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Series: policies and good practices

## #14

# Criteria for choosing partners and conditions for establishing partnerships between Handicap International and an operating body (national or international)

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March 2015

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Criteria and  
conditions for  
establishing  
partnerships

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Internal document - Can be made available to partner organisations

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## I- Identification of partners

Handicap International implements projects alongside partner organisations which run a number of activities on its behalf. The choice of partner is always based on a detailed context and stakeholder analysis. However, when Handicap International is the project leader, there is a clear process to be followed when establishing partnerships, covering initial contacts with a potential partner right through to the signing of a partnership agreement.

Between each of the phases in this process outlined in this document, time is allowed for negotiation and discussion.

The identification of partners is based on an analysis of the context and the stakeholders. A selection of potential partners is made that takes the following aspects into account:

- Strategic relevance: the potential partner’s role in the field of action concerned and possible technical, thematic and geographical synergies and complementarity;
- Ethics: the image, reputation, conduct and values of the potential partner, which must be consistent with Handicap International’s philosophy and values;
- Professional aspects: the potential partner’s professional competence in the required area and, more generally, the practical feasibility of the partnership.

These aspects are not only analysed in the identification phase, they are monitored throughout the entire duration of the collaboration.

At federal head office in Lyon, Strategic Policy Unit may be asked to provide an opinion on the ethical and political dimensions of a potential partnership.

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## II. Assessment of the administrative and operational capacities of the partner organisation

Depending on the amount of financial or material resources to be transferred to the partner<sup>1</sup>, Handicap International may assess the potential partner's administrative capacities.

It must be capable of managing a number of aspects of the project concerned by the collaboration and partnership:

- Steering (management, leadership and coordination);
- Administration (administrative organisation, internal rules, human resources);
- Legal aspects (status, registration and responsibility);
- Accounting (general chart of accounts, cost accounting, competent accounting staff, computerised accounting system, certification of the accounts, etc.) ;
- Finance (budget monitoring, accustomed to working with other funding sources, amount of annual budget, etc.) ;
- Logistics (number of staff, means of communication, number of vehicles, etc.);
- Technical aspects (internal expertise and competencies that can be mobilised for the project)

This assessment enables us to determine how much support and control will be needed and to adjust the project, if necessary.

## III. Establishing a collaboration and partnership agreement

Before entering into a partnership agreement, detailed dialogue with the potential partner is essential so that both parties can measure the benefits they will obtain from entering into collaboration.

The objective of the negotiations on the project is to result in a partnership agreement. These negotiations are an opportunity for each party to formally express the desire to work together and present its own interests in doing so, as well as for determining the project's operational modalities and discussing technical aspects.

In the drafting of an agreement, each parties' commitments are made visible and verifiable. These commitments must reflect the objectives of the project and be coherent with both parties' internal constraints. To this end, Handicap International sets forth the internal rules, policies and professional ethics that form the framework for its actions and the regulatory and contractual obligations governing the implementation of its projects.

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<sup>1</sup> In March 2015, the ceiling was €15,000

**For any questions on this document:**

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