

# UK Aid Match

## Principles of project design - guidance

15 October 2018  
[www.ukaidmatch.org](http://www.ukaidmatch.org)



# Why is good project design important?

- a well designed project reaches more people in a more effective way
- a well designed project builds the credibility of your organisation, and demonstrates that a Department for International Development (DFID) investment has been worthwhile
- a well designed project is more likely to perform well and be able to flex and adapt when needed

# What we look for in UK Aid Match projects

1. projects that help DFID meet their priorities
2. working within and through the context: projects that identify opportunities for harmonisation and alignment
3. evidence-based projects that combine innovation and flexibility, with proven approaches to achieving change
4. realistic and measurable ambition for change, that demonstrates value-for-money

In more detail



# 1. Projects that help DFID meet priorities

- the [Global Goals](#)
- hard to reach populations
- gender and inclusion
- [DFID departmental plan](#)
- fund-level logframe



## 2. Working within and through the context

- who are the stakeholders?
- what are they doing?
- identify ways to build upon other work, reducing duplication and increasing alignment



# 3. Evidence-based, adaptive projects

- demonstrate context-specific evidence
- use numbers and data that demonstrate the identified problem
- flexible and adaptive programming: use beneficiary feedback mechanisms, work-planning, monitoring tools and clarity on the vision

**4.8 Please provide a more in-depth explanation of the context in which your proposed project will work.**

Dawuro is extremely remote with poor infrastructure and service provision. 61% of people live in poverty (SAC, 2017) and with 79% of the population under the age of 30, families have little hope for the future. Nutrition: Diets are very poor, at 4/15 on Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS; SACE 2016). Most families consume root crops (90%) and green leaves (83%); some eat cereals (40%) but few have dairy products (13%), fruit (10%) or high vitamin A (3%). Malnutrition impacts severely on health, particularly for women and children, accounting for 28% of child mortality (UNICEF 2013) and on the ability to carry out farm work, further exacerbating farm yields. Families experience hunger for 4.7 months/yr (SACE 2016). Women do not change their diet when pregnant or lactating with health consequences for themselves and children. Young children are breast-fed up to 2 yrs and transition directly from breast milk to adult food for lack of appropriate baby food. Malnourishment renders children more susceptible to disease and negatively affects school performance. Farm production: Families struggle to make a living and are vulnerable to external shocks. They depend on rain-fed agriculture and small plots of land (0.5 hectares average). They cannot grow enough food as yields are low because of limited knowledge of farming, lack of access to inputs (seeds) or water, and poor crop diversification. Communities have lost hope in farming as a viable means of making a living, especially young people, with consequent migration to urban areas for work. Average annual income is 881 ETB (£31). Water access: Most people in Dawuro (64% DWO 2016) use unsafe water sources because only 35% of springs are

Example answer on context above



# 4. Realistic and measurable ambition



- what is your vision and what do you hope to see by the final day of the project?
- can you access, or capture, credible data to demonstrate the change you want to see?
- can you visualise your ambition and is it realistic to you, your implementing partners, the beneficiaries, the stakeholders?
- break down the timescales to check whether it is achievable

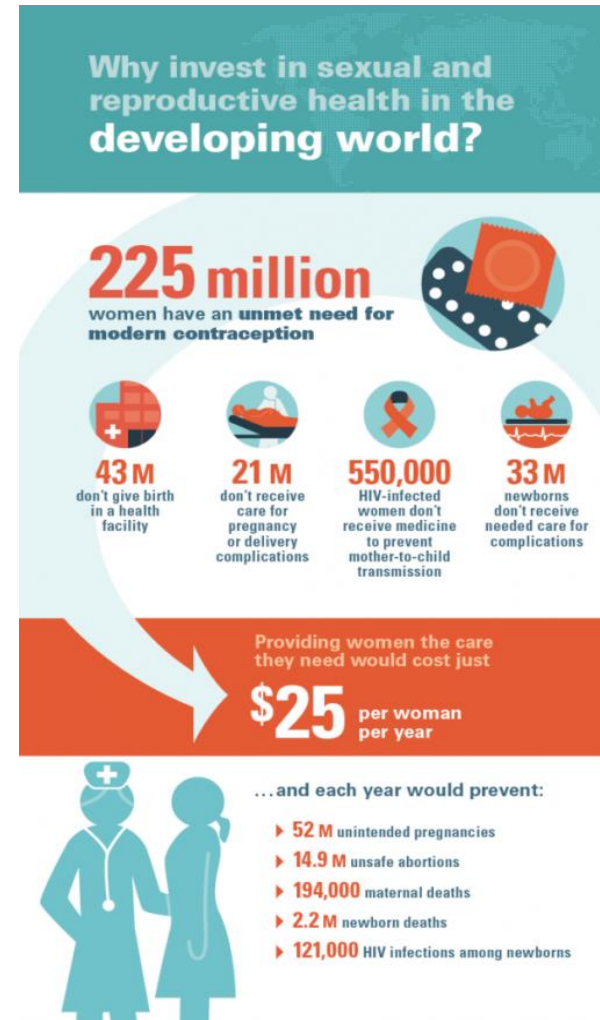
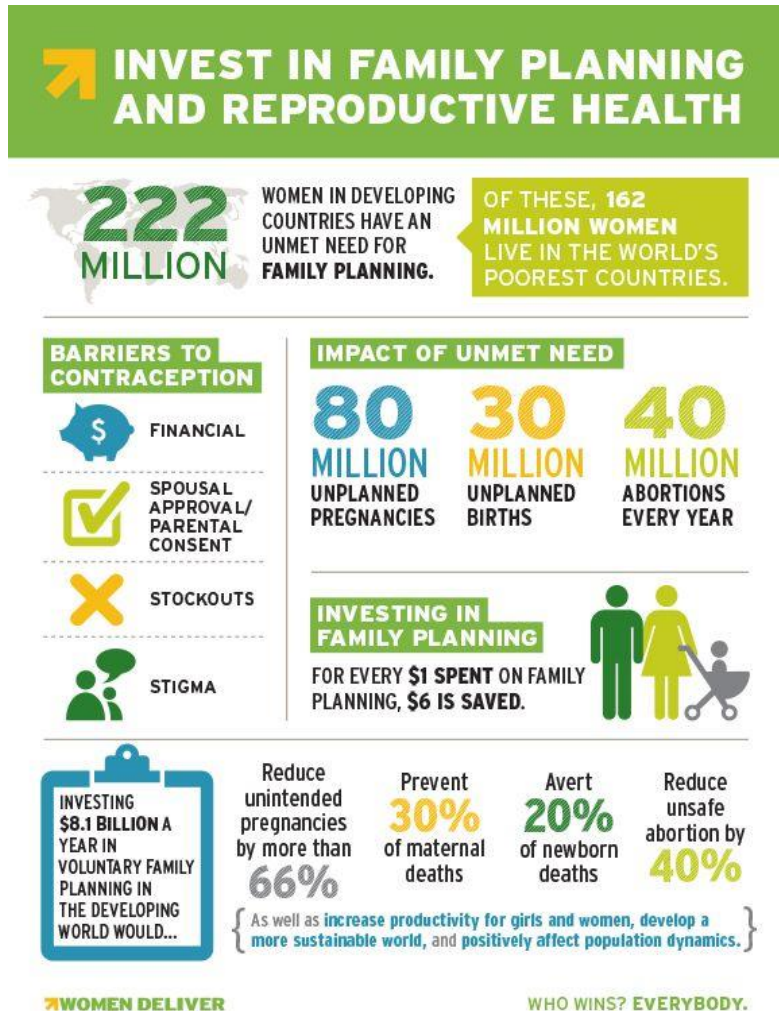


# Design sustainable projects

- sustainability is often an afterthought
- if there is a business, commercial or financial element make sure it is supported by a clear business case for the model
- improvements should continue when the funding has run out and the project has closed
- the entire project may not be fully sustainable but should at least demonstrate elements that are sustainable



# Value-for-money

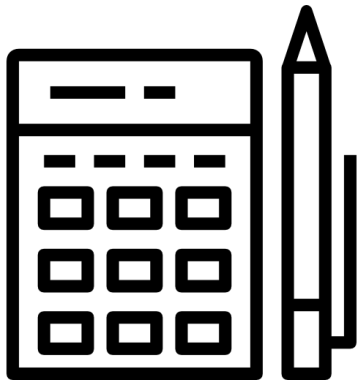


Here are a couple of examples of demonstrating value-for-money in your project.



# Budget tips

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- ensure proportionality in your budget
- think about what is realistic in terms of the timeline
- budget for what you need

# Mitigate the biggest risks



- focus on risks and not challenges or current issues – consider what could happen in the future and what you will do if those risks materialise
- focus on the top few things that could stop you achieving your outcomes

# Practical tips for applications

Don't look at the application form until you have done the following background thinking:

- establish your problem
  - agree what you want to see on the final day of the programme and put a number to it
  - do the beneficiaries and stakeholders also want to see what you want to see on the final day of the programme?
  - is your vision worth the cost?
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- define clearly and simply what you will do to address the problem in plain English and with few acronyms
  - consider the who, what, why and how

# Beneficiaries

- **primary beneficiaries** are people who will directly benefit from the intervention, for example, a mother attending an antenatal clinic
- **secondary beneficiaries** are those who are benefiting indirectly from an intervention, for example, members of a household where one individual has attended a training
- direct and indirect beneficiaries should only be counted once and should not be overestimated



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