South/majority world, namely faith based- (CKU), youth driven- (DUF) and disability (DPOD) organisations as well as abroad range of civil society actors (CISU).

CKU, DUF, DPOD and CISU are umbrella organisations and at the same time manages various pools of funds that support civil society and humanitarian initiatives⁵, with the goal of fostering sustainable change. These funds are distributed through an impartial grant allocation process.

Capacity building is key as the four pooled funds provide platforms for member organisations to network and share experiences; facilitate courses and events; offer advisory services and provide guidance on a wide range of topics, including financial management of projects, organisational development, and sustainable, rights-based approaches.

Additionally, all four fund managers are involved in engaging and creating awareness among people in Denmark about global issues.

The interventions, supported by the four pooled funds, contribute with a people-to-people element to Danish development cooperation. The work and funding guidelines for the pooled funds are based on a human rights-based approach. This means that people must be involved in decisions that affect their lives and that interventions should empower people to demand their rights and hold duty-bearers to account.

The Danish organisations with partnerships supported by the pooled funds are characterized by being small to medium sized with small secretariats or driven by voluntary efforts. The partners are also most often small to medium sized and are often located in remote areas. The partnerships are often between likeminded organisations and can constitute a platform for democratic conversations across

⁴ Danish Finance Act 2024

⁵ CISU has the Danish Emergency Relief Fund (DERF). CKU, DUF and DPOD do not support humanitarian interventions.

cultures and borders. CKU, DPOD and DUF also have direct partnerships whereas CISU only funds partnerships.

Capacity building is an integrated part of the partnerships. At organizational level, this includes strengthening democracy, legitimacy and organizational capacity as well as the recognition of organisations and their local branches. At community level, it includes strengthening empowerment, participation and decision making as well as enhancing the self-esteem, confidence and knowledge of community members.

Interventions and partnerships are very diverse as there are no thematic or country specific restrictions, and the interventions make use of a variety of citizen-driven approaches to address local needs and priorities.

3. Objectives

There are two closely related objectives for this assignment.

The first objective is that **the four fund managers and member organisations learn how to improve** approaches to partnerships, local leadership, locally-led development, learning from each other and from the perspective of member organisations and national partners from the Global South/majority world – and, if possible, community stakeholders. The findings will be captured in a learning document, including recommendations on how the fund managers can further promote local leadership and locally-led development. The learning document will also form basis for the best practice publication described below.

The second objective of this assignment is to **inform and inspire future efforts by providing concrete recommendations and showcasing best practices** from the pooled funds when it comes to promoting local leadership and locally-led development.

4. Scope

The assignment has two trails. Firstly, to produce an internal learning document with recommendations for the pooled funds which forms part of a joint learning process for the four pooled funds through one or two workshops facilitated by the consultants.

The second document is a best practice publication with main messages and showcasing how to facilitate local leadership and locally-led development. The intention is for the publication to serve as a knowledge piece and key input to ongoing debates and processes towards more localized civil society support in Denmark. It should ideally feed into the implementation of the Africa Strategy and the upcoming strategy for Denmark's Development Cooperation.

It is crucial that the voices of South partners – and if possible community stakeholders - are clearly reflected in both publications.

The two documents are elaborated below:

Learning document

Format: The learning document should summarise key learning points from the desk review and data collection from member organizations, their partners and if possible community stakeholders, along

with recommendations on what the fund managers can do to promote local leadership and locally-led development further. Max. 20 pages. The publication should be clearly structured to facilitate an easy overview.

Target group: The primary target groups is the four Danish fund managers. The secondary target groups are member organisations of CISU, DPOD, DUF and CKU.

Content: Issues to be covered shall include but is not limited to the following:

- Fund management: How does fund managers support local leadership and locally-led development through granting systems; flexibility; capacity building and advisory services; what are the approach(es), and examples of concrete mechanisms that work.
- Partnerships: What is the value of citizen-driven initiatives; partnership between likeminded organisations; organizational capacity building; loyalty and trust; strategic alignment between partners; ownership and power balances; long-term partnerships.
- Locally-led development: How are communities and community stakeholders involved in interventions; level of ownership and responsiveness to local needs.
- The role and value of Danish organisations: Popular engagement – how does the involvement of volunteers and likeminded organisations contribute to global solidarity; the importance of networks and knowledge sharing.
- A positioning of the setup and approach of the pooled funds in supporting development interventions in relation to the ongoing sector debates on de-colonisation, shift the power, tied aid/untying aid, localization and local leadership.

Best practice publication

Format: The content of the best practice publication is to be presented in a relatively short reader-friendly publication showcasing and recommending best practises for local leadership, equitable partnerships and locally led development. It should include joint messages as well as reflect the differences in approaches, setup and contribution to the local leadership agenda.

The publication should include a maximum of 10 main messages, each supported by a short informative narrative, facts such as graphs and key figures, as well as examples. The publication should be supported by a range of good quality photographs illustrating the partnerships and key messages.

Target group: Mainly the Danish MFA, civil servants working with development cooperation, the political parties' spokespersons on development cooperation, as well as larger Danish NGOs with a Strategic Partner Agreement (SPA organisations) or other organisations with an agreement with the MFA.

Content: The main messages should be based on the most important findings from the data collection. The main messages in the publication are to be selected in collaboration with the four pool managers.

5. Methodology

The methodology should be a combination of data collection in Denmark among the pooled funds and their member organisations and data collection among South partners, experts – and preferably community stakeholders - in a selected number of countries.

The assignment is expected to be based on – but not necessarily limited to – the following methods.

- **Desk review** of relevant studies, strategies/policies, guidelines, grant administration guidelines, grant management procedures, projects/programmes and cases from the four fund managers, supplemented by other Danish and international studies and other relevant material which can contribute to the reflections and learning on local leadership.
- **Workshop or interviews with the pooled fund managers** to identify and map how the fund managers work with the local leadership agenda, partnerships and locally led development. Identify similarities and differences in approaches, setup and constituencies. Some grant consultants should also be interviewed.
- **Data collection among selected Danish member organisations** from the different pooled funds, possibly done as joint focus group discussions. Danish member organisations will be selected by each fund manager in dialogue with the consultants. The organisations should represent different but strong partnership approaches (aiming to learn from what works).
- **Online questionnaire** to a larger number of Danish member organisations and South partners.
- **Data collection among selected South partners** from the different pooled funds through online interviews (individual or group) to get an insight into the different perspectives. Selected partners should represent a broad range of partnerships, i.e. partners who have been in short versus long-term partnerships, in different country contexts and working on different issues. Preferably, community stakeholders should also be included in the data collection.
- Conduct **key informant interviews** with Danish and international key stakeholders in the local leadership agenda. List to be elaborated between the four fund managers and the consultant.
- **Learning and validation workshop with the fund managers** to present the draft learning document and the most important recommendations. At the workshop, the messages that go into the best practice publication will also be presented and finally decided on.

6. Outputs

The outputs for the assignment are:

- **Inception** report
- **Draft reports – learning document and best practice publication** (in English)
- Present findings from the draft reports in a **learning and validation workshop with fund managers**
- **Final reports** – learning document and best practice publication.
- **Presentation** of findings at public event(s)

7. Timeframe and workplan

The assignment is expected to commence in November 2024 and be finalized by the end of March 2025.

Tentative workplan

Time (2024/25)	Task	Participants involved
Primo November	Recruitment of consultants	DPOD, DUF, CKU and CISU

Primo November	Inception briefing	CISU
November	Desk review and interviews/workshop with fund managers	Consultants
Ultimo November	Inception report	Consultants
Primo December	Feedback on inception report	DPOD, DUF, CKU and CISU
December – medio February	Data collection (questionnaire and interviews)	Consultants
Medio February	Draft publications shared with fund managers	Consultants
Ultimo February	Learning and validation workshop Written comments on draft publications	DPOD, DUF, CKU and CISU
March 15th 2025	Deadline for final publications (learning document and best practice publication)	Consultants
Ultimo March	Present findings at public event	DPOD, DUF, CKU and CISU, Consultants

8. Consultants

The assignment is expected to be completed by a small team of consultants, who between them have proven experience with:

1. Danish civil society, including small to medium sized voluntarily based organisations, and civil society in the Global South/majority world.
2. The local leadership/#ShiftThePower agenda and locally led development
3. Managing different data collection methods including participatory methods, strong analytical and report writing skills, as well as facilitation of learning workshops.
4. Formulating complex messages in an easy-to-read and interesting manner.

It is an advantage if the consultants have a research network in several countries in the Global South/majority world and can combine data collection in Denmark and in the global south. It is also preferred that the consultant team possess combined competence in the field of data collection and communication of messages.

9. Review Team / Management of the assignment

DPOD, DUF, CKU and CISU are commissioning the present assignment. The assignment is anchored with CISU and the CISU management is responsible for contracting issues, and for signing the ToR. DPOD, DUF, CKU and CISU are jointly responsible for the final approval of the publications. CISU is responsible for collating feedback from the review team and sharing with the consultants.

The appointed CISU Advisor Rikke Sig Hansen is responsible for briefing the consultant about the task and the day-to-day administration and arrangements. This will be done in consultation and with participation from International Chief Consultant Katrine Christiansen from DUF, Senior Advisor Gitte Liebst Robinson from DPOD and MEAL Coordinator Annika Bach from CKU.

There is an absolute maximum ceiling of DKK 250,000 (including tax and IVA) all-inclusive for this assignment. The assignment will have to be planned and invoiced within this absolute ceiling.

10. Application process

To be considered for the above assignment send an Expression of Interest (including approach to the assignment/methodology) of max. 3 pages, a financial proposal and updated CVs for all team members to CISU Advisor, Rikke Sig Hansen at rsh@cisu.dk. An example of previous work on communicating simple key messages should also be attached.

Deadline is 31st October 2024.

11. Key documents

Below is a list of relevant documents: internal documents relevant to both publications for this assignment, and external documents particularly relevant to the learning process.

Internal documentation from each of the four fund managers

- Guidelines, strategies/policies, grant administration guidelines, grant administration procedures, annual reports
- Cases
- International and external studies and reports

Relevant external documentation on local leadership (among others)

- EVALUATION OF THE DANISH SUPPORT TO CIVIL SOCIETY - Thematic Evaluation 2: Strengthening Civil Society in the Global South, DANIDA, (2022)
- A comparative case study on the role of Danish, Dutch, Belgian and French 'Citizen Initiatives for Global Solidarity' in Nepal and Senegal, Radboud, (2024)

Pictures

- Each fund manager will make good quality pictures available for the publications.

Contact CISU advisor Rikke Sig Hansen at rsh@cisu.dk for access to a full list of documents.

