

**PROGRAM OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT  
A GUIDELINE  
2020**



**ROYAL SOCIETY FOR PROTECTION OF NATURE**



**This document is endorsed by the undersigned as of the day and date specified below.**

Date: January 2020

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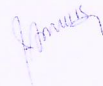
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## Purpose

*The purpose of this document is to facilitate efficient and smooth functioning of programs in the organisation. It provides procedural directions and necessary guideline for program management and operation and thereby strengthening the roles, responsibilities and coordination among Divisions and Departments.*

*This document is applicable to all the Departments and Divisions in the organisation, and it is the responsibility of respective Departments to ensure that the guidelines are adopted and applied. The guideline is a living document and may be revised and updated with endorsement of the management team.*

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## Chapter I: Mandates and functions of the Departments

### Divisions and Management

This section describes the roles and responsibilities of the respective Departments, Divisions and management bodies in the organisation in the context of their role or contribution to the overall program operation and management. The functions described below are drawn from the organisation's Administrative and Human Resource Policy and Articles of Association.

### The Board

As per the Human Resource Policy, the Board of Directors is the highest decision making body of the organization. It shall ensure that the organization functions in accordance with its Articles of Association and the Civil Society Organization's rules and regulations.

The Board of Directors shall provide guidance in the governance of RSPN. In specific, the Board shall provide guidance in setting priorities and strategic direction of the organization; for instance the board shall guide and approve the organisation's five year strategic plans.

### 1.2 The Executive Director

The Executive Director as the chief executive officer (CEO) of the organization manages the affairs of the organization on a daily basis. As the head of the organisation, he/she provides direction and guidance in overall operation and management of the Programs in the organisation.

He/she as the member Secretary to the Board will present and seek the directives and approval of the Board on important matters pertaining to the programs and management.

### 1.3 Management Team

The Management Team consists of the Executive Director, the Directors of Program Development Department and Operations Department, and the Division





Chiefs. The Management Team is responsible for important management decisions and functions as a platform for synergizing the roles of the various Departments and Divisions. It also approves matters concerning the Program operation, processes and procedures.

#### **1.4 Program Development Department**

The Program Development Department (PDD) has the primary function of managing and coordinating all matters related to the program. The management of the Department is overseen by the Director, PDD with assistance of a staff/s in the Department. The Department with the support of the Divisions is responsible for development, planning, monitoring, evaluation, monitoring and implementation of projects and programs.

The Department encompasses two Divisions namely:- Sustainable Livelihood Division, and Species and Habitat Conservation Division headed by Chiefs.

#### **1.5 Operations Department**

The Finance and Investment Division, Administration and Human Resource Division, and Communication and Education Division functions under the Operations Department with staff headed by the Division Chiefs.

#### ***Finance and Investment Division, Administration and Human Resource Division:***

These Divisions play an important role in the day to day functioning of all Programs in the organisation. Some of the important services the Divisions render to the Programs constitute the following:

- Preparing financial reports/statements based on the requirements of the Programs.
- Provide information and advice to Project Managers on budgets, cash flow and procurement.
- Ensure efficient financial transactions and provide over-sight of procurement processes.
- Management of human resources and administrative related tasks.



**Communication and Education Division(CED):**

The Division primarily functions to support the organisation’s Information Education and Communication (IEC) needs, including the overall visibility and outreach. In this respect, CED play an important role in supporting and backstopping the IEC and ICT requirements of Program Development Department.

The Communications and Education Division is headed by a Chief along with other staff supporting specific activities.

**1.6 Field Offices**

Based on need, RSPN may institute field offices in the areas where RSPN operate. These field offices will be managed and operated under the supervision of respective Divisions. Project officers will be placed in different field offices to implement and coordinate project activities on the ground. Besides activity implementation, the field offices will serve as an out-reach and bridge with local communities, stakeholders and public at large in the field.

To institute a field office, the management shall ensure that the following conditions are fulfilled:

- Requirement for field office in consideration to the intent and scope of a program in the area.
- Directive/approval from RSPN board to establish a field office.
- Provision of fund to establish a field office.



## Chapter II: Project Development

### 2.1 Project Formulation/Designing

Program Development Department is the primary body in the organisation responsible for project development. Development of a project will ideally require the following process to be followed.

**Research:** To generate project ideas, the initial activity should be the collection of baseline information from the identified project area/s. The baseline information may include, but not limited to the socio-economic condition and biodiversity status of an area. Such information is necessary to help understand the status and identify the need, issues and opportunities in an area. It may entail field surveys or assessment, stakeholder and community consultation, literature review and so forth. Such information is also important for measuring change or impact following project interventions.

**Secondary information:** While research and field consultations are an ideal way to conceive project ideas, often it is impossible to do so due to financial and time constraints. In this regard, project staffs are encouraged to document information while in the field, based on secondary information, field observation, and your experience. The information collected can be a basis for concept or proposal development. This is not an ideal approach, but an alternative option recommended at times of the fund and time constraint. A form as a guide to collect/document information can be found in the annexure - *Annex XVI\_Template Key Information Documentation*.

**Conceptualizing project idea:** Based on the information collected through research or secondary information, Divisions or individuals shall prepare a project concept. The concept may be a minimum of one page to a maximum of three pages, providing a framework or main ideas of the project, highlighting project rationale, project objective/purpose, strategies and so forth. For preparing the concept refer *Annex I: Form CON-Project Concept*.

### 2.2 Review of project idea

**In-house review:** The concept prepared will be submitted to Program Development Department (PDD) by Division Chiefs for further perusal by PDD. PDD with guidance of the Executive Director will appraise the concept primarily



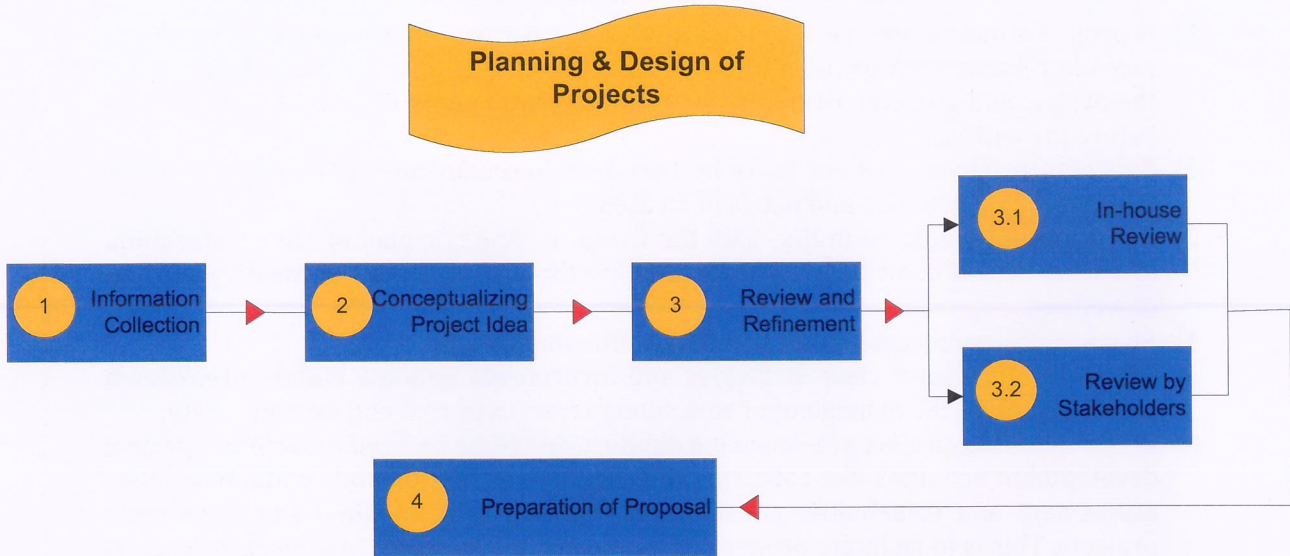
in the context of relevancy and appropriateness of the concept to RSPN (Organisational goals, objectives, strategy and capacity) and the proposed site. Based on the assessment, PDD will either pursue or revise the concept.

**Review by stakeholders:** If deemed necessary, PDD with support of the Divisions may also initiate consultations with stakeholders to review and seek feedback on a concept. This will be particularly relevant to projects that may entail partnership or participation of diverse partners or stakeholders in implementation of project activities.

**Preparation of proposal:** Considering that the concept is acceptable, PDD with assistance of relevant Divisions will work on a full proposal. The proposal will mainly encompass details of project background, objective, expected outcomes rationale, implementation strategy, resource requirements, cost estimate, activity schedule and so forth. Respective Divisions or individuals may also prepare proposals; however, it requires close consultation with PDD. The proposal should follow a format prescribed by a donor or use the format in the annexure (in case there is no standard format from the donor) - *Annex II\_ Template PP-Project Proposal* and *Annex XVII\_Template BC-Budget Calculation Sheet*.

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Figure 1. Project development flow-chart



### Checklist for preparing concepts and proposals

- 1) A project concept may be a minimum of one page to a maximum of three pages, providing framework or main ideas of the project. It is also the first expression of the project and gives the flexibility for the organization to work and re-work on idea before presenting it to a donor.
- 2) Concepts/proposals papers must be based on baseline information/data or clear understanding of issues and needs in an area.
- 3) All proposals should be in line with the five year strategic plan of the organization, or that it should contribute towards fulfilling the organization's strategic goals and objectives.
- 4) All concepts/proposals should have environmental linkage.
- 5) Proposals must have clear strategies and incorporate detailed budget breakdown keeping in mind the management cost, human resources cost and exchange rate.
- 6) Where possible, project pre-financing support should be secured to facilitate project development activities like collection of baseline information and conducting needs assessment and stakeholder consultation particularly in medium and large scale projects. This is to facilitate proper designing and development of projects as well as to support Monitoring and Evaluation of projects.
- 7) It is prerequisite for all projects to include Result Framework with targets and indicators to facilitate monitoring and evaluation of projects. For this purpose, a standard "Result Framework Matrix" needs to be prepared for all projects. Refer - *Annexure XII\_ Template Result Framework matrix.*

## 2.3 Agreements

Following the proposal development, next step is to prepare and sign agreement with donors or partners. All agreements, except the service related agreements, will be coordinated and processed by the Program Development Department (PDD Director and support staff). Similarly, any matters or issues associated with the agreements, including budget and activity amendments, project management, changes in implementation schedule etc will be dealt by PDD (including communication to donors), in consultation with the Executive Director and Divisions as relevant.

To facilitate the finalization of the agreements, PDD shall prepare or review and submit the agreements to the Executive Director for final endorsement. In specific, PDD shall provide recommendations, inputs or comments in the course



of preparation/finalization of agreements which may involve negotiation with donors/partners to ensure inclusion of prerequisites and concerns pertaining to the organisation. All agreements shall be signed by the Executive Director. Original signed agreements will be maintained by PDD, and copies shall be retained by the Finance and Investment Division and respective Divisions as relevant.

The agreements here refer to the following:

- a) Grant agreement
  - a.1 Contract agreement with donor
  - a.2 Contract agreement with implementing partners
- b) Memorandum of Understanding
- c) Service related contract agreement

For drawing agreement with partners refer the annexure - *Annex III, Template CA1 -Contract agreement with Partners.*

### **2.3.1 Grant agreement:**

The Grant agreement relates to contracts that are entered with donors intending to finance projects for a specific period of time. The grant agreements are legally binding with certain terms and conditions. The other kind of agreement here includes agreement that is signed with partners wherein RSPN provides certain amount of fund to its partners for implementing a collaborative project/program on a sub-contract basis or as an independent fund from RSPN.

### **2.3.2 Memorandum of Understanding:**

This agreement may be signed with partners or stakeholders with an intention to initiate or formalise cooperation in areas of mutual interest and it will not be legally binding. Such agreements may be initiated to enhance or to add value to the organisation's objectives and areas of engagement.



### **2.3.3 Service related Contract agreement:**

This contract agreement pertains to agreement associated to specific tasks that may be outsourced to external service providers, firms and individuals on a payment basis. Such tasks may broadly include undertakings on construction works, procurements, and other tasks requiring specific expertise.

This agreement will be prepared by the respective Divisions with assistance of Finance and Investment Division and Administrative and Human Resource Division. The agreement will be guided by the organisation's procurement and financial manuals, Service Rules and any other relevant documents as may be adopted by the organisation. Keeping in mind RSPN's mandate as an environmental organisation, the organisation shall endeavour to follow green procurement principles.

## **2.4 Project Execution**

Subsequent to signing of agreement with supporters, the next step would be to initiate implementation of project activities as per the project plan. Initiation of projects or programs in new areas will entail introductory meetings to introduce the organization and the project or program to the stakeholders in the area.

Implementation of the project may also involve coordination and collaboration with stakeholders and beneficiaries, implementing activities, producing outputs and outcomes, monitoring and so forth.

## **2.5 Ad hoc programs**

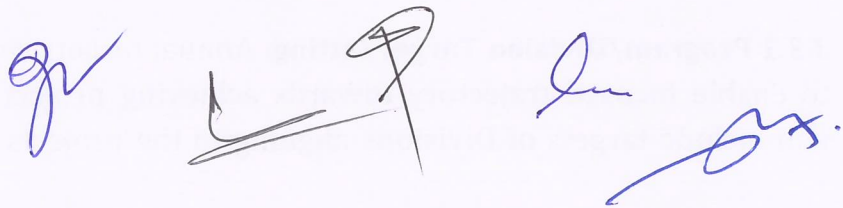
Besides project funds, RSPN also maintains budget for special need-based programs. Such funds in most cases are independent of projects, and are mainly generated or accumulated through contributions and donations without specified activities. Similarly, RSPN sometimes receive funding from supporters for certain activities without specific timeline or condition. Funds of such nature usually need not be accounted or reported to the supporters.

For such cases, following prerequisite needs to be followed to ensure accountability and proper management of the fund:





- Detailed action plan and work plan needs to be prepared which has to be verified by the concerned Division Chief, Director, Program Development Department and endorsed by the Executive Director
- Annual, technical and financial report has to be prepared and endorsed by Executive Director for office record and submission to the donors.

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## Chapter III: Planning and Reporting

### 3.1 Strategic planning

The strategic plan is expected to provide overall strategic direction for RSPN's priorities and engagement for 5 years with an endeavour to achieve its vision and mission. PDD shall organise and facilitate preparation of RSPN's Strategic Plan every five years under the guidance of the Executive Director. In developing the strategic plan, following aspects shall be taken into account:

- i) The government plans to synergise or avoid duplication/overlaps and contradiction
- ii) Seek guidance of RSPN board members in the development of the strategic plan.

The strategic plan will be in effect only upon endorsement by the organization's Board of Directors.

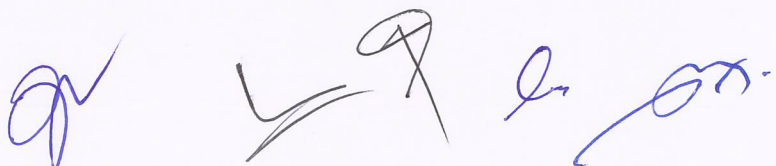
### 3.2 Project work plan and action plan

Project plans will be based on the duration of projects. For projects with more than one year duration, an action plan based on the overall work plan needs to be drawn.

### 3.3 Annual Program Planning and review/reporting

As a part of program monitoring system, Program Development Department shall organise annual review and planning of the Programs. The objective of the review is to appraise and monitor the progress made towards the set targets by different Divisions and to finalise the target for the upcoming year. It is also a platform to reflect on the organisation's performance in general and deliberate on the best way forward. Division Chiefs are responsible for preparing and presenting the reports and targets for their respective Divisions.

**3.3.1 Program/Division Target setting:** Annual targets setting is mainly intended to enable focused trajectory towards achieving project objectives. The targets will include targets of Divisions aligning to the projects in hand/in the pipeline

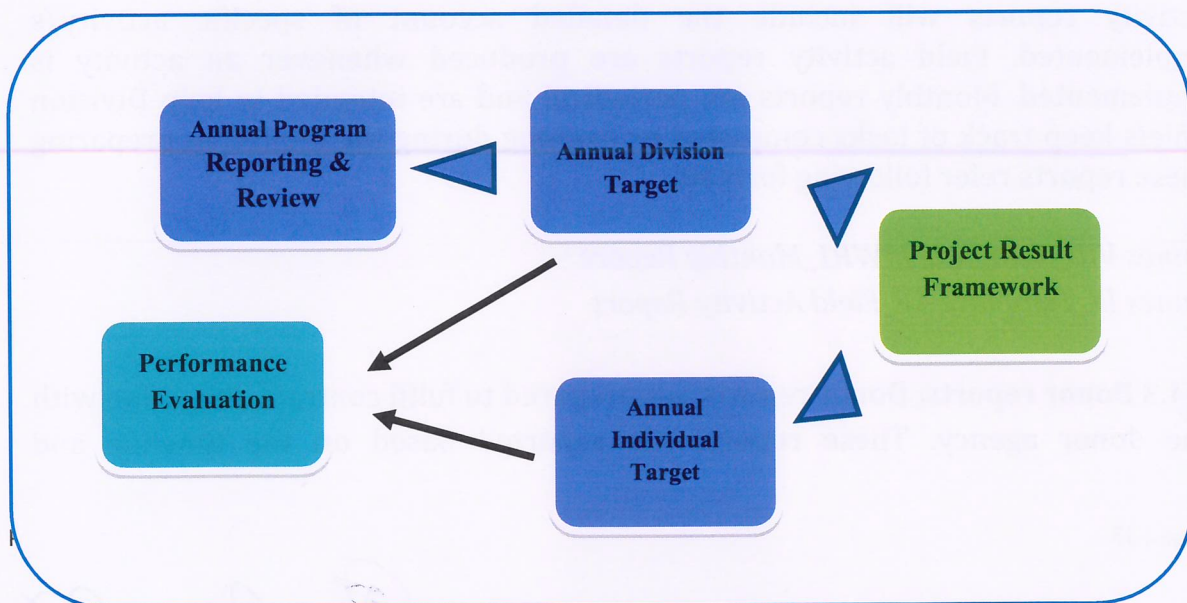


and or other activities in the plan. These targets should be consistent with the project result framework and project work plan in terms of timeline. While framing Division targets, only targets at the objective or outcome level are recommended. This is mainly to avoid unnecessary and insignificant targets. Target setting will be done in December every year. For framing targets use the form in annexure - *Annex V\_ Template TR\_Annual Targets*.

**3.3.2 Annual program review/reporting:** This will mainly encompass summary of the achievements of the respective Divisions against the targets set for that particular year. The purpose of the annual reporting is to review and keep the office informed of the achievements under different Divisions. Generally, the report will only reflect the progress made against the target for that particular year. However, for closed projects or projects nearing closure, the report should reflect the overall achievements against the final target (cumulative overall target).

Projects that are initiated at a later stage and not reflected in the planned target can still be reported with a set target (formulated at the beginning of the project). The annual review meeting will be organised in the beginning of the new year in January. For preparing the report refer annexure - *Annex IV, Template APR\_Annual program reporting/review*

**Figure 3: Logframe & Target -relationship with management features**



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### 3.4. Regular Reporting

Quarterly reports, reports to donors and field reports (including activity and monthly reports) will all provide information/data for measuring the progress of projects. PDD will coordinate reporting process with the respective Divisions.

#### 3.4.1 Quarterly reporting and planning

Quarterly reporting and planning will cover the progress made during the quarter and plan for the next quarter. The quarterly reporting is mainly intended to help keep track of quarterly progress under different Divisions and to provide a platform for feedback sharing. The office will meet every quarter for the purpose. The meeting will be organised by PDD, and the Division Chiefs or officers will be responsible for reporting. For preparing the report and plan refer - *Annex VI\_ Template QWPR\_Quarterly Report & plan.*

(The quarterly work plan should be in line with the overall work plan of a project).

#### 3.4.2 Monthly and Field activity reports

Monthly and field activity reports are prepared by the Project Officers and are intended to keep the Division Chiefs informed of progress in the field. Monthly reports will cover a brief update of activities from the field for the period, while activity reports will include the detailed account of specific activity/s implemented. Field activity reports are produced whenever an activity is implemented. Monthly reports are periodical and are intended to help Division Chiefs keep track of tasks completed or ongoing during the month. In preparing these reports refer following formats:

*Annex VIII\_ Template MWR1\_ Monthly Report*

*Annex IX\_ Template AR\_ Field Activity Report*

**3.4.3 Donor reports:** Donor reports are prepared to fulfil contract obligation with the donor agency. These reports are reported based on the timeline and



requirement specified by a donor. The Program Development Department shall maintain a schedule of donor reports and ensure that reports are submitted on time. Reporting will follow the following process:

- a) The reports should be submitted to PDD prior to the submission to donor for review. The draft reports should be submitted to PDD at least one week ahead of the reporting deadline to allow adequate time for review/feedback. PDD shall review the reports for quality assurance and donor/partner requirements.
- b) Prior to submission of the report to PDD, the Division Chief shall review the report to verify facts and comprehensiveness of the report/s and so forth.
- c) The outgoing hardcopy reports (Financial and Technical) to donors or partners have to be endorsed by the Executive Director and verified by Director, Program Development Department and the Division Chiefs. If it is submitted digitally, the communication must be copied to PDD and the Executive Director.
- d) The financial report, will be prepared by Finance and Investment Chief.
- e) For projects that do not have reporting formats, a standard reporting format as annexed should be used - *Annex VII, Template DR-Donor report*.

Reports should be inclusive of the following documents:

- Compiled technical progress reports submitted by the Division Chief
- Statement of project funds from Finance unit verified by FID Chief, PDD and endorsed by the Executive Director.
- Report submission cover letter to be signed by the ED.
- Pictures and other supporting documents.
- Others as required by donor agency. lose



## Chapter IV: Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation will be part and parcel of a project management system, and will be undertaken as a regular activity from the beginning of a project cycle. PDD will be the focal Department for implementing, coordinating and regulating monitoring and evaluation of programs in RSPN.

For detailed guide to monitoring and Evaluation refer M&E framework.

### 4.1 Monitoring:

Monitoring will be mainly done at two levels; at the program level and project level. At the program level, monitoring will be done by the Program Development Department mainly on the basis of annual program review, quarterly reporting, One-on-one project review, and field verification/assessment. At the project level, monitoring will be done by the Division Chief to track the day to day progress of projects mainly through monthly reporting, activity reports, field visits, informal communication and other tools as may be applied by the Divisions. Result framework will be an important tool for measuring the project performance.

### 4.2 Evaluation:

Projects will be evaluated to appraise the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of projects, after or during the project period. PDD shall ensure that projects are evaluated in time and that the recommendations/lessons are integrated into the program planning, management and implementation process. PDD may also undertake evaluation of certain projects based on requirement.



## Chapter V: Project budget & activity Amendment

### 5.1 Budget re-appropriation

All program funds will be managed and regulated under the Finance and Investment Division (FID) in accordance to the Financial regulation and norms of the organisation. Programs shall adhere to the original budget and activities approved by the donors, however reasonable changes and re-appropriation may be proposed to the donor in unavoidable circumstances. The extent of change allowable will be guided by a project agreement or will be based on the discretion of a donor. All such changes shall be routed through PDD for final submission to the donor.

FID shall integrate the amended budget in the accounting system upon fulfilment of the following process:


**Submission of request form:** A completed request form to be submitted by the Division Chief to the Program Development Department (PDD) requesting for changes in project budget. *For budget amendment request form please refer :-*

*Annex X\_ Template AM1-Budget amendment request*

*Annex XI\_ Template AM 2\_Budget & activity amendment.*

**Assessment of proposed changes by PDD and FID:** PDD and FID shall assess the appropriateness of the proposed changes considering the extent of re-appropriation allowable by a donor (in reference to the Project agreement), conformity of the proposed amendment in activities with project objectives and capacity to implement and so forth. If it entails further improvement, PDD and FID shall work with the concerned Divisions to revise and finalise the budget.

**Endorsement and verification:** PDD shall then submit the draft proposal (for re-appropriation) to the Executive Director for endorsement. This draft proposal needs to be verified (Signed) by Director, PDD and Finance and Investment Chief prior to submission to the Executive Director for endorsement.

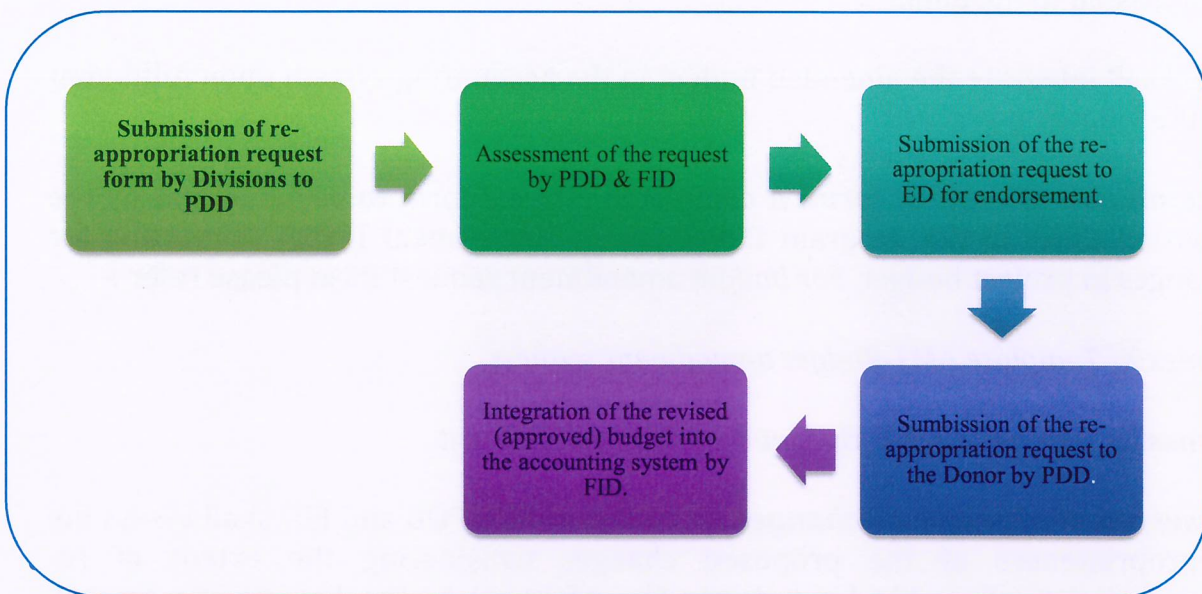
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**Donor approval:** The signed budget proposal will then be forwarded to the donor by the PDD for final approval.

**Budget Incorporation:** The amended budget, approved by the donor will then be incorporated into the organisation's accounting system and the overall project budget by FID.

The amended budget needs to be accompanied by a work plan if it entails changes in the plan.

**Figure 3. Budget and activity amendment process**



Extension of project duration in principal is not encouraged, however if deemed necessary, it would entail written approval from donors or partners. Such extension must take into account budgetary support requirement for project management and a detailed work plan. Request for project extension should be submitted to PDD for further review and submission to the donor.

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## Chapter VI: Knowledge Management

### 6.1 Print and social media management and administration

#### 6.1.1 RSPN data Repository

In order to document and maintain RSPN's institutional memory, all important documents and publications related to the organization (including projects/programs) shall be stored in RSPN's data repository. Communications and Education Division (CED) shall be responsible for administration and management of the repository. The repository will store digital copies of documents and publications.

The division shall ensure that all publications, documents, data and materials uploaded in the RSPN repository follow proper documentation protocol including the following:-

- All uploaded publications and documents should be final and uploaded in the right folders/data categories.
- All publication and documents to be properly labelled with title, date and year.
- Screen out unnecessary/insignificant documents.
- Maintain standard folder names.

Based on the kind of data and documents produced, new folders may be created. For reference and proper recording, CED will maintain a catalogue of all such publications.

CED shall also maintain archive of photographs related to RSPN and its programs with proper labels and groupings.

#### 6.1.2 Depositing documents, publications and data

As and when new documents, publication and materials are produced (digital and hard copy), concerned staffs are required to submit documentation details to CED by filling the project documentation form. This is to facilitate proper storage and archiving of the documents in the repository by CED. For documentation form refer *Annex XV\_Template DF\_Documentation Form*.



### 6.1.3 Publication Review

Any documents for publication by the organisation that will be circulated to public/stakeholders have to be reviewed either by the Publication Review Team or by relevant stakeholders before publication. This is to maintain standard and quality of publications produced by the organisation. The team members shall comprise of maximum 5 professionals relevant to the nature of the publication. The team will assess the document and issue directives on whether to proceed with printing or further improve the document.

Annual reports shall be endorsed by the Executive Director, with exception of other publications.

To maintain standard and uniformity in design and layout of publications, a guideline is provided in the annexure - *Annex XIV, Template PR-Basic Publication Requirement*.

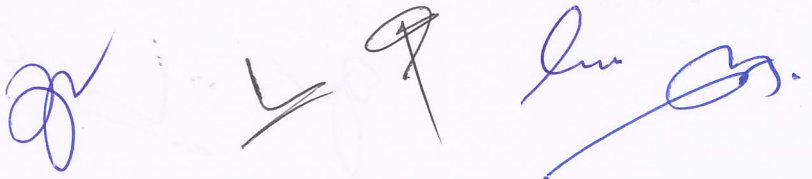
### 6.1.4 In-house publication tasks

CED shall undertake publication tasks of the organization related to designing (including website designing), layout and printing. For sustainability of CED or as a cost recovery mechanism, cost for such services may be recovered from respective projects as and when feasible. For this, CED shall issue invoice based on standard rates to the concerned Division. However, any publication tasks not within the capacity of CED would be outsourced.

To formalize the process and to ensure timely delivery of services, it is recommended that an internal letter of Understanding integrating work plan be drawn between CED and the concerned Division.

### 6.1.5 Copyright and authorship

Copyrights for all publications produced by RSPN should be with RSPN. Where such rights are not agreeable to a party in stake, specific agreement should be drawn for shared copyrights.

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Authorship sharing and other prerequisites for publications shall be based on standard international norms or as mutually agreed by both the parties prior to publication or communication of papers for publication.

### 6.1.6 Program database

Program Development Department shall maintain database of ongoing projects with information on reporting deadlines, project duration, approved budget etc consistent with project agreements (*Annex XIII, Template PD-Project Database*). The purpose of the database is to maintain record of projects, facilitate timely project reporting and so forth. This information will be shared with CED for inclusion in the general/overall database.

Additionally, PDD will maintain profiles or summary of projects for future record and quick referencing. This information will be consistently updated and made available to the staff via RSPN data repository.

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## List of Templates

- ANNEX I\_Template CON\_Project Concept
- ANNEX II\_Template PP\_Project Proposal
- ANNEX III\_Template CA\_Agreement with Partners
- ANNEX IV\_ Template APR\_Annual Prog. Review
- ANNEX V\_ Template TR\_Annual TARGETS
- ANNEX VI\_ Template QWPR\_Quarterly Report & Wplan
- ANNEX VII\_ Template DR3\_Donor Reports
- ANNEX VIII\_ Template MWR1\_Monthly Report
- ANNEX IX\_ Template AR\_Field Activity Report
- ANNEX X\_ Template AM1\_Budget Amendment Request
- ANNEX XI\_ Template AM2\_Budget & Activity Amendment Request
- ANNEX XII\_ Template RF\_Result Framework Matrix
- ANNEX XIII\_ Template PD\_Project database
- ANNEX XIV\_ Template PR\_Basic Publication Requirement
- ANNEX XV\_ Template DF\_Documentation Template
- ANNEX XVI\_Template ID\_ Key Information Documentation
- ANNEX XVII\_Template\_BC\_Budget Calculation Sheet
- Annex XVIII\_Template End of Project Report Template





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