

# [Guide to selecting implementing partner for ngos – assignment](https://assignbuster.com/guide-to-selecting-implementing-partner-for-ngos-assignment/)

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This piece is an executive summary of the processes and steps required for selecting a winning Implementing Partner for development work. It is the first in a series meant to enrich the body of knowledge available on the topic and provide guidance to local Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) desiring to manage donor funds.

Local NGOs provide the vehicle for effective intervention in their areas because of their closeness to the local communities. Faith-based organizations for example, command large followership, while community coalitions are established by the communities themselves. 1. 1 LOCAL IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS (IPs) Implementing partners are Non-Governmental Organizations, Community-Based Organizations, Community Coalitions and Faith-Based Organizations that are recipient of donor funding or support to implement development intervention activities in their community or areas of coverage.

They are expected to be not-for-profit organizations established with strong social network and capacity to support the intervention objective of the donor. They should have program experience and track record, with formal organizational structure, management processes and actively managed by their Trustees or Directors. 1. 2 BASIS OF PARTNERSHIP: The basis of the partnership between the donor and the implementing partner may include: 1. To implement intervention activities at different levels using local NGOs. 2.

To strengthen the capacity of the organization to provide quality social services. 3. To mentor and nurture such organizations into bigger players in social service delivery. 2. SYNOPSIS OF LOCAL NGO ENVIRONMENT: The development sector in Nigeria is very vibrant with a lot of NGOs registering their interest in different areas of social and economic needs. Some of the organizations are young which indicates a greater interest in development work by many. However, so many of them have low capacity and therefore require technical support and mentoring to move forward.

A good number of the NGOs are providing services in areas where donor funds are available. This explains why majority are in the area of Reproductive health and HIV/AIDS to the exclusion of other sensitive areas of societal need like economic empowerment, education, drug abuse etc. Faith-based organizations established by their parent bodies to assist needy members have the largest network of branches across Nigeria, but lack large scale intervention capabilities. There is a huge skill gap in the sector.

For local NGOs who have partnered donor agencies in the past, a lot of their staff has been trained in different areas, but the budget constraints of retaining such staffs, that will thereafter step-down the knowledge acquired to others is a challenge. The situation is not helped by donor requirement that personnel costs on a project should not exceed 10-25% of fund received, leaving local NGOs with the option of part-time staff and volunteers for the execution of the programs. This has implications on quality of service and sustainability of programs.

Sometimes, you will find out that service delivery operators do not understanding the concept and strategies being adopted, even after project orientation training because there are no experienced program officers to guide them. Governance is another challenge facing the sector. Quite a number of them are managed like one-man business without any visible organogram, no transparency and employees have limited information about what is going on. Sometimes, it is possible there is a board, but such boards are just on paper because they hardly meet.

The Executive Director is left to run the organization single-handedly; he takes all the decisions and informs the other directors. You will find out that it is very easy for such organization to deviate their goal into other areas without check. Organizations like these, present the highest risk for a donor agency. However, despite these challenges, some local NGOs have recorded successes in their chosen areas. Driven by passion to touch lives and visionary leadership, they have contributed their time and money into causes they believe in, leaving indelible marks in the lives of their target group.

In summary, the major challenges facing local NGOs can be summarized to include: o Manpower shortage o Governance and integrity issues o Little partnership and collaboration among existing NGOs o Budget constraints. 3. SELECTION PROCESS: The process of selecting Implementing Partners may take the following steps: 1. Solicitation / Expression of Interest advertisement 2. Short listing of Applicants 3. Evaluation / Selection of prospective NGOs 4. Pre-Award visit and fact finding 5. Review of finding and Final Selection 6. Streamlining proposals and budgets of prospective NGOs 7.

Signing of the sub-grant agreement. 8. Disbursement of funds 3. 1 Solicitation The advertisement soliciting for proposals could be in the form of Request for Proposal (RFP) or Expression of Interest (EOI). It should provide clear and accurate description of the technical requirements for the assignment as well as evaluation and selection criteria. A comprehensive scope of work (SOW) and level of program experience expected should be indicated. 3. 2 Short-listing of Applicants The proposals received are promptly acknowledged by email or fax.

They should pass through eligibility check to determine compliance with prescribed criteria. As a matter of fact, only proposals that meet the eligibility criteria should move-on to evaluation. In the case of two-stage proposal submission, each stage is subject to an eligibility check. It is necessary to complete an eligibility form for each proposal based on information obtained from the proposal. 3. 3 Evaluation and Selection: Evaluation and selection should be conducted by individuals with vast program skills, knowledge and experience in the area being reviewed. These could be from within the organization or outside.

Criteria here may include Efficiency and speed, Quality assurance processes, Technical competence and Cost. Above all, the entire process should be transparent. It is expected that a pre-determined threshold be established before the evaluation and selection work. The proposals would normally be evaluated by a committee who are expected to rank the proposals according to the threshold. 3. 4 Pre-Award and Fact Finding Mission For me, this is a critical phase. The mission will among other things seek to establish those salient facts about the organization that will assist the donor decide on a working relationship.

The team should comprise program and finance personnel well briefed about the organization and competent in organizational assessment and review. This mission will go beyond seeing the infrastructures in place to internal processes, board and management. In practice, when the team return with their reports, the NGOs ranked 1st before the visit may eventually be 5th after the pre-award visit. The information the team should obtain on this trip may be divided into: The Organization: o The Purpose of the organization o Legal status o Leadership, vision, management and core competences Organizational structure o Board and Governance o Sources of Funds (Existing grants) o Financial management systems, administrative and human resources systems o Infrastructures and equipments o Quality of human resources (full time and part-time staff) Programmatic o Program development o Ongoing projects and grants o Completed projects and their impact o Visit to any ongoing project site o Monitoring and evaluation systems o Evaluation of Program staff (qualification, skills and experience) External Environment o Community awareness of organization and networks Partnership relationships with similar organizations o Community support for the organization’s activities o Social and economic factors facing the organization o Other Socio-cultural and religious factors The approach to fact-finding may include administration of questionnaires, personal interview with staff and board members as well interviewing of suppliers, clients and other partners. A glimpse of what to look for on each area may include: o Under legal status: The relevant questions here are:- whether the organization is national, state or local government registered and why.

What type of registration and when. o Governance, what type of body governs the organization – a board of directors or trustees, committee or advisory council. What is the gender composition, business and academic background of members. How often does the board meet and what level of expense is approved by the board? What is the relationship between the board and the staff as well as funders. 3. 5. Review of Finding and Final Selection After the trip to various selected NGOs, the trip report is reviewed and a final ranking and selection is drawn up by the committee.

The committee’s composition may be enriched with the inclusion of individuals who were not part of the trip for some independence and objectivity. Final selection is made based on the facts obtained from the visits. 3. 6. Streamlining Proposals and budgets of prospective NGOs: The proposals of select NGOs are thoroughly reviewed to ensure they meet program objectives of the donor. This review should be conducted by an experienced program manager/director, working together with the program manager and accountant of the prospective implementing partner.

This review usually reveals gaps in program and budget areas ignored in the proposal. Remember that some of these proposals are sometimes written by the directors and consultants other than the people that will execute the project. Sometimes also, relevant costs are sometimes ignored to reduce overall budget cost and possibly win the grant. The review ensures that narratives are reconciled to budget and every activity is provided for in the budget. It focuses the implementation team on the deliverables and the expected impact of the intervention. 3. 7. Signing of Subgrant Agreement

The sub-grant agreement is drawn up, reviewed and signed by the parties. 3. 8. Disbursement of Grant: The payment formalities are completed and first installment is disbursed for the commencement of project implementation. 4. Dangers of choosing a wrong Partner: The dangers of choosing a wrong partner are enormous. They include the following: 1. Poor Programming and project execution 2. Ineffective project implementation 3. Changing of partner(s) in the middle of project 4. Poor result and low impact on target population 5. Project funding set-back or even stoppage 6. Project failure. THANK YOU.