



Criteria and Guidelines for Submission of Project Concept Notes: SAT/CFP1-3/2005

Please note that at this stage, SAT will consider project concept proposals of a maximum of 6 pages only. Concept notes longer than this will not be accepted. Please read the full briefing document, including the format for proposals, to establish what is required as these are mandatory requirements.

1. Background to the Southern Africa Trust

In Southern Africa, there is a high level of formal commitment to poverty reduction and to meeting the Millenium Development Goals (MDG's), both by governments and by regional and sub-regional organisations such as the African Union, NEPAD and SADC.

Linked to achieving the MDGs, most governments are engaged in the development and implementation of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). Policies to promote growth, good governance, and social and economic justice are central to these poverty reduction agendas. To be effective, however, many of these policies require more integrated regional approaches and enhanced engagement by civil society and the private sector, at both national and regional levels.

With these challenges come opportunities for new partnerships and alliances, and new forms of advocacy in relation to public policy. However, there are also risks.

Policies that enjoy adequate popular support are a political outcome of negotiation and bargaining. These processes are crucial to consolidating democracy, and to creating accountable, responsive governance. Yet if the voices of the poor are not asserted in these processes, other interests are likely to dominate in both the design and implementation of policy.

The Southern Africa Trust (SAT) was therefore established as an independent, regional, non-profit organisation registered in South Africa to support the full spectrum of civil society organisations in Southern Africa to participate effectively and with credibility in public policy processes so that the voices of the poor can impact more directly in the development of public policies.

SAT aims to do this by providing grants to a cross-spectrum of civil society organizations that engage in public policy dialogue with a focus on poverty (especially those with a regional presence and impact) and by facilitating poverty-focused policy research, linking and learning, and dialogue.

2. Criteria for Proposals:

2.1. Policy Dialogue at Regional Level: Ref - SAT/CFP1/2005

SAT will consider proposals that focus on processes of stakeholder networking, dialogue, and engagement in the development, monitoring or review of policy, including the following broad theme areas:

- The regional economy: including trade, financial markets, FDI, and labour markets;
- Human security, democracy, peace and conflict in the region;
- Health, hunger, vulnerability and livelihoods: the regional dimensions.
- Other key issues relevant to the reduction of poverty and inequality in the region.

Proposals need *not* cover all the sub-themes indicated by the headings, but may focus on a particular dimension: for example, on food security under 'health, hunger and vulnerability'.

The proposals will be assessed on the extent to which they meet the following criteria:

- a. How is the proposal relevant to regional-level priorities for poverty reduction?
- b. What is the 'regional' content of the proposal:
 - i. Is it promoting multi-country linkages and comparative learning across different country-level experiences of national policies;
and/or
 - ii. Is it addressing issues that are regional by nature (eg climate change, malaria control), where regional policy is required to complement to national-level policies
- c. Is the proposal able to show a link to policy processes and/or to policy opportunities?
This may be in relation to the development, monitoring and/or review of policy.
- d. Is the proposal driven by or linked to existing stakeholder organisation or action?
Does the proposal enhance dialogue, networks, and/or alliances *within* interest groups or sectors in the region?
- e. and/or
Does the proposal enhance dialogue, networks and/or alliances *between* different interest groups or sectors in the region?
- f. Does the proposal find ways to engage meaningfully with 'voices of the poor' or enhance the participation of poorly-represented constituencies in its processes?

Proposals in this category should not exceed US\$50,000, and should be implemented within a maximum period of one year from April 2006.

2.2. Research into Regional Approaches : Ref - SAT/CFP2/2005

SAT will consider proposals for policy-relevant research and analysis that sheds new light on the regional dimensions of poverty and inequality in southern Africa, and on where regional approaches may have the potential for added impact over and above what country-level policy can achieve. Proposals should fall within the same broad themes as above.

The proposals will be assessed on the extent to which they meet the following criteria:

- a. How is the research relevant to regional-level priorities for reducing poverty and/or promoting human and economic development?

- b. How does the research shed light on where regional approaches may add value to the impacts that can be achieved at country-level?
- c. Does the proposal promote multi-country research linkages, and/or comparative learning across different country-level experiences?
- d. Does it draw on and build research capacity from within the region?
- e. Is the proposal able to show a link to policy processes and/or to policy opportunities?
- f. Is the proposal driven by or supportive of existing areas of stakeholder organisation or action, and if so, how?
- g. Does the proposal envisage forms of dissemination that would make the research appropriately accessible as an input into policy processes?
- h. Does it innovate in reaching a wider audience, particularly constituencies within 'the poor'?

Proposals in this category should not exceed US\$50,000, and should be implemented within a maximum period of one year from April 2006.

2.3. Promoting Regional Civil Society Organisation : Ref - SAT/CFP3/2005

SAT aims to support the growth and consolidation of a diverse range of interest-based, sectoral and/or issue-based forms of organisation at regional level, as part of strengthening the capacity of regional civil society to contribute to policy processes.

SAT invites those organisations with a regional-level presence, a mandate relevant to poverty reduction, and a policy-influencing agenda to apply for programme funding. Priority will be given, at this stage, to organisations with existing track-records of relevant regional-level work. Proposals under this section may include the kinds of stakeholder processes and research envisaged in (1) and (2).

The proposals will be assessed on the extent to which they meet the following criteria:

- a. To what extent does the organisation have an existing regional-level presence, a mandate relevant to poverty reduction, and a policy-influencing agenda? Motivate.
- b. Do the organizational activities as proposed align with SAT's aims?
- c. Insofar as the proposal includes stakeholder processes as anticipated in (1) above or research as in (2), please use the above criteria to motivate the proposal.

Proposals in this category should be for a maximum time period of one year, as from May 2006, and should not exceed US\$100,000.00

3. Format for Project Concept Proposals:

Proposals should be in the form of a Concept Note of not more than 6 pages (including the cover page), with font size not smaller than 11 pt. This should include an indicative budget per category of activity proposed. Budgets should be presented in *both* local currency and US\$.

Proposals should have the following structure:

1. Cover Page
 - a. Category of proposal: (1. Policy dialogue at regional level; 2. Research into regional approaches; OR 3. Promoting regional civil society organisation);
 - b. Name of organisation, address, form of registration, contact person, and contact details for applicant organisation.
 - c. *Brief* description of core mandate, geographical scope and core activities.
 - d. If the organisation is a federation, please provide a list member organisations, and their geographical location.
2. Summary of the concept proposed;
3. Motivation for the concept, against the criteria provided;
4. Indicative budget – preferably no more than 5 line-items and a total.
5. Indicate the time period over which the proposed project/programme will be implemented, to a *maximum* of one year for all categories, from April 2006.
6. Track Record and Capacity – provide an indication of the track record of the organization and describe the capacity that the organization has to deliver on the proposed project/programme

Applicants may submit proposals in more than one category, but as separate proposals.

Applications from networks or partnerships between organisations are encouraged. In this case, please agree a lead organisation, for which all the above information is required. For other members of the network or partnership, please simply supply the names of all participating organisations, where they are based, and a *very brief* description of their core mandate and capacity.

In the case of applications from networks, partnerships or federations, the cover page may exceed one page: but the rest may still not exceed 5 pages!

Applicants whose proposals are short-listed may be approached for further information, be requested to further develop their proposal, and/or refine the budget.

4. Clarification on Concepts Used

4.1. The 'Southern African Region':

SAT uses SADC membership to delimit what is described as the 'southern African region'. Where a compelling basis exists to include participation in SAT-supported processes from a country that does not fall within SADC, this can be considered on a case by case basis.

Proposals need *not* cover all countries in the region, but may focus on sub-regional initiatives that involve forms of participation, engagement or research relevant to at least two countries.

4.2. Understanding 'regional' in SAT:

Many policy issues that impact on poverty are most effectively addressed at national level, and many civil society programmes exist to support engagement in policy development, implementation and monitoring at this level. This is not the role of SAT, and in this call for

proposals, SAT will not consider proposals for initiatives that are *solely* country-based and targeted at national-level policy.

In addition, many countries in the region share common challenges, and some programmes described as 'regional' are based on the replication of similar national programmes in parallel across many countries in the region. These are what SAT describes as 'multi-country' programmes, and are not, in general, a priority for SAT.

However, in a region as fragmented and historically divided as Southern Africa, there is still much to be learnt from sharing experience within the region, as part of building a common understanding and identity as a region. SAT will therefore support processes that build regional understanding, dialogue, networks and regional agendas relevant to the eradication of poverty and reduction of inequality in the region.

SAT's priority, nonetheless, is to support initiatives where real value is added to what can be achieved at country-level by taking a regional approach. For example, tackling malaria cannot be successfully achieved in one country if strategies are not aligned between neighbouring countries; conflict spills across borders; food security is affected by intra-regional trade; the migration of skills within the region can deepen existing inequalities, and the lack of alignment of financial market regulation means savings within Southern Africa are more likely to be invested in the financial markets of developed countries than within the region.

These are all examples of areas of policy that have direct impacts on poverty, inequality and economic development in the region, but where there is a limit to how much can be achieved on a country-by-country basis; or even through cross-country learning; and where instead, real impact requires a regional approach to be taken. Where SAT uses the term 'regional approaches', it is in this sense, and is distinct from 'multi-country' approaches.

4.3. 'Civil Society':

For SAT, civil society is understood broadly, to include for example the faith-based organisations, the media, popular organizations, the private sector, and other forms of constituency or interest-based organisation in society: essentially, 'non-state actors'. SAT will endeavour to support a wide cross-section of role-players in civil society, representing different interests and constituencies that are focused on overcoming poverty.

4.4. 'Regional Policy Processes':

SAT uses 'policy processes' and 'the development of policy' as a shorthand for all those different processes that influence and shape the way in which public policy is developed, monitored, implemented and reviewed.

While SAT's regional focus does imply a focus on institutions with a regional remit, such as SADC, regional-level policy is also strongly influenced by outcomes at national levels, and the connection with national-level processes are often the building blocks of regional processes. The region is also strongly influenced by continental and global dynamics. SAT is therefore less concerned with where intervention and support is initially targeted than on how it is expected to influence policy at regional level: and this process may not be direct or immediate.

In many contexts, the first step in supporting effective engagement in regional policy is to build capacity, understanding and policy agendas within and between constituencies or interest groups, and to facilitate regional linkages and platforms.

4.5. Supporting 'Voices of the Poor':

SAT sees the 'bargaining and negotiation' over policy by different interest groups as key to building and consolidating democracy, and recognises – and will support – a wide range of interests within such processes. However, SAT recognises that within many societies in the region, there are constituencies and interest groups that lack effective representation and 'voice' in policy processes, and that such constituencies are, to a large extent, those with the least power and resources – they are 'the poor'. While such constituencies and their interests are by no means homogenous, the shorthand for promoting more inclusive policy-making processes is to support 'voices of the poor'. While there are no easy short-cuts in this process, SAT aims to support innovative and meaningful ways of doing this.

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