

UNCLASSIFIED

United Nations
Department of Peacekeeping Operations /
Department of Field Support
Ref. no.2017.16



Policy

Quick Impact Projects (QIPs)

Approved by: USG DPKO
USG DFS
Effective date: 1 October 2017
Contact: DPET/DPKO/DFS and FBFD/DFS
Review date: 1 October 2020

UNCLASSIFIED

**DPKO/DFS POLICY ON
QUICK IMPACT PROJECTS**

Contents:

- A. Purpose**
- B. Scope**
- C. Rationale**
- D. Policy**
- E. Roles and Responsibilities**
- F. Terms and definitions**
- G. References**
- H. Monitoring and compliance**
- I. Contact**
- J. History**

ANNEXURES

- None
-

A. PURPOSE

1. This policy defines the purpose of Quick Impact Projects (QIPs), and describes their nature, scope, size and duration. It outlines principles for programme and financial management of QIPs and provides direction on budgetary issues.
-

B. SCOPE

2. This policy applies to QIPs funding provided to peacekeeping missions through the assessed budget. It does not cover the funds that military contingents themselves occasionally bring to assist their operations or funds provided by bi-lateral donors to the Trust Fund of the mission, which may carry their own requirement for use. However, the policy may be used as guidance in the use of these funds. This policy does not apply to programmatic funding for mandate implementation which is governed by separate guidance.
 3. All mission personnel involved in the identification, approval, and management of QIPs, in the management of the overall QIPs programme within missions, and in the preparation and submission of budget proposals for QIPs funding shall be aware of this policy and are expected to comply with its policy direction.
 4. This policy replaces previous guidance issued by DPKO and DFS.
-

C. RATIONALE

5. The Report of the Panel on UN Peace Operations (Brahimi Report) (S/2000/809) recommended that a small percentage of a mission's first-year budget should be made

UNCLASSIFIED

available to the Representative or Special Representative of the Secretary-General leading the mission to fund QIPs in its area of operations, with the advice of the United Nations Country Team's Resident Coordinator. This recommendation was supported by the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (A/C.4/55/6). Following four years of implementation, the Special Committee recommended in (A/58/19) that QIPs be extended through a second year of peacekeeping operations, and emphasized that projects should remain in direct support of the mission's mandate. In A/59/417, the ACABQ recommended that the General Assembly consider extending the funding for QIPs beyond the initial stages of missions and that the Secretariat work towards developing a model that would draw on lessons learned and that would not involve the establishment of rigid financial arrangements.

6. General Assembly Resolution A/RES/60/266 of 30 June 2006 on Cross-Cutting Issues emphasized the need for a comprehensive DPKO policy on QIPs, including on resource allocations. General Assembly Resolution A/RES/61/276 of 20 July 2007 underscored the role of QIPs in building confidence in individual missions, their mandate and the peace process; recognized that funding for such projects for a third year of the mission and beyond may be requested, and emphasized that these projects should be implemented with minimal or no overhead charges in order to ensure maximum amount is spent for the benefit of the local population. As a result, DPKO and DFS first issued this policy, providing operational guidance on QIPs to missions in February 2007. Subsidiary DPKO/DFS Guidelines on QIPs were issued in 2009. The policy was revised in 2013 in order to introduce lessons learned from a review of programme and project management of QIPs, completed in 2011.
7. Despite these changes, reports from the Board of Auditors routinely raised compliance issues as illustrated in their 2017 report (A/71/5 Vol.II). Furthermore, the introduction of International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAs) resulted in changes in accounting procedures affecting the management of QIPs. Finally, the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO, A/70/95-S/2015/445) recommended that the Secretary-General should request funding for programme delivery from the assessed budget to support the delivery of mandated tasks. As a result, DPKO and DFS have developed early guidance on the implementation of mandated programmatic activities using assessed funding. Greater clarity on the distinct use of QIPs and programmatic funds was required to ensure accountability. Therefore, this revision aims at addressing compliance weaknesses and adjusting QIPs management to recent policy developments.

D. POLICY

D.1 Definition and purpose

8. Quick Impact Projects are small-scale, rapidly-implementable projects, of benefit to the population, developed and implemented in a participatory manner. These projects are used by UN peacekeeping operations to establish and build confidence in the mission, its mandate, and the peace process, thereby improving the environment for effective mandate implementation.

UNCLASSIFIED

D.2. Nature and scope

9. Projects shall be devised/selected according to one or more of the following criteria:
 - 9.1. Contribution to promoting acceptance of the mandated tasks as well as building confidence and credibility and credibility of the mission amongst the population.
 - 9.2. Contribution to building confidence and/or building support for the peace process, including through demonstrating early peace dividends to the population.
 - 9.3. Contribution to improving the environment for mandate implementation by generating support for the mission including through addressing the immediate needs of the population.
10. Quick Impact Projects shall have the following characteristics:
 - 10.1. small scale and low-cost;
 - 10.2. designed to be of benefit to the population;
 - 10.3. planned and implemented within a short time frame;
 - 10.4. of a non-recurrent nature, and do not place an unforeseen financial burden on the recipient or create material requirements that cannot be met without external support;
 - 10.5. visible to the population, partners, and local authorities;
 - 10.6. done in consultation with representatives of national or local authorities, and with the participation of local communities;
 - 10.7. done in consultation with relevant UN actors, and not duplicative of, nor undermining the programmes of UNCT or other actors;
 - 10.8. are inclusive and sensitive to consideration of gender, ethnicity, age and other factors affecting persons in situation of vulnerability;
 - 10.9. designed and implemented in accordance with the principles of "Do No Harm";
 - 10.10. sensitive to any potential risks to the population, including risk of conflict or risk of damage to the environment.
11. Projects may take a variety of forms including *inter alia*:
 - 11.1. limited infrastructure related projects;
 - 11.2. the provision of equipment for the use of beneficiaries;
 - 11.3. non-recurrent training activities;
 - 11.4. and the holding of confidence-building or similar fora.
 - 11.5. depending on the mission's priority areas of focus, projects could address community needs pertaining to inter or intra community reconciliation, livelihoods, culture or the environment.
12. Projects may support the objectives outlined in paragraph 9 through the outputs themselves and/or through strengthening the capacity and credibility of local implementing partners, such as civil society organizations or local authorities, in the process of implementation.

D. 3 Programme Management

13. The QIPs programme shall be managed under the overall authority of the Head of Mission, who shall be responsible for designating a relevant mission component to undertake the overall coordination and management of the QIPs programme.

UNCLASSIFIED

14. The Head of Mission shall establish a Project Review Committee (PRC) and designate a chair of the Committee. The PRC shall include representatives of relevant components of the mission and relevant UN bodies present in the country. The PRC is responsible for the approval of individual projects, ensuring that projects comply with QIPs requirements as defined under sections D.1 and D.2. The PRC also reviews monitoring reports and takes remedial actions to ensure the timely and quality implementation of projects. The PRC shall meet on regular basis to review and approve projects without delay.
15. Furthermore, the Head of Mission may establish field-level PRCs (FPRCs) under the chairmanship of Heads of Offices. The Head of Mission shall determine the delineation of roles and responsibilities between the PRC and the FPRCs, including the level of authority delegated to FPRCs in the mission.
16. Missions shall ensure they have adequate substantive and financial management capacity to implement QIPs programmes, commensurate with the funds requested and number of projects foreseen. For new missions, with assessed QIPs funds of \$1 million and above, appropriate management capacity shall be identified through the use of existing posts before additional resources are sought.
17. Where possible, a small QIPs Management Team (QMT) shall be constituted including, at minimum, a dedicated programme manager assisted by an administrative assistant. Missions shall allocate engineering expertise to the QMT considering the number of infrastructure projects and/or appoint a focal point within the Engineering Section to review and provide technical support to projects. The QMT is responsible for the overall QIPs planning and management. The QMT serves as a secretariat to the PRC, assesses project proposals' compliance with this policy, notifies applicants of PRC decisions and maintains project documentation. The QMT also ensures that evaluations of the overall QIPs programme are conducted on a regular basis and findings used to improve further planning and management.
18. The PRC shall designate a project focal point for each individual project. With support from their parent component, the project focal point is responsible for liaising with implementing partners, targeted beneficiaries, and other relevant stakeholders; monitoring the implementation of approved projects; and reporting progress and/or challenges to the PRC. Project focal points assume their responsibilities alongside their regular duties, in agreement with their supervisors. Project focal points may be situated within any component of the mission.
19. The Chief of Staff shall issue a Standing Operating Procedure clearly outlining mission-specific governance mechanisms, roles and responsibilities for the planning, management and implementation of QIPs. Individual QIPs responsibilities shall be integrated into the work plans and performance evaluations of mission personnel involved in their planning, implementation or evaluation including QMT members and project focal points.
20. Subsidiary DPKO/DFS Guidelines are provided to assist missions in the design and establishment of effective mechanisms and procedures for the management of QIPs.

D.4 Coordination

21. Consultation with representatives of UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes (AFPs) in-country shall take place during the identification phase of any QIPs, so as to avoid duplication and ensure coordination and coherence with humanitarian and development

UNCLASSIFIED

projects. The QMT, PRC, and where applicable FPRCs, shall liaise with AFPs through the Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC) or the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General/Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator (DSRSG/RC/HC). In the absence of a designated Humanitarian Coordinator, the Resident Coordinator should designate a relevant AFP to support consultation on QIPs planning and identification.

22. Close coordination amongst mission components, including UN CIMIC officers, shall be established and maintained. The QMT and the PRC shall share proposals submitted for review and approval to the relevant components in the mission. Similarly, mission components are encouraged to share information pertaining to project activities with the QMT and the PRC, with a view of strengthening the coherence of mission's activities.

D.5 Size and Duration

23. The PRC shall establish a maximum budget for individual QIPs, which shall not exceed \$50,000 unless prior authorization has been obtained from the Controller to exceed this amount.
24. The PRC shall set a maximum implementation time for individual projects, up to and not exceeding six months (180 days) from the date the first instalment of project funding is received by the implementing partner. Projects shall be considered closed after the receipts and closure report have been submitted and once the final payment has been disbursed by the mission as detailed under paragraph 48.
25. Every effort shall be made to ensure that the entire project management cycle (including project identification, review and approval, financial disbursement, and evaluation following completion) is completed quickly but without prejudice to good practice in project management. The PRC and QMT shall ensure that an appropriate contingency period is built into project timelines in order to comply with the six-month time limit.
26. Missions shall avoid only having projects of the highest authorized time frame and budget. The QMT and PRC shall seek to identify and approve projects of various sizes (timeframe and cost) for maximum potential impact. Missions shall also avoid breaking down costs into more than one project.
27. Under exceptional circumstances such as outbreak of violence or natural disasters, the chair of the PRC or FPRC where applicable, can suspend the implementation of a project. Such suspension shall be documented in writing including its rationale and duration. The Chair of the PRC shall notify the implementing partner of the suspension through the project focal point. At the end of the suspension period, the PRC shall determine whether the project can resume according to the MOU, requires amendments to reflect changes in the operating environments and emerging community needs, or should be terminated. In the event that the PRC recommends the project termination, procedures described under paragraph 39 shall apply.

D.6 Budgetary issues

28. Resources for QIPs may be included in the budget request for the start-up phase and for the first two years of the mission. In the third year of the mission and beyond, especially during the drawdown phase, funding for QIPs may be requested if there is a requirement for confidence-building in the mission's mandate and the peace process. The need for further confidence-building should be derived from QIPs annual and external evaluations,

UNCLASSIFIED

local perception surveys and community engagement reports. An assessment and justification of the requirement for QIPs shall be provided, as outlined in DPKO/DFS Guidelines on QIPs.

29. Budgetary requests for QIPs programmes may constitute up to 1% of the requested resources, subject to estimated needs assessment by the respective mission.
30. Budgetary requests for external evaluations of QIPs programmes may be included in the budget request under the consultancy line item and should not exceed 2.5% of the overall QIPs funding request. These requests shall be made through proposed budgets with appropriate justifications, and will be subject to General Assembly approval.
31. All reasonable efforts should be made to ensure that QIP funds are used within the budget period for which they were requested. All QIP funds should be obligated and committed to specific projects as early as possible during the fiscal period for which they were requested.

D.7 Programme Planning

32. The Head of Mission shall set and periodically review priorities for QIPs geographic and thematic focus, taking into account the unique nature and mandate of the mission, local context including outcomes of gender-sensitive conflict analysis, results of local perception surveys, and where available, assessments of environmental impact as well as the overall mission plan and broader strategies for community outreach. Priorities for QIPs geographic and thematic focus should also take into consideration priority objectives established under relevant UN and humanitarian plans to avoid duplicating and/or undermining them. The definition of QIPs priorities which shall be articulated in a document clearly outlining how the mission intends to distinguish the use of QIPs resources with other funding sources at the disposal of the mission including programmatic activities through assessed contributions or trust funds. These priorities shall inform the selection and approval of individual projects. Therefore, they shall be communicated to all sections and components within the mission.
33. Within the early days of the mission, priority shall be given to the identification of a few suitable projects in order to start the process quickly. Potential projects for this purpose may be identified by the lead elements of the mission in advance of the establishment of a PRC. At a minimum, consultation on these projects shall take place with relevant mission components, members of the UN Country Team and with appropriate national/local authorities.
34. Similarly, at the beginning of each fiscal year, the QMT or the dedicated QIPs officer shall develop targets and timeframes for project selection, implementation and closure in line with priorities set by the Head of Mission (see para. 32). These targets shall guide the PRC and where applicable the FPRCs in the review of project proposals. The QMT shall report periodically to the PRC on the status of the QIPs programme against the set targets. Status reports shall be shared with the Mission leadership and the policy contact focal points at Headquarters on a quarterly basis.

D.8 Project Identification and Approval

35. QIPs may be proposed by any component within the mission, UN agencies, funds and programmes, other international organisations, civil society organisations (CSOs), local authorities, government and state institutions. Given QIPs' stated objectives of promoting

UNCLASSIFIED

confidence in mission's mandate and in the peace process, preference should be given to local actors with strong connections with the target communities. Commercial contractors cannot apply for QIPs but may be identified by the implementing partner as an executing agency to implement the project.

36. The QMT shall assess the compliance of project proposals with the criteria outlined under sections D.1 and D.2 of this policy, their alignment with mission-established priorities, and potential duplication with ongoing interventions of other mission components or of the UN country team before submitting proposals to the PRC. Proposals that do not meet the minimum criteria shall be returned to the applicant with the appropriate comments in order to inform changes or guide the development of future proposals. Proposals that meet the minimum criteria shall be submitted to the PRC with a signed Assessment Checklist Form as proposed under the DPKO-DFS Guidelines.
37. All proposals meeting minimum requirements shall be considered by the PRC or FPRC within 2 months of initial receipt by the QMT. The Chair of the PRC or the FPRC whenever applicable shall convene the committee as often as possible in order to ensure the expeditious review of project proposals.
38. The PRC or the FPRC shall review project proposals for compliance with sections D.1 and D.2 of this policy. In addition to the criteria set out in section 2, decisions to select between project proposals shall be guided by the quality of the project proposal and the implementation capacity of the proposed implementing partner or executing agency, including its ability to complete the project within the required timeframe. The PRC or the FPRC shall document the review of each project's compliance with QIPs criteria and notify applicants of the outcome of the review.

D.9 Project Implementation and Monitoring

39. The Head of Mission shall ensure that adequate procedures are in place to ensure the effective monitoring of projects. At a minimum, project focal points shall submit a written mid-term report to the PRC or FPRC indicating progress made in the attainment of project objectives and highlighting any risks of delays or non-completion. The PRC or FPRC shall review monitoring reports and decide on any required mitigation measures, including possible action to recover funds in collaboration with the Office of Legal Affairs.

D.10 Visibility

40. The PRC shall ensure that project proposals outline concrete steps to ensure project visibility and that related costs are included in the proposed budget.
41. QMTs and project focal points shall work closely with missions' Strategic Communications and Public Information components in order to ensure that QIPs receive adequate visibility and that messaging associated with QIPs are in line with the mission's overall communication strategy.

D.11 Financial Management

42. Authority is delegated by the Assistant Secretary-General, Controller to the authorized official, in this case Directors and Chiefs of Mission Support (DMS/CMS) at United Nations Peacekeeping Missions and Officers-in-Charge appointed to these functions, on the basis of the Terms of Reference contained in the Controller's Delegation of Authority, which set out conditions for financial management and reporting. The DMS/CMS and

UNCLASSIFIED

Officers-in-Charge shall ensure that expeditious arrangements are in place for the signature of Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) for projects selected by the PRC or FPRC.

43. The authorized official shall also be responsible for ensuring that expeditious administrative arrangements are in place within the mission to support QIPs. This includes establishing a maximum window for processing payment requests upon receipt of the required documentation. QIP programme managers and individual project focal points shall be informed by the Finance Section as soon as funds are credited to the implementing partner.
44. Project funds shall be provided to the implementing partner or to the executing agency if requested by the implementing partner in a minimum of two instalments. The PRC shall determine the number, sequencing and value of instalments paid for each project based on: (i) the size of the overall project budget, (ii) the assessed level of risk of non-completion, and (iii) the ability of the executing agency to pre-finance the project.
45. The first instalment shall be paid to the implementing partner immediately following the signing of an MOU and shall not exceed 80% of the total cost of the project. The balance shall be paid in one or more separate instalments, conditioned upon monitoring of the implementation of the project by project focal point and submission by the implementing partner of a signed list of expenditures to date with receipts.
46. The implementing partner shall be responsible and accountable to the mission for the efficient financial management and utilization of the funds received. The implementing partner shall maintain financial and accounting documents concerning projects financed through the QIPs fund, including an up to date list of expenditures. The implementing partner shall make available to the mission, upon request, all relevant financial information concerning the project.
47. Any changes to the approved project budget, timeline or outputs must be authorized by the PRC. Proposed changes to the project budget, timeline or outputs shall be submitted with a detailed justification to the PRC for consideration and shall not increase the budget beyond \$50,000 unless prior authorization has been obtained from the Controller.
48. Upon completion of the project, the project focal point shall conduct a site visit and submit a Project Closure and Evaluation Form to the QMT. The implementing partner shall submit a signed final list of expenditures with receipts to the authorized official through the QMT. Upon receipt of a copy of the signed Project Closure and Evaluation Form and the original final list of expenditures, the authorized official shall authorize the Finance Section to clear the final disbursement. Any unspent balance remaining upon the completion of the project shall be credited by the implementing partner to the mission.

D.11 Programme Evaluation

49. An annual evaluation of the QIP programme shall be carried out by the QMT in coordination with the PRC, as per the format provided in the DPKO/DFS Guidelines on QIPs. Missions with ongoing QIP programmes may periodically commission external evaluations of the impact of the programme if required. Annual and external evaluations shall assess actual QIPs contributions to building confidence in the mission mandated tasks and peace process; identify programme performance and compliance issues; and suggest recommendations to improve the overall planning and management of the QIPs programme.

UNCLASSIFIED

E. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

50. The Head of Mission shall be responsible for the establishment and effective functioning of appropriate QIPs planning, management and evaluation mechanisms.
51. The authorized official shall be responsible for ensuring that expeditious arrangements are in place for the approval of MOUs and the disbursement of funds in compliance with financial regulations and rules.
52. The Chief of Staff shall be responsible for issuing and disseminating a Standing Operating Procedure clearly outlining governance mechanisms, roles and responsibilities for the planning, management and implementation of QIPs.
53. The chair of the PRC or where applicable the chair of the FPRC shall be responsible for convening the PRC in a timely manner and ensuring that project approval and monitoring comply with this Policy.
54. The QIPs Programme Manager in the QMT shall be responsible for implementing adequate planning, management and reporting procedures of the QIPs programme as well as providing effective secretariat services to the PRC and where applicable to the FPRC.
55. Project focal points shall be responsible for ensuring adequate liaison with implementing partners, monitoring the implementation of approved projects and reporting progress to the PRC.

F. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Authorized official	Authorized official refers to the Director and Chief of Mission Support (DMS/CMS) or Officer-in-Charge of Mission Support appointed to these positions in the absence of a DMS/CMS.
---------------------	---

G. REFERENCES**Normative or Superior References**

- DPI/DPKO/DFS Policy on Strategic Information and Public Information, 2017
- DPKO-DFS Policy on Civil-Military Coordination in UN Integrated Peacekeeping Missions, 2010

Related Policies

- OIOS Report on Military Involvement in Humanitarian Affairs
 - Secretary General's Note of Guidance on Integrated Missions
 - DPKO / DFS Guidelines on Quick Impact Projects (QIPs)
-

UNCLASSIFIED

H. MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE

56. Within missions, the Head of Mission is accountable for the Mission's compliance with this Policy and shall establish mechanisms and processes to enable effective monitoring of compliance. All mission personnel participating in the planning, implementation and monitoring of QIPs programmes are accountable for their individual compliance with this Policy.
57. External oversight of QIPs shall be provided by OIOS in accordance with the standard procedures of that office.
-

I. CONTACT

58. The contacts for this policy are the Field Budget and Personnel Division, DFS and the Policy, Evaluation and Training Division, DPKO/DFS.
-

J. HISTORY

59. This policy was approved on 12 February 2007 and amended on 01 January 2013.
-

APPROVAL SIGNATURE:



DATE OF APPROVAL:

SEP 22 2017

APPROVAL SIGNATURE:



DATE OF APPROVAL:

25/9/17