



KCSF Grants Manual

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Abbreviations

KCSF – Kosovar Civil Society Foundation

ED – Executive Director

RD – Re-granting Director

GMU – Grants Management Unit

MEU – Monitoring and Evaluation Unit

GM – Grants Manager

MEM – Monitoring and Evaluation Manager

GO – Grants Officer

JGO – Junior Grants Officer

MO – Monitoring Officer

GET – Grant Evaluation Team

IG – Institutional Grants

ODG – Organisational Development Grants

SPG – Small Project Grants

NG – Networking Grants

RG – Representation Grants

DA - Award

GLOSSARY OF TERMS FOR KCSF GRANTS MANUAL

Re-granting – is a KCSF function that includes the entire process of distributing financial support of a donor to third parties. In cases when required from specific terminology of particular donor, it can be referred to also as fund-forwarding, distribution of funds or sub-granting.

Grant – is a specific financing instrument where KCSF provides financial support to an applicant based on a specific proposal by the applicant through which the applicant defines how they aim to achieve a specific goal that is defined in the Calls for Application published by KCSF. It refers to various forms, depending on the scope and goal of the financial support, such as Institutional Grants, Organizational Development Grants, Project Grants, Urgent Grants, etc. It can also be referred as “Intervention”, without any specific reference to the type of instrument.

Award - is a specific instrument that aims to mark a recognition given in honour of an achievement that has served to the goal of a KCSF program. It is decided and delivered ex-post. It is delivered through a certificate and accompanied by a money prize, depending on the availability of funds.

Open calls - Publicly announced opportunities for funding where all applicants can submit their applications in line with the requirements of the calls and eligibility criteria. They can be Specific calls with a set deadline for application or Rolling calls that are continuously open and have no deadline for application.

Governance bodies – are specific bodies that have set mandate within KCSF re-granting function, both of advisory or supervisory nature.

Grant Evaluation Team – is a body composed of external evaluators that is mandated to evaluate applications for grants based on pre-determined criteria and decide on the final list of recommended applications for support.

Internal Grant Evaluation Team - is a body composed of KCSF staff that is mandated to evaluate applications for grants based on pre-determined criteria and decide for the support or refusal of those applications.

Coaching and Mentoring – is a capacity building process where KCSF staff or external associates mandated by KCSF assist and guide applicants and/or grantees in completing various tasks. Coaching refers to more short-term processes of assistance and guidance that have a very specific goal, while mentoring refers to longer-term advice and guidance which may cover a wider range of elements and/or topics.

KCSF Program – is a set of projects and/or interventions of KCSF that are larger than specific time-bound projects and serve to a larger goal of KCSF mission and strategy (I.e. EJA Kosovo).

KCSF Project – is a set of activities that is intended to be completed by KCSF within a specific timeframe in order to achieve a set outcome or goal (I.e. specific re-granting schemes operated by KCSF).

KCSF Directors – all KCSF directors, including KCSF Executive Director and Department Directors.

KCSF Management/KCSF Senior Staff – all KCSF staffs who have a managing and/or supervisory role, including KCSF Executive Director, Department Directors, Unit Managers, Project Managers, Coordinators and Senior Officers.



Re-granting Department – one of KCSF Departments that is mandated to manage programs that primarily are of the re-granting nature. It is composed of two core units: Grants Management Unit and Monitoring and Evaluation Unit. Depending on the existence of specific projects of re-granting nature, it can include also specific Project Teams.

Potential applicants – all NGOs, unregistered initiatives, individuals and any other entities that are eligible to apply, as per eligibility criteria of respective Call for applications published by KCSF.

Applicants – all NGOs, unregistered initiatives, individuals and any other entities that have submitted an application to KCSF, in response to a Call for application published by KCSF.

Successful applicants – All applicants that have been recommended for support but have not yet signed a grant contract with KCSF.

Grantees – All successful applicants that have signed a grant contract with KCSF.

Days – unless otherwise specified, it refers to calendar days, where the day when specific period has started to run is not counted.

INTRODUCTION

The KCSF Grants Manual aims to describe the rules and procedures applied by the Kosovar Civil Society Foundation (KCSF) for its re-granting function¹. This is an internal document that regulates the division of duties and responsibilities of staff engaged in the Re-granting Department during each stage of the re-granting process.

The scope of this Grants Manual includes standard operating procedures for all KCSF re-granting programs that are designed and operated by KCSF, such as EJA Kosovo or specific grants under Sida Core Grant for KCSF 2020-2024. While all re-granting programs follow principles and rules as envisaged in this manual, specific implementation annexes are developed as soon as a new re-granting program is designed. This manual is not applicable for existing specific re-granting projects that have been designed before the entry into force of this manual. Although they generally follow similar principles and standards, each of them has specific processes and procedures, depending on the individual contracts and specific arrangements of each project.

The Grants Manual provides information on:

- KCSF and its organizational structure;
- Organization of roles and responsibilities in the Re-granting Department within KCSF;
- Principles and processes on designing calls for applications, and their publication and promotion;
- Principles and processes on receiving project-proposals, administrative control and evaluation;
- Principles and processes on contracting and monitoring;
- Principles and processes on grant management;
- Principles and processes on grantee audit and grant closure;
- Training and capacity building for grantees;
- Preventing, identifying and addressing irregularities/violations from grantees;

Since KCSF provides support to civil society initiatives through a variety of financial support instruments, different processes within the re-granting cycle may vary depending on the instrument. Thus, the description of processes and procedures is based on the main principles of each phase and sets the minimum standards to be applied and the frequency of application of these procedures. Specific procedures are regulated in specific annexes (application forms, guidelines, templates and forms etc.) which are an integral part of this manual.

The Grants Manual and in particular its annexes may be updated and/or adjusted based on feedback from all parties involved and if there are lessons learned from its implementation, changes or developments to KCSF internal procedures, as well as recommendations from respective governance bodies and internal or external assessments. Any proposed change must be initiated by the Re-granting Department, discussed by KCSF Department Directors and approved by the KCSF Executive Director (ED). After approval of any change, all responsible staff should be informed about the new version of the manual. For major

¹ Re-granting is the entire process of managing and distributing donor funds from KCSF to Civil society initiatives in Kosovo.



changes that go beyond administrative and technical processes, Re-Granting Director (RD) informs also respective donors and governance bodies.

1. ABOUT KCSF

KCSF is the leading organization in strengthening and funding civil society in Kosovo since 1998. KCSF provides funds for civil society organizations through its cutting-edge re-granting mechanisms and systems, builds capacities and knowledge for the sector through its well-established Resource Centre, as well as advocates for and defends civic space and the environment of operation for civil society in Kosovo and beyond, through research and advocacy.

KCSF's ultimate vision is to see Kosovo transformed into a democratic society with the prospect of EU integration and an advanced socio-economic situation.

KCSF's mission is to support the development of civil society and initiatives that promote a democratic culture and respond to socio-economic needs of Kosovo, with a particular focus on contributing to the process of integration in the European Union.

KCSF strives to organize citizens and empower civil society organizations and initiatives to actively and successfully contribute to policy processes and shaping public affairs. KCSF's work is embedded in two beliefs: 1) that a bold and effective civil society is indispensable for advancing and sustaining Kosovo's democratic transition, and 2) that the European Integration perspective is the most powerful driver of domestic reforms in Kosovo. As such, KCSF is committed to support an active citizenry through creating an enabling environment for civil society and supporting civil society initiatives to articulate and address the needs of their constituencies and beneficiaries.

During more than 20 years of work, KCSF has supported financially more than 500 civic initiatives with a portfolio of over 15 million EUR. Moreover, it has built knowledge and capacities of thousands of civil society activists and others from Kosovo and region through basic and advanced trainings, undertook extensive research and successfully advocated for numerous systemic reforms and ad-hoc policy developments related to civil society development.

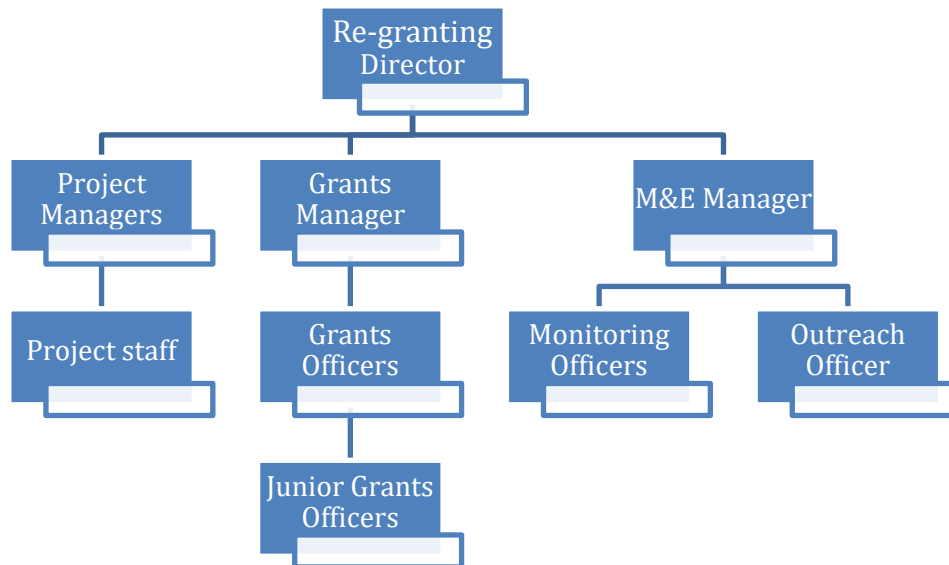
2.1 THE RE-GRANTING DEPARTMENT

The Re-granting Department is responsible for managing all re-granting processes within KCSF. The Department is led by the Re-granting Director (RD), while he/she is supported by Grants Manager (GM) and Monitoring and Evaluation Manager (MEM). The Re-granting Department includes a Grants Management Unit (GMU) which is led by the GM and a Monitoring and Evaluation Unit (MEU) which is led by the MEM. In addition, specific re-granting projects are led by respective Project Managers and have their specific project teams. The following section elaborates on the main functions of the department and its units, while the duties and responsibilities of each staff are covered within the specific job descriptions.

The Re-granting Department is supervised by the ED and supported by other Departments. The Finance and Administration Department has a specific role by assisting with financial and administrative matters,

while also having an approving and supervisory role in certain payment related processes and special financial procedures.

The graph below presents the organizational structure in the Re-granting Department.



2.1.1 THE GRANTS MANAGEMENT UNIT (GMU)

The unit is responsible for the entire re-granting cycle with the exception of monitoring, reporting and evaluation of grants implementation.

The main tasks of this unit include:

1. Designing and promotion of calls for application;
2. Communication with applicants and administration of the received applications;
3. Administrative control of received applications;
4. Continuous assistance for external evaluators during the evaluation process;
5. Screening of shortlisted applicants (where applicable);
6. Administration of the process of completion of documents required for contracting, including coaching for successful applicants (where applicable);
7. Preparation of grant contracts;
8. Review of interim and final financial reports;
9. Administration and approval of requests for budget reallocation
10. Administration of requests for VAT exemption by grantees;
11. Grants closure process (analysing auditor reports, the transfer of assets ownership, returning of unspent funds,)
12. Manages the database of applicants and grantees;
13. Prepare meetings of governance bodies;
14. Other tasks related to implementing, advancing and improving the re-granting cycle within KCSF.



In addition, this unit also assists in preparing interim and final reports for donors (narrative and financial) and coordinates activities and tasks with other departments in KCSF.

2.1.2 THE MONITORING AND EVALUATION UNIT(MEU)

The main responsibility of this unit is to monitor, evaluate and report on the implementation of grants from the moment of contracting to the closure of the grant. Moreover, this unit is responsible for monitoring, reporting and evaluating the implementation of re-granting programs in general.

The main tasks of this unit include:

1. Designing of monitoring system, including monitoring plan and data collection methodology;
2. Supervising, assisting, and coaching the design of logical frameworks and plan of activities by successful applicants during the contracting phase;
3. Communicating with grantees to ensure that the guidelines for implementation and reporting are adequately implemented;
4. Monitoring of grantee activities;
5. Monitoring of visibility and approval of visibility requests;
6. Advising grantees on grants implementation modalities
7. Identification of grantee needs for capacity building;
8. Identification of networking and alliance building opportunities of grantees;
9. Reporting the results of the program for internal and external purposes;
10. Other tasks related to advancing and improving the re-granting cycle within KCSF.

Moreover, this unit is also responsible for: supporting in design of calls for applications by bringing feedback from the implementation, supporting the screening of shortlisted applicants (where applicable), maintenance of databases related to monitoring; assisting in preparing meetings of governing bodies; and coordinating activities and tasks with other departments.

2. INSTRUMENTS

KCSF supports civil society organizations and initiatives, and individuals through the following instruments:

- Project grants
 - Small grants;
 - Medium grants;
 - Urgent grants;
- Institutional grants;
- Organizational development grants;
- Democracy Award;
- Representation grants;
- Networking grants.

The following table explains the main characteristics of each support instrument.

Table 01

Instrument	Main Characteristics:	Who can apply?	Maximum Budget	Maximum Duration
Small project Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims to support the initiatives of individuals, unregistered initiatives and non-governmental organizations for more focused and short-term interventions; • Applicants are required to operate in their respective localities; • Organizations that have an annual turnover budget over 25,000 EUR are excluded from this instrument; • Applicants compete among equals and are not put in competition with well-established CSOs that have stronger organizational capacity for proposal writing; • Are intended to deliver concrete results within a set timeframe; • Require explicit approaches in involvement of citizens and target groups in the intervention; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals • Unregistered initiatives • NGOs 	10,000 EUR	12 Months
Medium Project Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim to support medium to larger interventions; • Targeted NGOs are those with sufficient capacities to implement projects expected to have an impact at the national level or more systematic processes at local or national level; • Intended to deliver concrete results within a set timeframe; • Require explicit approaches in involvement of citizens and target groups in the intervention; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs 	50,000 EUR	24 Months
Urgent Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim to support urgent interventions; • Is intended only for those cases in which a quick response from civil society initiatives is needed and there may not be time to react through standard application procedures; • It gives priority to necessity of reaction and urgency of the matter; • Simple application procedure; • Quick decision-making; • Short term and focused results; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals • Unregistered initiatives • NGOs 	3,000 EUR	N/A
Institutional Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aim to support the implementation of the strategies of the organizations and in parallel with strengthening internal governance and organizational capacities become the voice of citizens in the thematic areas that they cover; • Is intended to sustain organizations that are change agents and to act and contribute to main societal developments in their area of expertise; • Enable organizations to address consistently identified issues and whenever they appear without the need to plan them as in the case of project grants; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs 	40,000 EUR/per year or Maximum 120,000 EUR per grant.	24-36 Months

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No more than 15% of the total proposed budget can be allocated for organizational development; • Require explicit approaches in involvement of citizens and target groups in the work of the organization; 			
Organizational Development Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on supporting the capacity building of organizations (staff, development of internal tools and systems of organizations, internal documents, etc.); • A single activity or series of activities can be funded; • Enables organizations to apply for the development of any program within the organization; • Require explicit approaches in involvement of citizens and target groups in the work of the organization; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs 	15,000 EUR	24 Months
Democracy Award	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is intended to evaluate the contributions of individuals, group of citizens and organizations in various fields, which are the result of community mobilization and citizens engagement, new ideas, intellectual courage or achievements and who have contributed to the democratization of Kosovar society through their work and dedication; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals • Unregistered initiatives • NGOs 	5,000 EUR	Annual award
Representation Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial support for regional/international representation of civil society organizations staff; • Some of activities supported: Representation in congresses, conferences, seminars, workshops, symposiums, festivals, strategic meetings, various network meetings; • The activity should be linked with the work of the organization (mission/scope) that he/she represents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representatives of NGOs 	1,000 EUR	N/A
Networking Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting the membership of organizations in regional and international networks, specifically, reimbursement of membership fees in networks in which they are a member or aim to achieve membership; • Compliance of the mission and scope of the applicant organization with the mission and scope of the network for which the application was submitted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs 	800 EUR	N/A

3. RE-GRANTING PROCESS

KCSF guarantees professional, transparent and impartial re-granting process where the highest ethical and professional standards are applied by both KCSF staff and external associates.

The re-granting process requires detailed planning, including design and approval of a variety of documents and decision making at several levels. The roles and responsibilities of staffs/units involved are clear and set in advance. The work plan also considers external services (translation, PR and other related consulting services, external logistical arrangements, legal services, etc.). The work plan is prepared at annual basis and revised periodically and approved by the RD and KCSF Management². For specific re-granting programs where such a step is required (i.e. EJA Kosovo), the annual work plan is also approved by the respective supervisory body.

The following are the main elements and characteristics of KCSF re-granting process.

The table below describes re-granting process applied for each instrument.

Table 02

Re-granting process	Small Project Grants	Medium Project Grants	Urgent Grants	Institutional Grants	Organizational Development Grants	Awards	Representat ion grants	Networking grants
Open Calls	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Three Languages (Albanian, Serbian and English)	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Frequency of the calls								
- Annual Calls	N/A	√	N/A	√	√	N/A	N/A	N/A
- Rolling Call	√	N/A	√	N/A	N/A	N/A	√	√
- Annual Awards	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	√	N/A	N/A
Eligible applicants								
- NGO's	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
- Individuals and Unregistered initiative	√	N/A	√	N/A	N/A	√	N/A	N/A
Full Application form and Annexes required	N/A	√	N/A	√	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Concept Note required	√	N/A	√	N/A	√	√	√	√
Evaluation from External Board	√	√	N/A	√	√	√	N/A	N/A
Evaluation from KCSF	N/A	N/A	√	N/A	N/A	N/A	√	√
Shortlist of applicants	√	√	N/A	√	√	N/A	N/A	N/A
Screening by KCSF of	√	√	N/A	√	√	N/A	N/A	N/A

² KCSF Management is composed of all senior managers at KCSF.

shortlisted applicants								
Field/Office Visits on internal governance and financial management ³	√	√	N/A	√	√	N/A	N/A	N/A
Public Interviews by Grants Evaluation Board (GETs)	√	√	N/A	√	√	N/A	N/A	N/A
Complaint Mechanism	√	√	√	√	√	N/A	√	√
Coaching from KCSF	√	√	√	√	√	N/A	N/A	N/A
Capacity Building for grantees	√	√	√	√	√	N/A	N/A	N/A
Monitoring of grantees	√	√	√	√	√	N/A	N/A	N/A
Audit	√ ⁴	√	N/A	√	√	N/A	N/A	N/A

3.1 ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

In order to be eligible to apply for grants the applicants are subject to the following rules:

- Applicants must be individuals, groups of individuals or organizations active in Kosovo engaged in any non-profit initiative in any of the eligible program areas⁵;
- When applicants are NGOs, NGOs must be registered at the Department of Non-Government Organizations;
- When applicants are individuals or unregistered initiatives, they must prove that they are engaged and/or working in the respective eligible program area;
- Applicants must demonstrate the capacity to manage the activities proposed within the grant application;
- Applicants should not be affiliated or campaign for political parties;
- Applicants should not be led by Politically Exposed Persons⁶;

The above general rules may change only in cases when such changes are assessed to better suit to the intended purpose of the specific call or instrument. Such changes follow the standard process of amendment of the Grant Manual. Eligibility rules will be published in respective guidelines for application for each call for application.

³ For Institutional grants and Organizational development grants KCSF conducts an office visit during grant evaluation process. Whereas, for small and medium project grants these visits are conducted after grant contracts signature.

⁴ Not applicable for grants up to 5,000 EUR

⁵ Individuals and unregistered initiatives are eligible to apply and get support only for small grants, urgent grants and Awards.

⁶ For more on limitations related to Politically Exposed Persons (PEPs) see details at the Application Form Template.

3.1.1 NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

In cases where applicants are NGOs, they shall demonstrate that their engagement is within the area of democratization and eligible program areas. Despite their legal status, not all of NGOs are included in the above eligibility criteria. Due to the wide scope of the applicable legislation in Kosovo for registration of NGOs, sports clubs, sports federations, amateur cultural associations or religious organizations that are registered as NGOs are not targeted for KCSF grants. Similarly, NGOs that represent businesses or similar entities which have obvious financial capacities to cover the costs of their organization or sustain their activities are not targeted for KCSF grants.

3.1.2 INDIVIDUALS AND UNREGISTERED INITIATIVES

In cases when the applicants are individuals or unregistered initiatives, they shall demonstrate that their engagement is not for profit and is for public benefit rather than private interest. They should also demonstrate that they adequately meet the relevant eligibility criteria. When these applicants are awarded with grants, all grant related payments will be administered by KCSF. Beneficiaries should ensure that all invoices are received on behalf of KCSF and submitted to KCSF on time. The GMU will be responsible for checking invoices and providing assistance on financial issues. Whereas, Finance and Administration Department executes the payments as forwarded by the GMU. All other requirements related to grant administration are applicable as per non-governmental organizations.

3.2 DESIGN OF CALLS FOR PROPOSALS PACKAGE

The preparation of the necessary documentation for the announcement of the call for application represents the first stage of the re-granting process. Each call is based on the program document that defines the purpose of the intervention, the thematic areas and objectives that are intended to be achieved, as well as the targeted applicants which are best suited to serve to the respective program objectives. The first drafts of these documents are prepared by the Grants Officer (GO) and reviewed by the GM. The drafts are then forwarded for comments to the MEU. The approval within the department is made by the RD while the ED makes the final approval.

The Calls for application package must include:

- Call for application;
- Guidelines for application;
- Application form;
- Logical framework template;
- Budget template;
- Activity plan template.
- Guidelines for evaluation, including its annexes



Call for application (Annex 01) is a 1-page document that serves to inform potential applicants that a funding opportunity is published.

The Call for application should include key information about:

- Program information;
- Description of the instrument;
- Who can apply;
- Timeframe and budget
- Application method and deadline.

Guidelines for application (Annex 02) is a more detailed document that provides information on the purpose of the call and should contain all the information that helps applicants understand the call requirements.

Guidelines for application should include at least the following information:

- Information about the program and priority areas of support;
- Detailed information about the instrument;
- Application criteria;
- Eligible applicants and activities that are expected to be supported;
- Eligible costs;
- Ineligible costs and activities that are not supported;
- Duration of support;
- Budget limits;
- List of documents required for application;
- Application method and deadline for submission of applications;
- Evaluation process and criteria;
- How applicants are informed on evaluation results;
- Notification of the decision and complaint mechanism;
- Contact information and deadline for questions or clarifications;
- The maximum number of applications per call and the maximum number of grants per applicants;
- Tentative dates of evaluation, the contracting process and starting date of implementation of grants;

Application Form (Annex 03) is a document that is structured to collect in a simple and logical way all information that is needed for evaluation of applications as per predetermined criteria.

The Application Form should include below listed sections:

- Instructions page;
- Information about the applicant;
- Summary of the proposal;
- Information about the relevance of the project-proposal;

- Main expected outcomes, main activities to contribute to the outcomes, implementation strategy and approach;
- Information about relevant experience;
- Information of the engagement of citizens and constituency building;
- Information about organizational strategy (if applicable)
- Information about organizational capacity and internal governance (if applicable);
- Declaration on Politically Exposed Persons;
- Statement by the applicant on the truthfulness of submitted information;
- List of mandatory documents
- Checklist.

Depending on the instrument application form will be modified accordingly. In some instrument a more simplified version of application form will be provided. Whereas in some of the instruments, application form includes also three specific annexes that provide more specific information on the logical framework of the intervention, proposed budget for the intervention and/or organizational budget, and detailed plan of activities of the intervention.

The templates for the logical frame, budget and plan of activities should include the following information:

Logical Framework (Annex 03-a):

- Name of the project/intervention and applicant;
- Overall objective;
- Expected results of the intervention;
- List and description of activities;
- Reference indicator to program results (if applicable);
- Risks and assumptions
- Description of activities and reference to results and budget lines.

Budget (Annex 03-b):

- Name of the program/project and applicant;
- Main budget categories of Human Resources, Direct expenses, Office costs, Auditing costs;
- Budget units, number of units and price per unit;
- Total amount of co-financing;
- Total amount for the audit;
- Subtotal and total amount of the grant;
- Amount which is requested by KCSF;
- Percentage of support by KCSF, if applicable;
- Justification of each line of the budget.

Plan of activities (Annex 03-c):

- Main activities planned on a monthly basis for the first year of grant;
- Main activities planned on quarterly basis for next following years;
- Reference to the expected results;

Each instrument has its own set of application documents. Depending on the instrument and the purpose of the call relevant documents are prepared and modified accordingly.

3.3 CALL ANNOUNCEMENT AND PROMOTION

All documents designed for application should be prepared in three languages: Albanian, Serbian and English. KCSF ensures that information about the call reaches as widely as possible to all interested parties and promotes the call for all targeted applicants. The Junior Grants Officer (JGO) in cooperation with the Public Relations Officer of KCSF ensures that calls are:

- Published in the relevant links of the KCSF website;⁷
- Advertised in at least two daily newspapers with biggest readership in the official languages used in Kosovo (Albanian and Serbian);
- Delivered to the entire email list in the KCSF database;
- Posted on KCSF's social networks; and
- Elaborated in details through information sessions.

The above promotion must be made no later than seven days after the announcement of the call for application. All potential applicants shall have full access to information at all times regarding any open calls through the KCSF official website, the "OPEN CALL" section.

The GM in cooperation with the Outreach Officer and the Public Relations Officer of KCSF, if deemed necessary, proposes to the RD the distribution and promotion of the call through additional channels and forms (radio, TV appearance, other web portals, etc). If necessary, subject to purpose of the call and targeted applicants, specific and targeted promotion may be organized.

The call for applications should be open at least 30 days. Yet, the GM proposes to the RD a longer period in all cases that more time is considered necessary to prepare quality applications for particular instruments or calls. On the other hand, shortening of the minimum period can be done only in extraordinary cases, with approval of the ED.

⁷ In the event of any change to one or more of the call criteria, the responsible officer should ensure that the changes are reflected immediately on the website, making it clear to all interested parties with the latest revision and make a clear reference to the documents and date of change.



3.3.1 INFORMATION SESSIONS

The purpose of info sessions is to inform potential applicants about the specificities of the call(s), application requirements, program expectations and guide them through application forms and templates.

Information sessions should be organized in at least three regions of Kosovo and at least one of them should be in the Serbian language. For rolling calls regular sessions are organized on a monthly basis, while other sessions are organized after announcement of respective calls, for calls that have a specific deadline for application.

Prior to holding the info sessions GO and Monitoring Officer (MO) should prepare a presentation which includes in detail the guidelines for application. The presentation should be approved by the GM and MEM. Additionally, they should ensure that all logistical aspects (meeting spaces, translation when needed, handouts etc.) are arranged.

The GMU in cooperation with the Outreach Officer prepares the info sessions plan at least ten days before the call is published. The schedule for info sessions is published on KCSF's website and its social media accounts at least seven days before the first info session. Info sessions are delivered by GO and MO. In special cases, the GM and MEM may decide that information sessions are delivered by other staff.

After ensuring that the core information from the call is presented in detail, KCSF officers engaged for the presentation answer all questions from the participants about the call. From the beginning of the Q&A session, officers should make it clear that only the call related issues will be discussed and responded, with each question being answered in the light of the maximum information available to them.

In general, KCSF officers should be open to comment on various issues that may clarify the general expectations of the relevant call, but should refrain from interpreting concrete cases (e.g. interpreting if a specific idea is valid or not).

To provide other potential applicants with equal access to information, after each info session relevant questions raised by participants are posted on the web site no later than three days after the info session is held.

3.4 COMMUNICATION WITH APPLICANTS

All potential applicants and the public are offered the opportunity to write to KCSF in respective official e-mails that are checked by the JGO on a daily basis. In cases where potential applicants are asking questions about the program or even seeking clarification about the application, replies must be sent no later than three working days after receiving the email, except in specific cases where internal consultation and/or donor consultation is required.

The JGO responds directly to applicants in the case of standard responses related to application procedures. In case where there is need for additional consultation the JGO forwards questions to the rest of GMU staff. Depending on the complexity of the questions and authorizations of respective officers and



managers, higher levels may be consulted both within the Re-granting department and other departments of KCSF.

Information that is considered relevant for other potential applicants is published in the Frequently Asked Questions section of the respective program, not later than two days after the reply is sent to the potential applicant.

3.5 RECEIVING APPLICATIONS

Applications for all instruments are submitted electronically in designated emails. Depending on the instrument, applicants submit different documents, as defined in respective calls for application. Applications received with all mandatory documents must be downloaded by JGO no later than the following working day after the application deadline. Whereas, if the call is constantly open, applications should be downloaded at the end of each week.

The email address of the program must be checked at predetermined times by the GO or any other person appointed by the GM. This person double-checks the status of each application on database so to avoid any applications that may not have been downloaded. The downloaded applications are stored in the relevant folders and the application data are registered into the database by the JGO. All data for applicants are stored on KCSF's shared drive that is regularly backed-up by the IT Officer of KCSF.

3.6 ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROL

Administrative control is the first step of the evaluation. A unique reference number is assigned for all applications. In this phase, the submitted applications are checked by KCSF teams if the following formal criteria have been fulfilled.

For calls that are continuously open, the administrative control is performed on weekly basis. For calls with set application deadline, the administrative control is performed within five days after the application deadline. For each application that administrative control is conducted, the appropriate form for administrative control must be completed which also includes the names of the persons performing this control.

Form for Administrative Control (Annex 04-a) must comply with the requirements specified in the guidelines for applications and the application form. The GO prepares the respective form of administrative control for each instrument. After being reviewed from GM, the final approval is made by the RD. The minimum requirements to pass the administrative control include, but not limit to the following:

- The adequate KCSF application templates for certain instrument were used;
- The application was submitted within set deadline;
- Application form is completed in required languages;
- The application does not exceed the maximum allowed number of pages;
- The applicant has answered all questions in application form;
- The application complies with budget and duration limitations;



- Document that proves that the applicant is a registered NGO or a proof of their activity for individuals and non-registered initiatives;
- The applicant has submitted all mandatory documents required under the call.

The GMU must ensure that these requirements are publicly available through their clear listing in the respective calls for application.

The administrative control is carried out by two persons, one representative from each unit. The unit managers appoint responsible staff for the administrative control. The GM ensures that controllers are informed in advance of all administrative control criteria and requirements.

In some cases, applicants may also be required to resubmit the documentation within two working days. The documents that are required to be resubmitted are only those received within deadline but with technical problems during download or inappropriate file format. The GM and the RD decide on the request for resubmission of the documents with technical problems.

The results from administrative control should be communicated to all applicants no later than three days after the end of the administrative control. All documents and information from administrative control are tracked and archived in the relevant grantee folders in the "shared" drive.

In case any applicant claims that their application has been wrongly evaluated during the administrative control, they may appeal the decision within two working days of receiving the notification from KCSF. KCSF officers who have carried out the administrative control of the appellant should examine whether the administrative control has been properly carried out, in the presence of the GM or a third person appointed by the GM. In cases where wrong evaluation is confirmed, the administrative control is repeated and if the application passes the administrative control, the application is sent to the team of evaluators while all internal communications with the parties involved are archived for internal procedures. In any case, the applicant shall be informed of the results of the repeated administrative control.

List of applications that pass the administrative control is forwarded to the Grant and Evaluation Team (GET) members and includes the following information:

- Name of the applicant;
- Title of the intervention (when applicable);
- Amount of the grant;
- Duration of the grant.

3.7 EVALUATION PROCESS

KCSF grant evaluation system is designed to ensure integrity and good reputation of the process by being impartial, objective, competitive, traceable and transparent. This is achieved through detailed elaboration of all steps and sequences; clear division of roles and responsibilities for KCSF staff, external evaluators and donors; predetermined criteria and procedures that are public in advance; public information on pool of external evaluators, including criteria for selection and their profiles; public and fully accessible interviews; avoidance of any external interference in the sound judgment of external evaluators and full traceability of their evaluation; publication of evaluation results and detailed information about supported grants; detailed information for unsuccessful applicants and a fully-fledged complaint mechanism; as well as possibility for the public to report any suspicion of any wrongdoing by any party by a public anonymous whistle-blower mechanism.

An external evaluation team consisting of 5 experts with relevant expertise and knowledge will conduct the evaluation of applications. Evaluation teams of external experts are contracted on a rotation basis and based on specific calls and instruments. An exception to the rule is that urgent grants applications and networking and representation grants applications will be evaluated by the KCSF.

Donors are not involved in the evaluation process. Yet, donors may exercise their veto right on recommended applications that are considered against the values promoted by the donor or are overlapping with other similar interventions.

3.7.1 EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS BY KCSF - INTERNAL GRANT EVALUATION TEAM (GET)

Due to the nature of the instrument, their size and need for a prompt decision, urgent grants applications (up to 3,000 EUR) and networking and representation grants (up to 1,000 EUR) will be evaluated by the KCSF, through an Internal Grant Evaluation Team which is composed from three members from KCSF staff, as per the following rule: two members from the Re-granting Department and one member from the staff of other KCSF Departments. The members of the Internal GET will be appointed by the Executive Director for a period of one year, with the possibility of one-time replacement with other members from the same level only in cases of conflict of interest or unavailability that may cause prolonged delay of evaluation of applications.

Applications will be evaluated as per requirements set in the Guidelines for Evaluation of Applications for each instrument. Applications will be evaluated only through reviewing the submitted documents. KCSF policy on conflict of interest applies to Internal GET members as well. If any of Internal GET members assert that they have a conflict of interest with any applicant, in accordance with the conflict of interest policy, the member is obliged to declare the conflict of interest and abstain from the evaluation.

3.7.2 SELECTION OF THE GRANT EVALUATION TEAM (GET) MEMBERS

The Grant Evaluation Team (GET) members are selected from a pool of evaluators created and maintained by KCSF.

All KCSF staff members can recommend experts from Kosovo or the region to be considered for the pool of evaluators based on the following criteria: 1) Knowledge about socio-political context in Kosovo and democratization process in general; 2) Knowledge about civil society and/or about the areas covered by the respective program; 3) Experience with donor-funded projects and Project Cycle Management; 4) High level of personal integrity and good professional reputation ; 5) No conflict of interests with regards to the work and scope of the program and KCSF; 6) Does not belong to any of the categories of Politically Exposed Persons as per definition of KCSF and 7) Proficient in Albanian and English, whereby Serbian is an advantage.

All proposals by KCSF staff for GET members should be submitted in written by responding to above criteria and declaring what is his/her association with the proposed GET member. All proposals will be discussed and evaluated one by one while the final decision whether to include a nominated individual in the pool of evaluators is taken by the ED, in close cooperation with Department Directors. The pool of evaluators will be updated on regular basis, either by inclusion of new experts or by removal of those who a) are not anymore available, b) have not performed according to expected standards, c) in the meantime do not fulfil the original criteria upon which they have been selected. Information on pool of external evaluators, including criteria for selection and their individual profiles will be public. Additionally, the whistleblower mechanism will be available on KCSF website as a possibility for the public to report any suspicion or wrong doing by any party, including the external evaluators.

All GET members sign a service contract with KCSF and are paid for their engagement. The payment is based on a standard fee per day, calculated based on the number of applications/pages evaluated per day. Depending on the complexity of the instrument, it is expected that each evaluator reads and evaluates approximately 60-100 pages per day.

Grant Evaluation Teams for specific calls are chosen randomly from the Pool of external evaluators, with specific control clauses applied (i.e. the same evaluator cannot be part of three successive GET teams, even in cases when the random draw has resulted with his/her name). KCSF intention is to have trilingual evaluators where possible, however, where this is not possible, the necessary materials and public interviews are translated.

GET should perform their mission in accordance with the Terms of Reference and the contract with KCSF (Annex 04-a) and in line with the Guidelines for Evaluation of Applications (Annex 04). The Guidelines for Evaluation of Applications is prepared by the GMU, in cooperation with the RD, and is sent to the ED for approval.

Prior to starting the evaluation, the evaluators should analyse and fully familiarize with the application package and Guidelines for Evaluation of Applications. In addition, the GM and MEM organizes a consultation meeting with GET member prior to starting evaluation of applications. During this session all evaluators will be informed in details about the program, instruments, available budget or number of

grants and the re-granting process in general. GET Members meet several times a year to evaluate applications from different calls/instruments.

After the completion of a round of evaluations, GM completes a performance assessment summarizing the level of satisfaction with the performance of each evaluator in line with TORs for External Evaluators and Guidelines for Evaluation of applications. The performance assessment considers if the assignment was delivered on time, if the evaluation scores are complete and consistent and in case of repeated major discrepancies with other evaluators the reasons for that, if comments section in individual evaluation is filled and complete, if performance during public interviews and GET discussions is satisfactory in terms of interest, engagement and feedback, etc. Performance assessment of external evaluators in no case does not intend to assess sound judgment of external evaluators in evaluation of individual applications.

3.7.3 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

In addition to the contract, KCSF policy on conflict of interest applies to evaluators as well (an annex to the service contract between KCSF and evaluators). This annex stipulates the principles, restrictions and sanctions of conflict of interest. According to KCSF, conflict of interest is defined as: *“a situation of incompatibility between the assignment and the private interest of a member of the evaluation board, when he/she has direct or indirect private or property interests that may influence or appear to affect his/her legitimacy, transparency, objectivity and impartiality in the performance of the evaluation responsibilities”*. In addition, GET members are requested to sign an agreement on Non-Disclosure of information and note on Ethical abstention in cases of conflict of interest.

If GET members assert that they have a conflict of interest with any applying organization(s), in accordance with the contract and its annexes, the GET member is obliged to declare the conflict of interest and abstain from the evaluation⁸. If this is the case, GET member should inform KCSF in written as soon as he/she notices the conflict. In case GET member(s) withdraw from assessing an individual application due to conflict of interest, the evaluation process continues with the remaining GET members. In case such a withdrawal results in less than three GET members remaining available to evaluate particular applications, at least one GET member with conflict of interest is withdrawn from the entire evaluation process and is substituted with other external evaluators from the Pool of Evaluators through standard procedures.

⁸ In cases of declaration of conflict of interest by GET members than the average score of the remaining evaluators. To consider the evaluation complete and fair at least 3 GET members must evaluate the proposal. If three GET members out of five declare the conflict of interest with the same applicant than additional member is invited from the GET pool of associates to join the evaluation for that particular application..

3.7.4 EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS BY GET

GET members will evaluate the proposals in two stages:

- 1) Initial evaluation based on review of submitted documents by applicants, and
- 2) Final evaluation after Public interviews

All applicants that have passed administrative control will be evaluated from the GET. List of applications that passed the administrative control along with application dossiers containing all submitted documents is shared with GET members no later than three days after the completion of the administrative control.

The applications will be evaluated in the following five categories:

- Quality of the application and relevance;
- Level of involvement of the citizens/target groups in the work of the organization/initiative;
- Level of organisational capacity and internal governance;
- Relevance of previous experience;
- Cost-effectiveness of the proposed budget;

Furthermore, through screening by KCSF and veto right by the donors, the evaluation process will ensure that the funded interventions do not overlap with similar interventions funded by KCSF or its donors, do not have budgets that are not cost-effective, as well as are not implemented by applicants who have a bad track record of implementation of previous interventions funded by KCSF or its donors.

The above general categories may be adjusted in case of specific instruments. The weighing of the categories should serve the specific purpose of the instrument and the call. The weighing of the categories as well as any changes to general categories is proposed by the GM and MEM, in consultation with RD, while the ED makes final approval.

Each GET member evaluates applications as per requirement set in the Guidelines for Evaluation of Applications. When individual evaluation of applications is completed, each GET member shares its individual evaluation grid with GO via email. GO will communicate with GET members if major discrepancies on the evaluations among evaluators are noticed or in case further comments are required or additional information is needed. The evaluation of each GET member has the same weight.

Upon receiving the individual evaluations, the GO prepares the Consolidated Evaluation Grid form containing the aggregate scores that is the arithmetical average of the scores given by each of the five evaluators. For each instrument there is a minimum threshold of points from the initial evaluation that is necessary to be considered for short list. All applications that pass the set threshold as well as half of available points (**50%**) in each of main evaluation categories are short listed for the next stage of evaluation i.e public interviews.

3.7.5 SCREENING OF SHORTLISTED APPLICATIONS/ORGANISATIONS FROM KCSF

All shortlisted applications will undergo a screening process by KCSF. The screening forms are prepared by the GMU and the MEU and approved by the RD. Due to difference in the format and structures of application forms and evaluation, specific instruments have specific screening forms. Screening of Project grants, both small and medium, is based solely on the submitted document and already existing materials of KCSF. Screening of Organizational development grants and Institutional grants includes also information from office visits. Nevertheless, none of them includes evaluation of any element of the application that requires subjective judgment from KCSF.

The Screening Form for Small Project Grants (Annex 04-SPG-d) contains the following information:

- Prior experience with KCSF as a grantee (if applicable);
- Complementarity and overlap with other ongoing programs/projects implemented by KCSF or KCSF grantees;

The Screening Form for Medium Project Grants contains the following information:

- Budget alert check;
- Prior experience with KCSF as a grantee (if applicable);
- Complementarity and overlap with other ongoing programs/projects implemented by KCSF or KCSF grantees;

For institutional grants and organizational development grants all shortlisted applicants will be visited in their offices by KCSF staff to undergo a screening of organizational capacities and internal governance. This part of the screening is based on mandatory documents (annexes) submitted by the applicants whereby their completeness and accuracy are confirmed in person or through requests at site for supporting documentation.

During the office visit, the below listed information is screened:

- Management structure;
- Internal regulations and policies;
- Human resources;
- Decision-making;
- Financial management;
- Financial system;
- Auditor reports;

Two staff members, one officer from the GMU and one officer from the MEU usually carry out visits. Reports from visits must be completed within two working days after returning to the office, except in cases when visits are done back-to-back through the week. In such cases, reports from visits are completed no later than seven days after the field visit. The information from office visit is included in the respective Screening Forms.

The Screening Form for Organizational Development Grants (Annex 04-ODG-d) contains the following information:

- Information from office visit on internal governance and organizational capacities;
- Prior experience with KCSF as a grantee (if applicable);
- Complementarity and overlap with other ongoing programs/projects implemented by KCSF or KCSF grantees;

The Screening Form for Institutional Grants (Annex 04-IG-d) contains the following information:

- Information from office visit on internal governance and organizational capacities;
- Budget alert check;
- Prior experience of KCSF as a grantee (if applicable);
- Complementarity and overlap with other ongoing programs/projects implemented by KCSF or KCSF grantees;

The part related to complementarity and overlap are screened, reviewed and filled out by the MEU, while the parts related to the budget and prior experience of the applicant with KCSF are filled out by GMU. The unit managers are responsible for the screening phase while the RD approves the final screening forms for each shortlisted application.

The Screening Forms are sent to evaluators at least two days prior to the public interviews.

Due to the nature of the instruments, for the urgent grants, representation grants, networking grants and awards screening phase is not applicable.

3.7.6 PUBLIC INTERVIEWS

Each shortlisted applicant will be interviewed by the GET members. The GO recommends the timetable for interviews while the GM approves the timetable. All shortlisted applicants must be notified for the time of their interview at least five days prior to their interviews.

All interviews will be announced publicly in advance and will be open for all interested, both through physical presence in the meeting room or through online livestreaming. The livestream will allow all interested parties to have access to interviews also at a later stage. The interviews will have a specific time limit, equal for all shortlisted applicants. For Institutional grant applicants the interview is set at max. 20 minutes. Interviews will be conducted in the language selected from the applicant (Albanian, Serbian or English) and if needed simultaneous translation will be provided. In case of simultaneous translation, the available time will be doubled. During the interviews, one or more representatives of the applicant will: 1) briefly present the main elements of their proposal/strategy; and 2) respond to the specific questions from GET. Following the interviews, every GET member will review their initial individual evaluation grid based on additional information from both screening and public interviews, where they will confirm/adjust the scores provided by them for the respective applicant. Further, no later than three days after the interviews GET members will submit their individual revised scores to KCSF, in electronic format.

3.7.7 FINAL DECISION – APPLICATIONS RECOMMENDED FOR SUPPORT AND VETO RIGHT

No later than five days after the public interviews, the GET will hold its final meeting where they will be presented by KCSF with the revised Consolidated Evaluation Grid (highest to lowest), to be followed by discussions among GET members. They can discuss individual applications that are considered for funding or specific elements of respective applications, including cases of significant discrepancies in scoring among different evaluators. After these deliberations each evaluator has the final chance to revise their individual scores. The Final Consolidated Evaluation Grid will be compiled and the decision for the final list of applicants to be recommended for support will be made. The decision will be based on the scoring rank (highest to lowest), up to the total budget available for funding, as well as considerations about specific quotas (i.e. geographical quota of at least 1/3 of grantees coming from outside Prishtina).

In order to be considered for funding, applicants need to have passed the minimum threshold of total points (i.e. 71 points for Institutional grants) as well as half of available points (**50%**) in each of main evaluation categories, based on the Final Consolidated Evaluation Grid. For each applicant recommended for support a discussion takes place whereby it is agreed whether there is any need for further clarification. In cases when GET members reduce the budget or decide to not fund specific component/s of the proposal, GET members should specify the conditions and present full justification for the decisions. The conditions should be considered only when necessary to improve the chances for successful implementation of the intervention, and should not significantly change the nature and scope of the original proposal.

GO prepares the final Form of recommended applications for support (Annex 05) which is then signed by all evaluators. This form contains the following information:

- Name of the applicant, including unique reference number;
- Name of the intervention;
- Address of the applicant;
- Recommended Amount for support;
- Recommended Duration for support;
- Any conditions or clarifications that need to be addressed before contracting (if applicable).

GO is also responsible for notes of the meeting which summarize the discussions and decisions of the GET meeting and shall be completed no later than five working days from the date of the meeting. Meeting notes are approved electronically by the GET members.

Donors have a veto right on recommended applications that are considered against the values promoted by the donor or are overlapping with other similar interventions funded by them. Donors will be invited to exercise their veto right within a given period of time which cannot be shorter than seven days, with silence meaning this right is not being exercised.

To enable this process, the List of recommended applications for support (Annex 06) is sent to the donor(s) two working days after the GET meeting. The list contains following information:

- Name of the applicant, including unique reference number;
- Name of the project/program title;
- Summary of the proposal;
- Address of the applicant;
- Recommended amount for support, including other funding (if applicable);
- Recommended Duration for support;

After the donor's response (or silence) the List of recommended applications for support automatically becomes a decision for support.

The JGO publishes in the KCSF website the Information on successful applicants (Annex 07) with the following information:

- Date of the GET meeting;
- Name of the supported applicant;
- Title of the intervention;
- Budget approved ⁹and
- Duration of grants.

3.8 INFORMING UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

Each applicant who has participated in the application process receives a response regarding the evaluation process and the result of their application. All unsuccessful applicants are informed not later than two working days after the Information on successful applicants is published in KCSF website. Each unsuccessful applicant is informed in written with the overall evaluation (total score), and the possibility to request clarification. Requests for clarifications must be made within two working days after receipt of the information from KCSF.

- **Second phase (Clarifications)** – All applicants who requests clarification will be informed on the achieved scores per evaluation categories, as well as about the possibility to request additional clarification within two working days after receipt of clarifications from KCSF.
- **Third Phase (Additional clarifications)** – All applicants who request additional clarification will be informed on the detailed comments made by each evaluator following the structure of evaluation categories, as well as the possibility to submit a formal complaint within two working days after receipt of additional clarifications from KCSF.

The possibility to request additional clarification is public on the KCSF website.

An exception to this rule is the Awards instrument, where unsuccessful applicants are informed on the result of their nomination without any possibility for clarification or complaint.

⁹ At the end of the document it should be noted that the exact budgets of beneficiaries will be published after the contracts have been signed through factsheets providing details of the grants supported.

3.9 COMPLAINT MECHANISM

In case they consider their proposal was not evaluated based on merits even after receiving additional clarifications, applicants may submit an official complain within two working days. The complaint must be made in written, stating clearly the reasons and arguments for the complaint. The complaint should be made by the applicants and not through intermediaries or third parties. Upon receipt of the complaint, KCSF shall notify the applicant on the receipt of the complaint and the deadline within which the reply will be sent, which is 15 days. The complaint is reviewed by the KCSF Complaint Committee, which has two standing members (the KCSF GM and the KCSF MEM) and a third member appointed by the ED from one of other senior KCSF staff.

Complaints may lead to re-evaluation only if KCSF Complaint Committee concludes that serious omissions that have resulted in material breach during the evaluation have been found. Depending whether the Complaint Committee finds such omissions or not, in cooperation with the RD, they recommend whether the application should be re-evaluated or the complaint should be rejected. The recommendation is submitted to KCSF Directors who take the final decision.

In cases when the reasons and arguments provided in the complaint are not sufficient to initiate a re-evaluation process, the applicant is notified through an email that their complaint is rejected and there can be no re-evaluation of the application.

In case when KCSF decides the complaint is valid, it leads to re-evaluation of the application. In such a case, KCSF addresses the evaluators with a request for re-evaluation of the application. A new GET is established where two¹⁰ out of five GET members from those who have previously evaluated the application are replaced. The new GET composition will re-evaluate the application, including by accessing the screening reports and recordings of the public interview. GET will re-evaluate the application by the same process, resulting in a final evaluation score for the respective application, which can be identical, higher or lower than the original score. The new score will be adjusted in the final Consolidated Evaluation Grid. If the new final evaluation score is higher than the last successful applicant and geographical quota is maintained, the re-evaluation will result in inclusion of the complaining applicant in the final list of applicants recommended for support. The veto process will be repeated only for the re-evaluated application. If no veto is exercised by donors, the last applicant in the original list of successful applicants will be removed and transferred to the list of unsuccessful applicants.

KCSF must close the complaint process and respond to the applicant within 15 days from the day when the complaint has been submitted. KCSF should keep a register of complaints and the process how cases were handled. Donors should also be notified of any complaints made by respective applicant and how they were addressed and managed. The procedure and possibility to complain is public on the KCSF website.

¹⁰ Two members with the highest discrepancy from the average score of respective application in scoring will be replaced.

3.10 INFORMING SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS

Successful applicants are informed after the deadline for complaints has passed. In case there are complaints from unsuccessful applicants and depending on the number of complaints, the information for successful applicants listed at the bottom of the list may be temporarily paused until the complaint(s) are rejected or re-evaluation(s) is completed.

The notification email for the successful applicants includes the information on the award of the grant and the GET conditions or needs for any clarification, if applicable.

Within five working days after the notification GM meets every successful applicant. During this meeting details about conditions set by the GET and all steps that should be taken until the finalization of the contract are discussed.

3.11 MENTORING BEFORE CONTRACTING AND CONTRACT SIGNING

Conditions and clarifications set by GET aim to improve the proposal and minimize potential problems during implementation. Thus, successful applicants before signing the grant contract with KCSF shall:

- Fulfil the conditions and/or provide clarifications set by the GET (if applicable);
- Finalize the necessary annexes of the grant contract (Logical framework, Budget and the Plan of Activities)¹¹.

For Small Project Grants and Organizational Development Grants applicants will be mentored by KCSF to develop annexes for contracting.

In principle, these documents must be completed within 14 days, however in special cases this deadline may be extended depending on the conditions and needs for clarification (i.e.; a memorandum of cooperation or commitment from third parties is required). The decision to extend this period is made by the GM upon the recommendation by the GO.

GM confirms whether the annexes are final and conditions and/or clarifications are completed. The final approval for contract annexes is made by RD.

When annexes are approved, the GO sends to the successful applicant the Form for main Grant Contract information (Annex 08). This form includes following information:

- Name of the organization/initiative;
- Authorized representative;
- Registration Number;

¹¹ These annexes are not applicable only in case of urgent grants whereas there will be a simple document that gives possibility enables to the MEU and CU to track activities and budget expenditures



- Bank details¹²;
- Contact person information.

The grant contract is finalized by GMU and approved from RD before being submitted for signature to the ED.

The grant contract (Annex 09) includes at least the following elements:

- Basic information of the grantee and KCSF;
- Object of the contract;
- Total grant amount and instalments;
- Reporting deadlines;
- KCSF duties and responsibilities;
- Grantee obligations;
- Duration of the contract;
- Return of funds;
- Ownership;
- Documentation;
- Communication between parties;
- Dispute resolution clauses;
- Contract termination clause.

Depending on the nature of instrument, additional elements may be included in the grant contract.

The contract is signed in two copies, one for each party.

After signing the grant contracts, the GMU ensures that key Grant information (Annex 10) are published on the KCSF website. Such information includes:

- Project/program title;
- Name of the grantee (including contact information);
- Grant duration;
- Amount of support;
- Place of implementation;
- Summary of the intervention.

Each grantee should have a physical Grantee Dossier that is maintained by JGO. The following documents should be included:

- Application form with all mandatory documents;
- Administrative control form (signed);

¹² The bank account should be a separate account reserved only for KCSF funds. In case of unregistered initiatives or individuals, bank details are not requested, as all transactions are operated by KCSF.

- Screening report;
- A copy of the signed List of recommended applications for support;
- Grant Contract;
- Annexes to the contract;
- Forms with contract information.

The Grantee Dossier is completed further during grants implementation by both units, with the following documents:

- Requests for payments of instalments
- KCSF forms of request for payments of instalments
- Request for VAT exemption;
- Request for budget reallocation, including the communication for approvals;
- Request for no-cost extension.
- Request for the transfer of assets ownership;
- Grantee reports;
- Other documents, formal communication and notes to the file regarding elements of the implementation of the grant.

After contract signature, each grantee is assigned with a GO and a MO, who shall be their designated contact points from KCSF for the entire duration of the grant. In addition, office visits are conducted for grantees of small and medium project grants. The purpose of the visit is to assess the capacity of organizations in internal governance and financial management. Findings from these visits will be addressed during the grant implementation.

3.12 MANAGEMENT AND MAINTANACE OF APPLICANTS AND GRANTEES DATA

The registration of data for received applications is done on a regular basis. The JGO registers data a double-check of registered data is conducted periodically by the GO. The GM is responsible for overall quality control of data registry and management.

In addition to registering received applications, the GMU maintains a list of grantees with basic information such as:

- Name of the grantee;
- Data of the organization;
- The contracted amount;
- Amount for audit, and
- Date of payment of instalments.

Information related to monitoring of grantee activities is registered and maintained by MEU.

3.13 PAYMENT OF INSTALMENTS

The payment of the first instalment is made not later than 15 working days after the contract is signed by both parties. The precondition for the payment of the other instalments is the approval of the narrative and financial interim reports as explained in section 6.3. As a general rule, the breakdown of the instalments is done proportionally taking into account the total amount of the grant, duration of the grant, prior experience of the grantee with KCSF, grantee capacity and reporting periods. The GM fills out the Order for payment of the instalments not later than three days after the interim reports are approved and Request for payment of the next instalment is checked.

The completed payment dossier includes:

- Order for payment of the instalments (Annex 11);
- Signed form for evaluation of the interim narrative and financial report by report controllers (GMU and MEU);
- Request for payment of the next instalment signed by the grantee (Annex 12),

This dossier is sent to the RD for approval by the GM no later than two days after completing the dossier. The final approval is made by ED. The GM ensures that a copy of each of these documents is placed in the grantee's dossier, while the original file is forwarded to the Finance and Administration Department for payment execution. Each payment must also be registered by the JGO on the Grantee Database no later than two days after receipt of copies of the documentation by the GM.

3.14 SPECIAL REQUESTS FROM GRANTEES

During the grant's implementation phase, grantees have different approval requirements related to grant implementation, both with regards to finances and program. Two key documents that regulate issues related to grantees are the Guidelines for Implementation and Reporting (Annex 13) and Communication and Visibility Guidelines and Visibility templates (Annex 14;14-a). These documents are an integral part of the Grant contract. The Guidelines for Implementation and Reporting regulate all aspects of grant implementation and reporting, including but not limited to:

- Reporting deadlines;
- Reporting forms;
- Payment of staff;
- Payment of services;
- Payment of office rent;
- Payment of transport expenses;
- Regular invoices;
- Non-Eligible expenses;
- Requests for budget reallocation, no cost extension, VAT;
- Ownership of assets/equipment;

While the Communication and Visibility Guidelines guides the grantee on aspects of visibility such as:

- Visual identity (Use of logos);
- Supporting clause and disclaimer;
- Communication and promotion channels;
- Press and media;
- Printed communication and visibility (project factsheet, leaflets, brochures and newsletters, power point presentation, banners);
- Online communication and visibility (websites, articles, newsletters, blogs);
- Information campaigns and events;
- Management of social media;
- Audio-visual materials, pictures and other publications.

Although there is a wide variety of requests made by grantees during grant implementation, most common specific requests from the side of grantees are:

- Request for VAT exemption;
- Request for budget reallocation;
- Request for no-cost extension;
- Request for the transfer of assets ownership.

Requests should always be submitted formally, in writing, and addressed to the designated GO for the grant. All such requests must be submitted by the grantee in accordance with the rules set out in the relevant guidelines.

3.14.1 REQUEST FOR VAT EXEMPTION

Based on the [Explanatory Decision No. 04/2016](#) on Treatment of Donations for Tax Purposes of the Tax Administration of Kosovo (TAK) all beneficiaries of donations in Kosovo are exempted from paying the Value Added Tax (VAT). In order to enable a smooth implementation of the supported grants and avoid undertaking burdensome procedures for minor expenses, KCSF commonly agrees with its donors to set the threshold for VAT exemption to 200 EUR, thus considering the VAT as an eligible expense for all invoices up to 200 EUR. Yet, the exact threshold is specific for each program and is clearly presented in relevant program documents.

The procedure of VAT Exemption should be defined through specific instructions that the grantee must adhere with, when preparing the request. VAT exemption requests (Annex 15)¹³ are accepted by the staff designated GO to communicate with grantees from the GMU. Within three days, the designated GO from the GMU checks these requests if they are in compliance with KCSF requirements and in accordance with the contracted budget. After control of compliance, these requests are forwarded to the Finance and Administration Department for final approval. After the approval by the Department, the JGO notifies the grantees to retrieve the original documents while ensuring that a copy of these documents remains in the grantee's dossier.

¹³ For all invoices over 200 EUR and based on previous agreement with donors

3.14.2 REQUEST FOR BUDGET REALLOCATION

In order for the grant to be implemented efficiently, in the cost-effective manner and within contractual obligations, during implementation of the grants, the grantee can review the budget and request for budget reallocations. Request for budget reallocation should be submitted prior to occurrence of expenditure from the respective budget lines from which the reallocation is requested.

Table below provides information on the process, procedure and deadlines, depending on the type of the budget reallocation request.

Table 03

Type of reallocation	Procedure for re-allocation I. Only for information, II. For approval by KCSF III. Not allowed
Between budget lines of the same activity, regardless of the percentage.	I. Grantee should Inform KCSF via email at the moment the grantee has made a decision for the reallocation, but prior to expenditure execution.
From one activity to another activity up to 10% of the amount of the budget line of the activity from which reallocation is required.	
From one activity to another activity more than 10% of the amount of the budget line of the activity from which reallocation is required.	II. Grantee should send the signed request through email or hardcopy to KCSF. The request should contain a detailed justification of the need and budget lines for which the reallocation is requested. Same applies in case there is a need to add a new budget line to which the reallocated budget is to be assigned. The request should be made as soon as possible but not later than five days before the expenditure. Reallocation can be performed only when receiving in written the confirmation from KCSF that the request for re-allocation is approved.
From one category to the other category, regardless of %, with exception of reallocations between specific categories that are not allowed	
From all other categories to the category of Human Resources (regardless of %)	III. Not allowed
From the category of Activities - direct project/program expenditures to other categories (regardless of %)	
If the request for budget reallocation is approved by KCSF, grantee and KCSF are obliged to keep the communication/information in the contract dossier.	

3.14.3 REQUEST FOR NO-COST EXTENSION

Request for no – cost extension can only be approved if:

- Delays in project implementation are caused by external factors where the grantee has no control over (force major);
- The grantee has informed the MEU in written of the problems/challenges in due time;
- Grantee has regularly informed the MEU of recent developments about the respective activity or activities;
- The submitted request is sound, well justifies and clearly specifies the reasons for the delay in project implementation and related activities;
- The request is sent at least one month before the end of the grant period and must clearly specify the necessary additional deadline. An exception to this are cases when extraordinary circumstances or unexpected developments have changed the prospects of grant implementation and closure even during the last month of implementation.

MEU responds to the request no later than five days from the date of receipt of the request. Within this period, the MEU should review the request and along with the GMU's opinion forward it for approval to the RD. The grantee must be informed in writing for the decision. In cases of no cost extension approval, the contracted auditor shall also be informed and the decision should be included in grantee's dossier.

3.14.4 REQUEST FOR TRANSFER OF ASSETS OWNERSHIP

Unless stated otherwise in contracts between KCSF and respective donors, all assets purchased by grantees through KCSF re-granted funds are not property of the grantees. In cases where grantees consider that assets purchased from grant funds are necessary for continuation of their work beyond the period of grant implementation, they may request the transfer of assets ownership to them in line with the Rules of procedure for the transfer of ownership of assets (Annex 16). The Request for transfer of assets ownership (Annex 17) must contain the official signed form and the list of equipment requested for transfer of ownership. This request must be submitted together with final reports and the auditor's report, not later than 45 days after the grant is completed. The GO ensures that all documents are completed based on respective instructions.

The Request for transfer of assets ownership to the grantee will be approved if the following criteria are met:

- The grantee confirms that the organization will continue its operation beyond the project end date, with a same or similar mission;
- The grantee has presented a sound reasoning/justification on the need for the specific asset(s) to implement their future activities;
- The grantee commits to use the specific asset(s) for similar purposes of that of the project supported by program, in line with the mission of the organization;

- Purchased assets have been foreseen in the initial budget signed from both parties, or have been subject to budget reallocations, as per set rules for budget reallocation;
- Purchased assets have been paid from specific budget lines foreseen for devices and equipment;
- Within the implementation period of the grant, the grantee addressed all warnings issued by KCSF concerning the implementation of the grant, especially on the financial issues;
- After the implementation period of the grant, the grantee has submitted all final narrative and financial reports, as per guidelines and contractual commitments with KCSF;
- The grantee has returned all unspent funds to KCSF, as per guidelines and contractual commitments with KCSF;
- The audit report has not stated any major financial or procedural findings or irregularities during the audit of the grant.

In cases when approval from donors is requested, they are asked by KCSF to respond to the request within 14 days of receiving the request from KCSF, unless otherwise is stated in the respective contract between the donor and KCSF. KCSF must notify the grantee on the final decision no later than 90 days after project closure.

In cases KCSF or its donors partially or fully rejects the request for transfer of ownership of assets to the grantee, the grantee has to return all respective asset(s) to KCSF. In case the returned assets remain with KCSF, KCSF will transfer these asset(s) to one or more organizations with same or similar mission to the original grantee, free of charge, based on a transparent process. Priority will be given to those organizations in need of such assets that are in less favourable financial position to obtain these assets in other ways.

4. CAPACITY BUILDING

Capacity-building support to KCSF grantees is an essential tool that will help grantees to meet their capacity gaps to better respond to community needs, overall management and functioning of the organization, apply participatory planning and advocacy in their work, etc. While training will be continuous and compulsory for all grantees, they will also be tailored to the needs of the organizations to better address their specific capacity challenges.

Depending on the type of the grantees and their particular needs KCSF will:

- support them to identify the needs of their target groups and link it with adequate levels of the policy-making process;
- identify main gaps regarding internal rules of procedure;
- assist them in conducting a better outreach so citizens that need their support or services know of their existence and consider them as an alternative platform to address their concerns;

- provide them with skills and tools to upgrade their advocacy to participatory advocacy, where citizens are not only referred to as those influenced by a particular policy but are actively engaged throughout the advocacy cycle;
- explore the best modalities of an association to extend its membership and/or engage more with its members; etc.
- explore the best modalities of foundations and institutes to extend their constituency and directly involve them in the work and activities of the organization.

In this regard, KCSF’s capacity building component is organized in three streams: (1) Contract Implementation Support; (2) Internal Governance and Financial Management Support; and (3). Programmatic Support.

4.1 CONTRACT IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

At the contractual level, support will be provided to all grantees. KCSF will adapt its level of engagement depending on the instruments and the level of targeted applicants. Successful applicants will be supported in preparing and completing mandatory annexes such as the log-frame, budget, activity plan.

For Small project grants contractual coaching will be more intensive in order to achieve the desired results whereby the initial concept note submitted will be upgraded into a log-frame by the grantee, with coaching from KCSF.

Delivery of the Contract Implementation Support

Table 04

Target Group	Main Phases	Responsible Unit/s	Time
Institutional Grants and Organizational Development Grants Grantees	Screening through office visits to all short-listed applicants in order to assess and identify organizational and capacity gaps to be addressed during the implementation of the grant/program.	MEU; GMU	After the short-listing of applicants)
	Coaching, if needed, on finalizing mandatory annexes: log-frame, budget, activity plan.	GMU; MEU	After the confirmation of the Final list of recommended applicants for support, prior to contract signature.
Project Grantees	Coaching in preparing and finalizing mandatory: the log-frame, budget, activity plan.	GMU; MEU	After the confirmation of the Final list of recommended applicants for support

	Office visits to all grantees to assess and identify organizational and capacity gaps that could be addressed during the implementation of the project	GMU; MEU	At the early stages of the project implementation
All grantees	Delivery of training on contract implementation.	GMU; MEU	At the early stages of the project implementation

4.2 INTERNAL GOVERNANCE AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

As a general principle, the training module on internal governance and financial management topics will be offered to all KCSF grantees. An assessment of the organization's capacities on internal governance and financial management will be conducted in the early stages of the application or implementation process. The assessment process is tailored depending on the grants instrument that they apply for:

- Applicants for institutional and organizational development grants will be screened on their internal governance structures and financial management during the application phase; whereas
- Project grants grantees will undergo an initial assessment upon signing the contract.

Delivery of the Internal Governance and Financial Management Support

Table 05

Target Group	Main Phases	Responsible Unit/s	Time frame
Institutional Grants & Organizational Development Grants Grantees	Screening of capacities of shortlisted applicants on internal governance structures and financial management	MEU; GMU	After the shortlisting of applicants
	Training preparation for all grantees on internal governance and financial management principles and good practices	MEU; RC	After the confirmation of the final list of recommended applicants for support
	Delivery of training for all grantees on internal governance and financial management principles and good practices	MEU; RC; EA	First two weeks of the grant implementation
	Continued grantee monitoring	MEU	Throughout the grant implementation
	Follow-up mentoring for each grantee based on their specific capacity building needs	MEU; RC	Throughout the grant implementation
Project Grants Grantees	Identification of main challenges on internal governance and financial management for all grantees	MEU; GMU	After the confirmation of the final list of recommended applicants for support
	Training preparation for all grantees on internal governance and financial management principles and good practices	MEU; RC	After the confirmation of the final list of recommended applicants for support

	Delivery of training for all grantees on internal governance and financial management principles and good practices	MEU; RC; EA	First two weeks of the grant implementation
	Continued grantee monitoring on the implementation of projects	MEU	Throughout the grant implementation
	Follow-up mentoring for each grantee based on their specific capacity building needs	MEU; RC	Throughout the grant implementation

Continued grantee monitoring will serve as a tool for overseeing the implementation of internal governance and financial management principles and practices, as well as follow-up mentoring, if needed, on their main obstacles identified from the monitoring visits.

4.3 PROGRAMMATIC SUPPORT

As a general principle, the training module on programmatic topics will be offered to all KCSF grantees. At the programmatic support, the main focus will be on engagement and participation of citizens in CSOs' work. Depending on the needs, type of intervention and results of screening and assessments of applicants and grantees, adequate training and mentoring will be provided.

Delivery of the Programmatic Support

Table 06

	Main Phases	Responsible Unit/s	Time frame
1	Capacity needs assessment for each grantee on their main challenges on participatory advocacy and outreach and community mobilization.	MEU; GMU	After the confirmation of the final list of recommended applicants for support
2	Training preparation for all grantees on participatory advocacy and outreach and community mobilization	MEU; RC	After the confirmation of the final list of recommended applicants for support
3	Delivery of training for all grantees on participatory advocacy and outreach and community mobilization	MEU; RC; EA	First two weeks of the grant implementation
4	Follow-up mentoring, if needed, for each grantee based on their specific capacity building needs	MEU	Throughout the grant implementation

Continued grantee monitoring will serve as a tool for overseeing the implementation and use of principles and practices learned on training modules, as well as follow-up mentoring, if needed, on their main obstacles identified from the monitoring visits.

4.4 SUPPORT FOR CIVIC INITIATIVES, INDIVIDUALS, AND URGENT INTERVENTIONS.

KCSF will also support individuals and civic initiatives, including urgent reactions for certain public causes. All capacity building methods will be tailored and adequate for such initiatives/interventions.

5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

After the contract is signed, the grantee dossier is submitted to the MEU including the main remarks and actions for follow up that were observed during the contracting period. These remarks should be taken into account from the MEU during the monitoring of the respective grant.

5.1 CONTRACT IMPLEMENTATION TRAINING

Within 15 days after the contract is signed with the grantees, the MEU needs to organize Contract Implementation Training for the grantees. The aim of this training is primarily to go over the contractual requirements, present the Guidelines for Implementation and Reporting as well as Communication and Visibility Guidelines, and discuss the logical framework and expected results. Other topics that will be discussed during this session include the following:

- Citizen engagement and constituency building - the importance of involving citizens in the work of the organization;
- Internal governance;
- Financial management, transparency and their relevance to the work of organizations in particular, and of the sector in general;
- KCSF horizontal priorities such as gender mainstreaming.

5.2 GRANTS MONITORING

Monitoring of the grant begins immediately after the contract is signed and continues until the grant is completed. Throughout the grant implementation period, the MEU is in continuous communication with the grantees to ensure that:

- The grant is being implemented in accordance with the contract;
- The potential for achieving results is maximally utilized;
- The applicable implementation guidelines and respective annexes are strictly followed, and
- Grant objectives are being met according to the logical framework.
- Capacity building needs are identified and addressed
- Milestones are met and success stories identified

Monitoring of grantees is conducted in the following ways:

- Regular communication with grantees by phone and email;
- Keeping track of the grantee's work on social media and media;
- Visits to grant activities;
- Office visits to grantees;
- Monthly activity plans required to be submitted by grantees;
- Feedback from capacity building activities
- Regular grantee reports which include quarterly brief reports, interim and final reports
- Audit reports

Grantees are divided into portfolios between the (MO) who are responsible for overseeing the implementation of the grants, communicate with the grantees, ensure that grantee reports are submitted in a timely manner and that grantees adhere to other contractual obligations. Portfolio allocation is coordinated with the MEM and aims to more effectively organize the work of MO. In addition, having portfolios allocated by specific thematic areas or geographical location enables qualitative monitoring to be more encompassing and reflects the work and development of grantees in that particular thematic area or region.

Following the portfolio allocation, based on the activity plans, a monitoring plan is drawn up during the MEU meetings where the frequency and the appropriate form of monitoring are discussed and determined depending on the following:

- Instrument;
- Capacities of the grantees;
- Previous KCSF experience with the grantee;
- Reporting period;
- Reports from the responsible Monitoring Officer; etc.

The monitoring plan is updated as needed during weekly MEU meetings based on information presented by the designated MO officer.

During the implementation of the grant, the designated MO should ensure that s/he at a minimum¹⁴ conducts the following:

- Monthly communication with the grantee;
- One visit to a grantee activity per quarter;
- One visit to the grantees' office every six months.

In addition to the monitoring plan, if deemed necessary, grantees may also be visited without prior notice.

¹⁴ Monitoring frequency is decided when the monitoring plan is developed in the monitoring unit and these present mandatory minimum monitoring visits per each grantee.

5.3 TYPES OF MONITORING

The table below presents main forms of monitoring undertaken by the monitoring unit.

Table 07

Type of monitoring	Description	Steps to be undertaken by the monitoring unit
Activity monitoring	<p>Activity monitoring is intended to assess whether supported activities are being carried out as planned and in accordance with the visibility guidelines.</p> <p>Since grantees are contractually obliged to request approval for donor visibility for any activity and/or document that is made public, this serves as an additional monitoring tool regarding activity implementation.</p> <p>Monitoring of activities and visibility is also conducted through regular contact with grantees via email, phone and site visits.</p>	<p>Annex 18 – Activity Monitoring Report needs to be filled out by the MO within 2 days after the monitoring visit and submit it to MEU manager for review.</p> <p>Any recommendations or remarks such as non-compliance of visibility rules, late notification of activity, changes to the intended agenda, inadequate place for holding of the activity etc. need to be recorded in the monitoring form and communicated to the grantee within 5 days.</p> <p>The final form is signed and placed in the grantee dossier and the data on the findings of the visit are entered into the database after the approval by the MEU manager.</p>
Office visits	<p>The purpose of the office visit is to discuss the overall implementation of the grant, results, achievements and any challenges or problems faced. In addition, the office visit serves to discuss sector developments in the area of grantee activity, opportunities for collaboration with other organizations, promotion of project results and impact, different methods of target group involvement. It also feeds the identification of the needs for capacity building - training, mentoring, or any other.</p>	<p>Annex 19 - Office Visit Monitoring Report needs to be filled out by the MO within 2 days and submitted to the MEU manager for review. The findings of the visit need to be entered into the database after the approval by the MEU manager.</p> <p>The office visits are discussed during the unit meetings and follow up action is decided and assigned.</p>

<p>Financial monitoring</p>	<p>Financial monitoring is intended to assess whether the grant budget is being spent in accordance with the contract and is in line with the financial rules specified in the Guidelines for implementation and reporting (Annex 13). In addition, financial monitoring aims to identify opportunities for more efficient budget utilization or increased alignment of activities and/or results within the approved budget, without interfering with the grantee's independent budget management.</p>	<p>Annex 20 – Financial Management Monitoring Report needs to be filled out by the GO and submitted to the GM for review. Any findings are then reported and discussed with the MO responsible for the grant and necessary actions are undertaken.</p> <p>Financial monitoring is led by the CU in collaboration with the Monitoring and Evaluation Unit.</p>
<p>Quarterly reports</p>	<p>The quarterly report should contain summarized information on the overall development and progress of grant implementation. Grantees should also report if the grant implementation is going in accordance with the implementation plan and budget, and inform KCSF on any other significant development that had or may have an impact on the grant implementation.</p>	<p>The report should be prepared in accordance with Annex 13-b Quarterly report of Guidelines for Implementation and Reporting and should be submitted electronically not later than 5 working days after the end of the reporting quarter.</p>
<p>Interim reports</p>	<p>The frequency of interim reports is set in the grant contract and depends on the duration of the grant and the number of instalments. Typically, an interim report is submitted after 6 months of implementation.</p> <p>Interim narrative reports provide a comprehensive overview of the progress of the grant implementation, activities completed and achieved results.</p> <p>Each interim narrative report includes the narrative report template (Guidelines for Implementation and Reporting annex 13), log-frame with progress on indicators and accompanying</p>	<p>Interim reports must be submitted within 15 days after the end of the reporting period, excluding institutional grants where the reporting deadline is 30 days after the end of the reporting period.</p> <p>The grantee needs to submit physical copy and the original of the receipts for all expenditures as well as any accompanying documents required for the narrative report as stipulated in logical framework and Guidelines for implementation and Reporting (annex 13). The copies of the documents is archived in KCSF while the original documents are returned to the grantee after the approval of the report.</p> <p>The MEU is responsible for checking the narrative part of the report while the CU</p>

	<p>means of verification, budget and accompanying receipts.</p>	<p>is responsible for the financial part of the report.</p> <p>The review of the report by the MO and GO should be completed within 10 days. Both officers need to fill out the Form for evaluation of interim reports (Annex 21) and present comments, recommendations, and request for additional documents and clarifications to be submitted.</p> <p>The designated MO will send the comments to the grantee, who is responsible to respond to the comments within 7 days.</p> <p>The interim report is approved if there are no additional requests by KCSF and the grantee has fulfilled all the requirements. The report approval form, signed by the MO and GO is submitted to the CU which following the approval of the DD initiates the payment of the instalment. The instalment is paid within 3 days.</p> <p>The MO is responsible for entering the progress on indicators in the M&E System and archive all the documents in the grantee dossier.</p>
<p>Final reports</p>	<p>The final narrative and financial report provide the same information as interim reports, but they cover the entire period of grant implementation</p>	<p>Final financial reports should be sent to the external auditor within 15 days after the project has been completed. Final narrative and financial documents should be submitted to the monitoring unit within 45 days of project completion along with the auditors' report.</p> <p>The reports are reviewed by the MO, the progress in indicators is tracked and entered into the M&E System.</p>
<p>Financial audit for institutional grantees</p>	<p>External auditing is carried out in order to check whether grantees are implementing their grants in accordance with the KCSF rules and procedures.</p> <p>Institutional grantees, in addition to</p>	<p>The auditing process is managed by the CU and once the findings of the auditor have been delivered, they are submitted to the monitoring unit with a recommendation on how to proceed.</p>

	<p>undergoing a final audit of expenditures like all KCSF grantees, are audited after their first year of implementation.</p> <p>Besides offering an external evaluation of financial compliance by the grantee it also serves as a capacity building tool for the organizations.</p>	<p>If the audit findings recommend improvements of the processes of the grantees, they become part of the conditions that need to be fulfilled by the grantee and monitored by the MO.</p> <p>Should the audit find mismanagement of funds or other more severe irregularities, the CU proceeds with the steps as stipulated in the contract.</p>
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5.4 CAPACITY BUILDING FOR THE MONITORING TEAM

Internal governance, financial management, and programmatic capacity building for KCSF grantees is an ongoing process that will last throughout the grant implementation period. Thus, regular monitoring on the implementation of principles and practices of participatory advocacy and outreach and community mobilization, Internal Governance, and Financial Management is an essential part for the capacity building component, and it is expected that new practices are embedded in the daily work of KCSF grantees. To do so, the MEU is expected to have a more involved role in overseeing the implementation of grants in a more qualitative manner, beyond contractual requirements.

Therefore, KCSF will provide continued training and mentoring to its monitoring staff to be able to conduct such a qualitative monitoring. KCSF staff will be trained on Policy-Making Cycle, Participatory Advocacy, Outreach and Community Mobilization, Principles of Internal Governance and Financial Management for CSOs.

CU and RC are responsible for ongoing training, mentoring, evaluation and identification of specific capacity building needs for the field monitoring staff.

6. AUDIT

According to KCSF procedures any grant awarded (with exception of grants up to 5,000 EUR) must be audited after the end of the grant. For each re-granting program or project, KCSF selects a licensed auditing company, based on procedures set in KCSF Procurement Manual. The contracted auditing company is mandated to conduct independent financial audits for all grantees of the respective re-granting program or project.

Unless otherwise specified, regular audits are conducted after the end of the grant, except in the case of institutional grants where audits are conducted on annual basis. Grantees must submit all documents required by the auditor within 15 days of grant completion while submitting the auditing report to KCSF together with all final reports within 45 days of grant completion.

GO notifies the auditor for the grantee that needs to be audited seven days prior to the end of the respective grant implementation period. At the same time the MEU shares the auditor's contacts with the

grantee. The auditor must perform the audit and submit the report within the 30 days after the grant contract is end.

A special audit may be initiated from KCSF when there are reasonable doubts about the grantee's financial performance. The request/proposal for a special audit is prepared by the GMU and discussed and approved by the RD and ED. When the decision is made to carry out the audit, the auditor and grantee are informed and the exact time of the audit is determined.

7. GRANT CLOSURE

The grant is considered closed at the time the final reports are approved by the MEU and GMU and procedures of returning unspent funds and transfer of assets ownership are finalized. Within 90 days of receiving the final reports and supporting documents, the MEU and the GMU shall make a decision on the grant status. After analysing the auditor's report, the GMU notifies the organization on unspent funds. If unused funds are less than 25 EUR, the grantee will not be required to return them. Refunds shall be made within seven days of receiving the official request from KCSF. Confirmation of the refund is required to be followed up by the grantee, however in cases when the grantee does not send the bank confirmation document, the GO will need to make sure to obtain the evidence from the Finance and Administration Department that the funds have been transferred into the KCSF bank account and archive it in the grantee's dossier.

Once the grantee has completed all the procedures, the GO officially notifies him/her of the grant closure. The copy of the grant closing email and procedures is archived in the grantee's dossier. Within the KCSF, the Re-granting Department and the Finance and Administration Department are notified.

8. PREVENTION, IDENTIFICATION AND ADDRESSING OF IRREGULARITIES OR VIOLATIONS

Re-granting as a function involves financial transactions and working with parties who have different organizational and professional knowledge and capacities. Such work involves risks for irregularities or even various operational and financial violations. To prevent various violations, whether procedural, operational, financial or otherwise, KCSF conducts regular actions to prevent, identify and address them at any given moment. Some of the most important are:

Transparency and Publication of Information - When designing an application call package, all information related to the call is published in advance and provided to all potential applicants in order to have a fair and transparent treatment and clearly explain the programs expectations. Proper outreach and information sharing with applicants on program expectations prevent potential irregularities that may arise later during the application or implementation phase, as applicants/grantees are informed from the beginning with the size and the level of program requirements.

Coaching and Mentoring Phase – On coaching and mentoring, KCSF’s first contact with successful applicants occurs after GET decision. As explained in subsection 3.11 during this process annexes to the contract are reviewed/finalized (logical framework, budget and plan of activities). This process enables fair, realistic and cost-effective grant planning and also setting out the risks for each intended outcome until a detailed justification for all the expenditure that has to be met in the budget. Being done before the contract signature it enables to clarify and eliminate any uncertainty before entering to contractual obligations. In addition, it establishes the first relations between KCSF and grantees which are later developed further and contribute to timely discussion of all issues and adequate measures from both sides.

Contract Implementation Training - Once the grant contract is signed, the contract implementation training with all the grantees is organized before the payment of the first instalment. A very important part of this info session is also devoted to the financial aspect by going over the eligible costs, VAT exemption request requirement, minimum requirements for purchasing goods and services and other financial requirements regulated through the Guidelines for Implementation and Reporting. Such information, sets from the very beginning of grant implementation all expectations from KCSF and in particular clarifies all obligations of grantees with regards to financial regularity.

Proactive monitoring – During proactive monitoring, whether through activity visits or even office visits, MO or GO could identify potential breaches, delays in implementation, or other irregularities by grantees. The early identification of irregularities but also timely and professional handling diminishes the chances of recurrence or increase and escalation of damage. Proactive and positive approach in monitoring that aims to assist grantees in grant implementation rather than find problems, contributes to mutual trust and smooth cooperation throughout the implementation of the grant, and beyond.

Approvals of different financial requests (those for VAT and budget reallocation) – During the implementation of grants, grantees are required to contact GO for VAT exemption and budget reallocations. In these cases, where reallocation and exemption from VAT are required, they also share documents and information that enable expenses to be tracked and to ensure that they are being managed properly. In cases where KCSF officers notice any irregularities, they do not approve the requests and simultaneously, together with the grantees, consider the possibility of addressing the problems.

Continuous communication – Continuous communication via email, phone but also various meetings with grantees enables KCSF representative to discuss the overall grant implementation. This contributes to building trust between KCSF and grantees and leads to important information being shared, thus reduce the likelihood of irregularities. In addition, this communication enables preventive measures to be taken, and in worst cases, to initiate the unannounced monitoring visit or audit procedure during the grant implementation.

Capacity Building - In addition to the allocated financial support, grantees also undergo a series of capacity building through trainings, coaching and mentoring on overall management and functioning of the organization. Besides strengthening the capacities of the organizations, all these actions also aim to minimize the various problems that may arise when implementing the grant.



Instalment Allocation and Post-Reporting Payment – Distribution of instalment payments is done proportionally. The first payment is made when the contract is signed. In all other cases the all subsequent payments are made after the approval of the interim narrative and financial reports.

Audit of grants – All grants allocated from KCSF re-granting program undergone an independent audit, except small grants up to 5,000 EUR. The audit identifies eligible expenses of the grant and states the amount of unspent funds that should be returned to KCSF. In addition, the audit report states any irregularities identified during the control of the grant dossier. This is another measure to prevent any misuse of funds and documents any irregularities during the grant implementation. Through the screening process, KCSF takes into consideration audit reports in cases when the same organization reapplies in other KCSF funding opportunities.

Obligation to report irregularities - All staff of KCSF who notice any irregularity or breach of the procedures, guidelines or contract made by the grantee report immediately to the unit leaders and the RD, which then follows up with all respective levels and actions, depending on the scale of the issue. For serious contractual violations, KCSF notifies also respective donors. For minor breach of procedures, direct communication with grantees aims to resolve the issue while discussing with the grantee on how to prevent similar cases in the future. For more serious violations, KCSF reactions can escalate, up to the termination of grant contract and/or filing lawsuits, as per respective contract clauses. All information, correspondence and other evidence of such breaches and violations are archived in the grantee dossier by the designated GO.