

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

**It is important to highlight the fact that the source of KUSANONE (Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects) funds is the people of Japan (taxpayers money). Therefore, the meticulous accounting for its spending and funded projects is of extreme importance and value. KUSANONE is obligated to make it clear that the funds are -in fact- used appropriately in order to inform the people of Japan accordingly. Therefore, the recipient organizations are jointly responsible to comply with the rules and regulations designed for the grant. The following questions are among the most frequent questions that the KUSANONE consultants have encountered through direct communication with civil society and community based organizations. We hope that the answers to these questions will provide further elaborations to the guideline brochure.**

### **-When do we have to submit the application?**

We accept applications all year round. However, the funding cycle starts in April every year in accordance with the Japanese fiscal year.

### **-How do we submit the application?**

Please bring your application documents (signed and stamped) to the Embassy's entrance or send them by post to the following address:

ATTN: KUSANONE consultants, Economic Section

Embassy of Japan

81 Corniche El Nil St., Maadi, CAIRO

**\*Note: We accept applications by email. However, when passed the first screening process, the original documents will have to be sent by regular mail or delivered to the Embassy.**

### **-Do you accept applications in Arabic?**

No, applications have to be written in English.

### **-What happens if the project management team changes or the board changes amid the project implementation?**

It is of high importance that the change in management team or contact person with the Embassy is immediately and formally communicated to the Embassy via email. It is important that a proper handover be conducted within the organization regarding the project progress and the KUSANONE guidelines to avoid breaking rules and its repercussions.

### **- Should the sources of the data in the project proposal be only as announced by the state?**

The data sources used in the project proposal must be valid whether by the state, international organizations, other local organizations or through surveys and studies conducted by the organization itself or others. The data sources must be clearly referenced.

### **-Do you notify us if we can receive grant funds or not?**

We will contact you when the Embassy finishes the application screening to tell you if your proposal has passed or not in the term.

### **-How long does it take to receive the grant funds and how long do we have to wait?**

1. The application screening takes usually 2 to 3 months after your submission.
  2. If your proposal has passed the application screening, we will implement a feasibility study. (1 month)
  3. If it results in approval, the documents will be sent to the Head Quarters in Tokyo for their assessment. (3-4 months)
  4. If it results in approval, we move to procedures for funds provision.
- \* In order to carry out the procedure, you must complete necessary works if required at any stage.
  - \* The process from No. 3 to the funds provision usually takes another 2 to 3 months at the earliest.
  - \* We cannot affirm the provision date unless the applied projects passed all the assessments that KUSANONE gives.

### **-Can we meet the KUSANONE consultants to explain our project proposal during the 1st screening?**

Close communication is welcomed. However, since we do give a proper assessment on each application, we expect your proposal documents, including the application form and the attachments, be precisely prepared to provide enough information to show the importance of your project without extra explanation. Should there be a need for further elaborations needed, the KUSANONE consultants will reach out to you to determine communication method needed.

### **-What makes a project more likely to be accepted?**

The possibility to become a KUSANONE recipient would be higher If:

- the organization has been operating for more than 2 years in the field of the proposed project.
- the need/importance of the project is written with statistic or trustworthy evidence in the application.
- the organization can sustain the operation/running costs of the project and it is obvious in the project plan
- the organization provides a financial contribution from its side besides its technical commitment.

### **-Can all the items and amount applied for get approval?**

No, not always. After the first assessment of application screening, selected organizations will be contacted for our second assessment namely feasibility study. We potentially request you to re-examine the items as minimum needs based upon the result of our feasibility study.

### **-Can computer devices be covered by the grant?**

No, in principle. KUSANONE is targeting projects that require fundamental needs for development. Funding computers is subject to the KUSANONE assessment within the context of the project's critical needs.

### **-Can vehicles be covered by the grant?**

KUSANONE tends not to provide funds for any vehicle except a special-purpose vehicle (i.e. garbage cart, truck for sewage removal, ambulance, mobile offices) for the project.

### **-I would like to use KUSANONE funds for the staff salary, operating cost and maintenance fees...**

Salary, operating cost, maintenance fees, banking fees, tax cannot be the grant items by KUSANONE's regulation. Please check our Guideline for more understanding of Governing rules for the grant as well.

### **-Why do we have to provide cost estimation from three different suppliers on each item?**

To ensure competitiveness, value for money and to prove that the applied costs are reasonable and appropriate. However, in the case of an emergency, or when it is not possible to obtain quotations from three suppliers due to the circumstances of the supplies of the item to be procured, a comparison of quotations from two suppliers is possible upon consultation with the Embassy.

### **-Are there preferred countries of origin for required project products?**

There are no preferred countries of origin. The suppliers provide offers to the project products according to specifications. The most cost-effective offer that meets the specifications is selected regardless of the country of origin of production. Japanese products that are price competitive are encouraged.

### **-What part of the training costs does KUSANONE cover?**

KUSANONE in principle covers assets and equipment. In certain circumstances under certain conditions, the KUSANONE budget can cover training costs. For example, if the training is related to the use of certain machinery or equipment. Training costs- if needed- is a budget line that can be typically covered by the organization through its own financial contribution.

### **-What is the maximum amount of grant allowed to be provided per project?**

In principle, This fiscal year (2024/2025), the grant funds is allowed within 10,000,000 YEN per project and it is not allowed to exceed the organization's total income of the previous year.

### **-Should an EGP account or a US dollar account be used for the grant?**

The KUSANONE disperses the grant in USD in the form of a cheque. The organization can open a USD or EGP account according to the country's regulations. Every withdrawal from the bank account requires prior approval from the Embassy based on a bank statement.

### **-Can a top up for the initial grant be requested in case of unforeseen circumstances?**

The grant amount committed through the grant agreement could not be adjusted or topped up. Any increase in the budget amount due to increase in prices or for any other reason need to be covered from other sources (the organization or through other funds/donors).

### **-Can a budget line be included in the project budget for unforeseen circumstances (contingency?)**

The project budget lines need to be as clear as possible based on the assessed needs. A contingency budget line is not a budget line that the KUSANONE can cover. The organization is free to add a contingency budget line, however, it would be covered by the organization's contribution not the grant's contribution.

### **-What happens if there is a surplus in the budget?**

In principle, the surplus must be returned to Tokyo. Should there be a foreseen surplus in the budget, the Embassy must be informed immediately with documented justifications for the surplus. However, if the project is not completed and the organization wishes to apply the surplus to a shortage of funds due to price fluctuations or to purchase additional equipment related to the project, the use of the surplus may be approved depending on the nature and appropriateness of the request. The organization should be in continuous and close communication with the Embassy on the technical and financial progress of the project.

### **-Is it possible to move between budget lines?**

The project budget lines are determined as accurately as possible based on the market prices and received suppliers' offers. However, based on the close consultations with the Embassy and the documented justifications, this decision shall be made by the Embassy based on its assessment of the justifications.

### **-What happens if there is a deficit in the budget?**

Should there be unforeseen circumstances (reasons that are not related to bad planning) that cause budget deficiency, the project should seek other sources of finance to cover the deficiency or conduct a budget revision closely with the Embassy. The Embassy must give prior approval before any changes in the budget occur. As answered earlier, the grant budget cannot be increased.

### **-What is the difference between an audit certificate and an audit report?**

An audit certificate is a disclaimer by the independent auditor that the organization finances have been revised and concludes the results of the audit. An audit report is the detailed revision conducted by the independent financial officer for every budget line and a conclusion for each. The audit certificate does not replace the audit report. The Embassy requires an independent audit report for each project. The audit certificate could be annexed to the audit report.

### **-Must the submitted reports be original or can scanned copies be sufficient?**

In cases of difficulty of sending the original, scanned copies that are signed and stamped by the organization can be accepted with written justification.

### **-Can a project receive an extension in time?**

The project duration is one year. However, with prior approval from the Embassy and with reasonable justifications, the project duration can be extended in accordance with the revised project timeline. The adjusted timeline must address all challenges and ensure the completion of the project within its adjusted timeframe.

### **-The process of approvals in the Embassy and from Tokyo takes a long period where prices and costs could rise and the offers provided are not valid anymore, which can affect the budgeting of the project. How can this be mitigated?**

Approval from Tokyo takes about 3-4 months based on the following:

- The application is clear, well written and has the necessary validations and verified data.
- The budget is done based on an accurate needs assessment
- There is a financial contribution from the organization- partnership concept
- The organization's experience and capacities are enough
- The speed and accuracy of response to the questions asked from Tokyo about the application.

There are different mitigation measures that can be reached when the organization is in close and transparent contact with the Embassy and the project consultant.

### **-It takes time to obtain a security clearance from the Egyptian authorities, is this included in the one year project period?**

Yes, it is. In order to minimize the time required to obtain the clearance, organizations are required to prepare the required documents accurately, etc. Also, the Embassy will request the government to expedite the process as appropriate to the situation, such as if it is taking too long.

### **-Do all stickers have to be put on every single item bought? Is the plaque enough?**

According to the KUSANONE communication and visibility guidelines, the stickers are provided by the Embassy in different sizes and must be placed on all visible procurements covered by the grant. The plaque is a requirement at the opening ceremony and needs to remain visible as long as the pProject exists.

**For submission of applications as well as for further inquiries, please contact the KUSANONE consultants:**

**Mrs. Yuka Kato, Mrs. Dina Hamed**

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