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The Integrated Approach to Programme Development

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THE INTEGRATED APPROACH TO PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

1. The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) is a regional intergovernmental organisation built on a strong foundation reflecting 68 years of impressive history, serving the Pacific through providing technical assistance in the areas of land resources, public health, social sector, statistics and demography, economic development and fisheries including aquaculture and marine ecosystems. The SPC is guided by the vision for a secure and prosperous Pacific Community whose people are educated and healthy and manage their resources in a sustainable way. Since its inception in 1947, the SPC membership has grown to 26 countries, which includes 22 Pacific Island Countries and Territories and 4 metropolitan countries.
2. As the Pacific evolves, SPC must evolve with it, proactively delivering effective development solutions to support its members to realise new opportunities and meet challenges. The SPC will measure its success, not only by its scientific knowledge and technical assistance but boldly, by the development outcomes it supports members to achieve.
3. The development and introduction of an integrated programming approach to move SPC forward has been initiated to enable the SPC to enhance provision of support to member countries in order to achieve sustainable development outcomes.
4. This paper presents the new approach.

Why — Context and rationale

5. Moving SPC from a predominantly project-based single sector approach to an integrated programming approach is crucial to enhance SPC's support to members as they address the critical development issues they face. It will also help SPC remain relevant and competitive in today's environment. The operating context in which SPC evolves is marked by increased competition and overcrowding of development actors. The litmus test for development organisations today is the ability to deliver "value-for-money."
6. To remain competitive, SPC needs to be highly focused on its comparative advantage, committed to results and development outcomes, and truly accountable to donors and members. The integrated approach to program development:
 - i. enables the SPC to address issues adequately through long-term, multi-sector approaches that use the best expertise and knowledge available;
 - ii. ensures that the SPC's responsibility makes a difference in people's lives and does not stop at producing good science and technical advice;
 - iii. builds on SPC's comparative advantage which lies in how knowledge is applied to achieve development outcomes. This includes the way SPC engages with its members and formulates integrated programmes to tackle development challenges by marrying scientific and technical knowledge with a deep understanding of the prevailing operational development context;

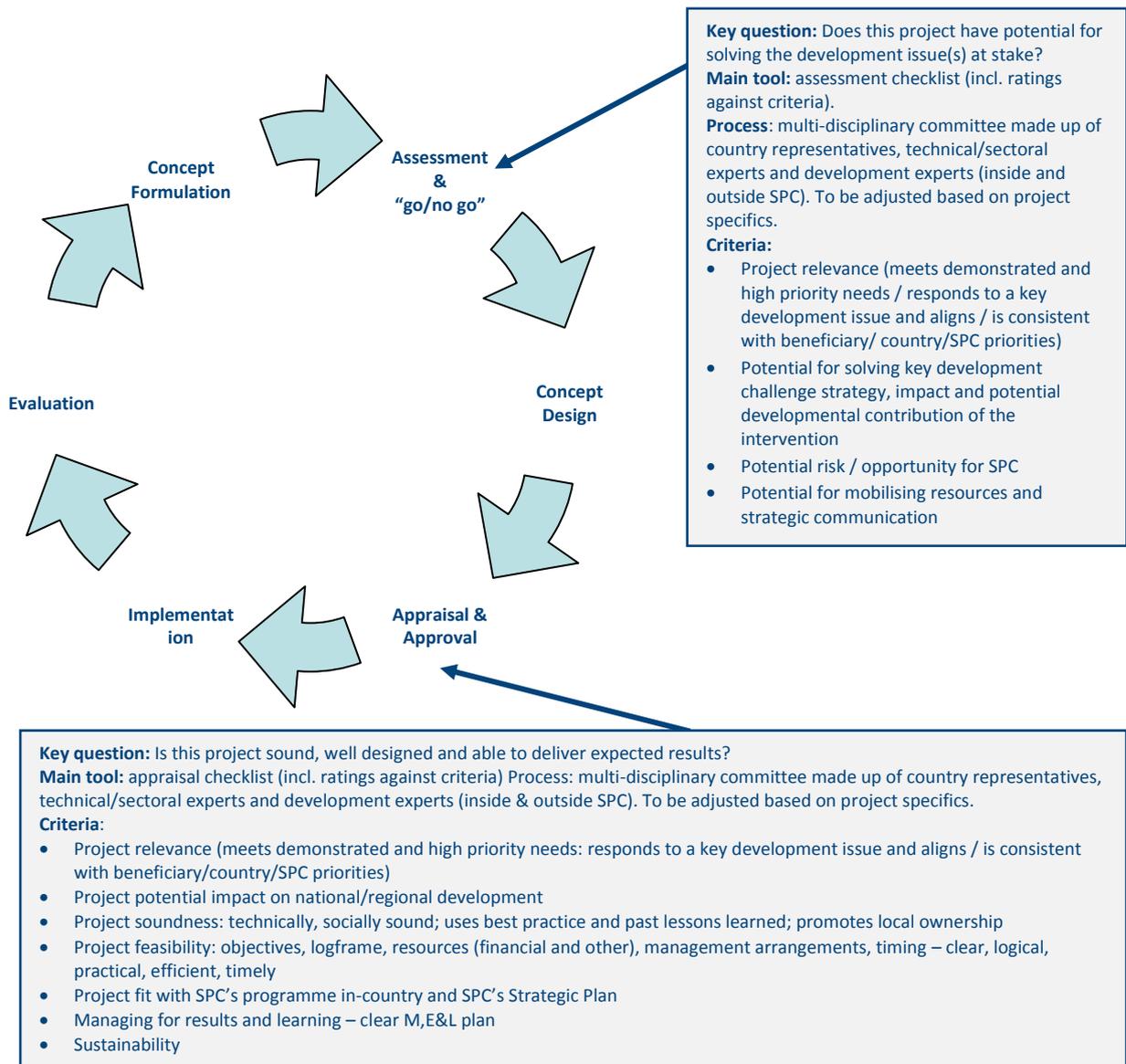
- iv. calls for a consistent and systematic process of project/programme formulation, design, implementation and evaluation;
- v. recognises and identifies the broader socio-economic context in which the project takes place, strategic priorities at country level, opportunities for adding value through integration, connections to key development challenges and outcomes, the role of and complementarity with other development actors/partners, and likely resources and potential opportunities; and
- vi. enables and identifies linkages between national and regional development challenges and help define the level at which the SPC's work will have most impact. In short, this process will help SPC determine the development outcomes it strives to achieve and whether our work will comprise one or many elements or sectors.

Key elements of the integrated Approach to Program Development

7. Integrated solutions that addresses the complex, multi-faceted development challenges faced by member countries and territories, and directly support country efforts to achieve their development outcomes;
8. Focus on contributing to the achievement of countries' development outcomes, and ensuring its strategy is aligned with and driven by the priorities of the particular country programme;
9. Engage in strategic proactive programme development and resource mobilisation through ongoing programmatic dialogue with members, donors and partners;
10. Implement an integrated, horizontal, peer-based approach to programme and project formulation, enabling discussion and incorporation of the broader developmental and socio-economic issues that drive and contextualise SPC's work, the key factors that have a bearing on the success, ownership, sustainability, and larger impact of the project (e.g. environmental impact and sustainability, existing capacity, regulatory environments, infrastructure, gender/cultural/conflict sensitivity);
11. Systematic exposure to alternative ideas, and to being more inclusive in how the SPC analyse development problems and craft responses;
12. Programmatic response contextualised within the particular cultural and gender context of the Pacific. Inclusion of factors such as environment, youth and human rights as enablers and an integral part of the design;
13. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) informs project design and timely adjustments, with active monitoring, internal reviews and adaptive learning embedded as part of programme management;
14. SPC able to report its results at the level of development outcomes, both to member countries/territories and donors, making a stronger case for value-for-money; and,
15. SPC able to communicate its purpose, strengths and contribution to development outcomes in a clear and coherent way.

Steps in the integrated programming process

16. Central to the integrated programming approach is a systematic appraisal of new initiatives, projects or programmes. Assessing and appraising projects will become essential steps in the project cycle and would occur following the identification and the formulation of new projects. It is anticipated that the development of programmes and projects, from formulation to design and to implementation, will be fully led by technical groups within the Programme Directorate (this includes all the current technical divisions).
17. *At the concept formulation stage of a project/programme*, a short concept note will be submitted to a Programme Committee to assess country appropriateness, context and commitment, organisational strategic fit, technical rigour, possible donor interest/requirements, approximate budget size and opportunities for integration across sectors. The Programme Committee may then agree that the project/programme continue to full design, and suggest, if required, adaptations. Alternatively it may decide the concept is not suitable to go ahead.
18. *At the design appraisal stage*, once programme/project designs are developed, they would be presented to the Programme Committee to appraise the design in more detail. Usually a few relevant appraisers, internal or external, will be identified to conduct a preliminary thorough appraisal which will also be available to the Committee. The Programme Committee may then decide whether the design is sufficient or needs revision.
19. The following diagram presents in more detail possible assessment and appraisal phases within the project development cycle:



Benefits

20. This approach will generate added value for the SPC and its member countries through:
- creating transparent and measurable pathways to development outcomes, providing far greater visibility and legitimacy for SPC as a development organisation: SPC will be "walking the talk";
 - changing the relationship between SPC and members and partners, by ensuring focus is on development outcomes in country or regionally and not on activities. This will foster more substantive dialogue with PICTs and development partners;

- iii. promoting an environment where there is communication and teamwork across SPC, thus nurturing cross fertilisation of ideas and seeding innovation;
 - iv. encouraging flexibility, security, consistency and sustainability since the programming approach provides a longer term outlook with sufficient room to adapt to changing priorities and redeploy resources as necessary;
 - v. creating enabling conditions for a more substantive role for decentralised offices in programme dialogue and engagement with governments, development partners and stakeholders; and
 - vi. standardising the project and programme development process, thereby allowing for greater quality in projects and programmes.
21. SPC is uniquely positioned to assist members to address many key Pacific development challenges. The integrated Approach to Program Development will enable the SPC draw on both internal and external networks of expertise.

Recommendations

22. The Heads of Fisheries are invited to:
- i. note the SPC Integrated Approach to Program Development; and
 - ii. provide directions and suggestions on how the integrated approach process can be further strengthened and utilised to enhance current services provided to member countries by the Fisheries Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems.