



# Veterinary Statutory Body

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## Guide to Veterinary Statutory Body Twinning Projects



Oie

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*Protecting animals, preserving our future*

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# Table of contents

## BACKGROUND

1. General introduction	5
2. Good governance of Veterinary Services	6
3. Creating links	7

## OBJECTIVES OF TWINNING

1. Eligible objectives	9
2. Ineligible objectives and activities	10
3. Conditions for success and criteria for selecting partners	11
4. Roles	12

## THE PROCESS

1. Expression of interest	14
2. Pre-evaluation	14
3. Submission of proposals for OIE-supported twinning projects	16
4. Evaluation of the proposal	21
5. Financing and payments	22
6. Project initiation	22
7. Project risks	22
8. Reports and monitoring	23
9. Modifications	24
10. Verification of expenditure	24
11. Unforeseen events	25
12. Project closure	25

## Annexes

Annex 1: Checklist of documents to be provided	26
Annex 2: Process flowchart	27
Annex 3: Budget proposal template	28
Annex 4: Project plan	30
Annex 5: Reporting schedules and payments	31





# BACKGROUND

## 1. General introduction

While more than a billion people are totally or partly reliant on livestock for their livelihoods, sanitary risks are increasing owing to the increasing demand for animal products and the proliferation of trade in these products to meet global demands.

Overall, more meat and milk are now produced in developing countries than in developed countries; this corresponds to a major shift in the 'centre of gravity' of the world's animal production, from temperate countries to tropical and subtropical zones, and has resulted in marked changes in trade flows.

The speed and volume of the international movement of animals and products of animal origin have changed and exacerbated the risks of the spread or emergence of infectious diseases. Diseases, including zoonoses, have already had a substantial negative impact on animal health, food security, food safety, public health and economies throughout the world.

National Veterinary Services are responsible for reducing the threats from animal diseases and zoonoses. Many animal diseases show little respect for national boundaries, therefore failure to act in one country may threaten many other countries. Collectively, as Members of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), national Veterinary Services are working together to reduce disease threats worldwide. Technical capacity and expertise are integral to the effective functioning of Veterinary Services and form a basis for sound science-based decision making.

To address these problems, the OIE has been developing common standards, enabling its Members to work together to reduce the threats posed by animal diseases and encourage the development of the technical and scientific capacities necessary for the proper functioning of Veterinary Services.

OIE standards are recognised by the World Trade Organization (WTO) and are principally contained in the following four OIE publications: the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* (the *Terrestrial Code*); the *Manual of Diagnostic Tests and Vaccines for Terrestrial Animals*; the *Aquatic Animal Health Code*, and the *Manual of Diagnostic Tests for Aquatic Animals*. These publications set out rules that Members can use to protect themselves from the introduction of diseases and pathogens through trade, without imposing unjustified sanitary barriers.

The development of OIE standards relating to terrestrial and aquatic animals is based on scientific principles, in line with the *Agreement on the Applications of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures* (SPS Agreement) of the WTO; this Agreement stipulates that sanitary measures must be scientifically justified and that their development and implementation must be based on a risk assessment.

OIE standards are adopted every year at the OIE General Session by the World Assembly of Delegates to the OIE, with each OIE Member having the opportunity to discuss and comment on them. This open and democratic process is designed to ensure the pertinence of OIE international standards, but it could be further strengthened by greater participation from its 178 Members. The OIE recommends that its Members have a veterinary scientific community capable of preparing, discussing and drafting standards; this would ensure that all OIE Members contribute to the setting of international standards on an equal footing.

An importing country needs to be sure that by accepting animals and animal products from a trading partner it will not be importing animal diseases.



Decisions relating to trade must be based on science, accounting for the animal disease situation in the exporting country and international standards for trade, and, where necessary, on science-based risk assessment. Policy makers in exporting and importing countries need veterinary expert advice to inform their decision making on such matters.

Trading countries must have full confidence in the evidence used to support claims of disease freedom, and this can be demonstrated through compliance with international standards for disease surveillance. Expertise is needed to develop and adapt cost-effective and comprehensive surveillance strategies to individual country settings.

Freedom from certain animal diseases creates opportunities for trade, and access to international markets will bring significant economic benefits to a country's livestock sector.

The above examples serve to illustrate the importance of maintaining technical capacity and expertise in Veterinary Services and show how these competencies relate to the formulation and implementation of the international standards needed to protect society against human and animal disease threats.

## 2. Good governance of Veterinary Services

In the *Terrestrial Code* (2013), Veterinary Services are defined as the *governmental and non-governmental organisations that implement animal health and welfare measures and other standards and recommendations in the Terrestrial Code and the OIE Aquatic Animal Health Code in the territory. Veterinary Services are under the overall control and direction of the Veterinary Authority. Private sector organisations, veterinarians, veterinary paraprofessionals or aquatic animal health professionals are normally accredited or approved by the Veterinary Authority to deliver the delegated functions.*

It is the responsibility of Veterinary Services of quality to apply international standards to ensure the sanitary safety of all OIE Members through trade; these Services are efficiently organised, regulated and professionally competent. Good governance is therefore the key to effectively detect, diagnose, control and prevent animal disease and zoonotic incursions. Veterinary Services are required to have the capacity to comply with OIE guidelines, recommendations and standards; this is an integral part of good governance.

The OIE supports its Members to improve their governance mechanisms by strengthening their capacities and bringing them into line with the international standards that they have democratically adopted. This can be seen through the OIE's global 'Performance of Veterinary Services' (PVS) Pathway, which focuses on a more sustainable, long-term strengthening of animal health systems. The first step in this process is the initial PVS Evaluation, which uses a tool to evaluate the performance of national Veterinary Services (the OIE PVS Tool) and their compliance with OIE international standards on the quality of Veterinary Services.

The OIE PVS Tool is based on the OIE standards democratically adopted by OIE Members and contained in the *Terrestrial Code*, and the international standards under Chapter 3.1 'Veterinary Services' and Chapter 3.2 'Evaluation of Veterinary Services' are particularly relevant. The OIE PVS Tool evaluates the following four components of a national Veterinary Service:

- (i) human, physical and financial resources;
- (ii) technical authority and capability;
- (iii) interaction with interested parties including the private sector; and
- (iv) access to markets.



These four fundamental components classify, in total, 47 critical competencies. For each critical competency, there is: a definition; 5 possible levels of compliance (from 1 to 5, with 5 corresponding to full compliance with OIE standards); and corresponding references to the *Terrestrial Code*.

Animal disease diagnosis, epidemiological surveillance, disease prevention and control, and sanitary inspection and certification are among the critical competencies of a national Veterinary Service evaluated during an initial PVS Evaluation mission. In order to achieve a high level of advancement for each of the critical competencies, the findings of an initial PVS Evaluation mission must demonstrate that the country has the necessary veterinary scientific and technical expertise in place to comply with OIE international standards. The OIE has already conducted PVS Evaluation missions in the majority of developing and in-transition countries, and the OIE PVS Tool is starting to be used in certain developed countries.

In line with the *Terrestrial Code* (Article 3.2.2.2), the legislative and regulatory framework, the organisational structure and functioning of the Veterinary Statutory Body (VSB) are assessed and considered during an initial PVS Evaluation mission. The *Terrestrial Code* defines a Veterinary Statutory Body as an autonomous regulatory body for veterinarians and veterinary para-professionals.

An analysis of approximately a hundred initial PVS Evaluation reports indicated that fewer than half of all OIE Members have an effective Veterinary Statutory Body in place to regulate the registration of diplomas, the prescription of veterinary medicines and the employment of veterinarians and veterinary para-professionals. This finding was shared by the OIE *Ad hoc* Group on the Evaluation of Veterinary Services, which issued successive recommendations for the need to address this shortfall.

### 3. Creating links

The OIE Veterinary Statutory Body Twinning Programme is the OIE's approach to address this shortfall and reinforce the capacities of Veterinary Statutory Bodies globally to comply with international standards better; this entails the establishment of links between a recognised Veterinary Statutory Body – the 'Parent' – and the beneficiary 'Candidate' Veterinary Statutory Body. Support, guidance, training and expertise are some of the outputs that a Parent will provide to a Candidate. However, it is important to note that, although the transfer of knowledge principally comes from the Parent to the Candidate, twinning projects are mutually beneficial, providing an opportunity for both the Parent and the Candidate to garner expertise and improve their compliance with OIE international standards.

Although the *Terrestrial Code* defines a Veterinary Statutory Body as an 'autonomous' body, this is not the case for all OIE Members. In certain countries, the functions of the Veterinary Statutory Body are assumed by an administrative authority or are performed by the Veterinary Authority itself. Potential Candidates for the OIE Veterinary Statutory Body Twinning Programme have the possibility to form a Veterinary Statutory Body that has the capacity to progressively achieve autonomy or to become completely autonomous.

This will depend on the state of advancement of the Candidate and its commitment to continue to develop beyond the completion of a twinning project. In any case, the twinning project should improve the Candidate's ability to comply with OIE standards, stimulating and fostering the required momentum to play a greater role nationally, regionally and worldwide.

The OIE Veterinary Statutory Body Twinning Programme is sufficiently flexible to cater for the support needed by a Candidate Veterinary Statutory Body, regardless of the starting point. A twinning project can assist a Candidate in becoming established in a situation in which there is a lack of national regulation or



it can serve to assist an established Veterinary Statutory Body improve its compliance with international standards. The ultimate goal is to help Veterinary Statutory Bodies become self-sufficient, have the capacity to develop the relevant national veterinary legislation and supervise professional practice.

Twinning projects under the Veterinary Statutory Body Twinning Programme are encouraged to include the participation of developing and in-transition countries, and priority will be given to applications from regions where capacities in this field are lacking.

To increase the chances of success, the twinning project should focus on well-defined, achievable and measurable outputs. Clear-cut benefits are realised throughout the project, dividing the twinning project into stages with set outputs from each stage. Progress can be monitored through the achievement of these goals.

Objectives for each twinning project are jointly agreed by the OIE and the parties involved. The Parent and its designated expert, the 'project leader', are the driving force of the twinning and ensure that the project is successfully implemented. A strong relationship will ensure a flow of expertise that will benefit both the Candidate and the Parent. Links should be formed between participants of the twinning at all levels.

The OIE World Animal Health and Welfare Fund provides financial support for twinning projects. It is not an objective of the twinning project to fund the purchase of hardware, although it may include an assessment of the needs for such hardware, so that other necessary resources – beyond those provided for the twinning project – can be allocated appropriately.

A twinning project may be funded entirely by the OIE. It may also be co-financed by the OIE and the Candidate or Parent or funded entirely by the latter parties (or directly by another donor). This is the case, for example, when one of the parties is in a country that has a favourable economic situation or where a bilateral technical assistance agreement exists between two countries.

The Candidate may already be benefitting from other bilateral or multilateral projects aimed at increasing its capacity or expertise. In this case, a twinning project should be designed to ensure coordination and synergy with other current and future projects. Dual funding for the same activities must be avoided; co-financing of complementary activities is encouraged.

The length of a twinning project may depend on its scale. OIE-certified twinning projects have a minimum duration of one year and a maximum duration of three years.



# OBJECTIVES OF TWINNING

The aim of the OIE Veterinary Statutory Body Twinning Programme is to encourage the creation or strengthening of national Veterinary Statutory Bodies and to ensure that they fulfil their responsibilities, whilst complying with international standards. Veterinary Statutory Bodies are essential for regulating the veterinary network under the Veterinary Authority (comprising both public and private sector components of Veterinary Services).

## 1. Eligible objectives

In addition to the individual objectives of each twinning project, and as previously iterated, the main objectives of twinning are to improve a country's compliance with OIE standards by adapting its national system of veterinary governance to suit its context and needs, thereby enabling it to apply the appropriate standards.

This can be achieved by:

- structuring the practice of veterinary medicine in order to optimise surveillance and emergency response networks and improve the access of beneficiaries to veterinary services;
- improving the quality of veterinary medical practice to increase the reliability of veterinary observations and diagnoses and the effectiveness of service provided to beneficiaries.

Irrespective of the scale of a twinning project, its objectives must be consistent with national plans to improve the governance of the Veterinary Services to enable OIE international standards to be better implemented.

**A twinning project can address some or all of the following items, some of which are interdependent, on the condition that the objectives are achievable:**

### Strategy

The definition of strategies to ensure the existence of a national veterinary network and development of a legal framework to regulate the professional practice in the beneficiary country, including:

- the implementation of professional demography studies;
- the development of initial and continuing education training plans;
- the definition of the qualification levels required for the practice of each profession involved in the field of veterinary medicine (mainly veterinarians and veterinary para-professionals) and the corresponding curricula and recognition of diplomas;
- the definition of the prerogatives, rights and obligations of the different professions involved;
- the development of professional rules (codes of conduct, ethical rules);
- the positioning and legal framework of the Veterinary Statutory Body needed to ensure its independence.



## Structure

(administrative, recruitment, financial and other mechanisms within the Veterinary Statutory Body):

- organisation of the Veterinary Statutory Body in the beneficiary country;
- internal rules of the Veterinary Statutory Body;
- elections or appointments within the Veterinary Statutory Body.

## Functions:

- internal operational procedures;
- procedures for registration and control of documentary evidence of initial and ongoing training;
- disciplinary procedures;
- defending the interests of the profession;
- official representation, etc.

The above is an indicative non-exhaustive list of possible focus areas for twinning projects within the framework of the OIE Veterinary Statutory Body Twinning Programme. Twinning projects may also address issues not provided for in OIE standards, but cannot be appropriate subjects for twinning in their own right; these may include issues such as social protection for veterinarians and/or veterinary para-professionals.

## 2. Ineligible objectives and activities

Activities that do not contribute to the establishment or improved compliance of a Veterinary Statutory Body in line with OIE international standards are ineligible. This is notably the case for activities aimed at defending special interest groups such as associations or unions.

Technical associations that seek to strengthen professional competencies, or conduct outreach or training activities are ineligible, as are associations of a social nature.



### 3. Conditions for success and criteria for selecting partners

The success of a twinning project, its sustainability and the expected benefits in the longer term all depend largely on the commitment of the parties and the appropriate governance of the Veterinary Services in the countries concerned. Support from the Veterinary Authority is therefore essential, and formal commitment from the OIE Delegate of both countries is required before a twinning project proposal can be finalised. Ideally, the twinning project should be included in the national strategic plan of Veterinary Services.

The following point is also important and is taken into account in evaluating projects:

- a twinning project should theoretically take place in a Candidate country that has already embarked on an OIE PVS Pathway mission and has therefore already undergone an evaluation using the OIE PVS Tool.

A PVS Gap Analysis and a Veterinary Legislation mission also help to obtain knowledge of the context, and are therefore referred to when assessing the project. This is also the case when the project's objectives refer to diagnostic elements and recommendations proposed by missions conducted under the PVS Pathway or contained in the strategic plan of the Veterinary Services:

- as twinning between Veterinary Statutory Bodies is founded on the sharing and transfer of experience, trust and communication are therefore crucial. Consequently, the OIE considers it an advantage if there are already links already between the partners prior to twinning, i.e. through regional or bilateral projects;
- nevertheless, this is not a precondition, as the aim of the twinning project is also to assist in the creation of linkages;
- as good communication is crucial, a common language or one in which each partner is fluent is a selection criterion;
- as the functions of Veterinary Statutory Bodies have a legal content and their missions involve the delegation of powers, it is also important for the legal systems of each partner to be compatible (or similar);
- preference is given to projects that receive or are likely to receive national or international support, enabling them to have adequate resources;
- exchanges carried out under the twinning project should not have to contend with geographical, economic or political problems such as travel restrictions for the experts concerned;
- project plans must meet a need that clearly corresponds to the Candidate's context and must be fully described;
- limiting factors and risks should be identified and taken into account.



## 4. Roles

### The Parent

The Parent is chosen by mutual agreement with the Candidate and the OIE, based on its ability to fulfil its mandate and use and promote OIE standards.

The Parent must possess the necessary competencies to assist the Candidate with improving its capacity, and both the OIE and the Candidate must consider that these competencies are at a sufficient level to enable the Candidate to fulfil its objectives. It is not advisable for a given Parent to be involved in more than three twinning arrangements. This restriction could be reconsidered in the case of a twinning project specifically aimed at harmonising the situation in several Candidates.

The Parent is responsible for preparing and managing the project. Among its active or honorary members, it must designate an expert to be the official twinning project leader. This designated a project leader who is not one of its members, is subject to the signing of a service contract that stipulates the duties and responsibilities of the parties without transferring the Parent's responsibilities to the expert. It may nominate a Focal Point (financial manager) for budgetary and administrative issues.

The project leader must have the necessary ethical and professional qualities to be able to provide the Candidate with institutional, organisational or regulatory assistance, advice and training.

The project leader must finalise the project proposal and work plan with the Candidate, and they should jointly submit it to the OIE Headquarters in Paris.

Once the contract has been signed, the project leader is to implement the project and supervise the activities. The project leader is responsible for authorising expenditure.

The project leader is to prepare and submit activity reports to the OIE.

The Parent is subject to financial audit by the OIE and, where appropriate, by donors.

### The Candidate

The Candidate must have the necessary capacity to carry out the work envisaged and achieve the proposed objectives of the twinning project.

The Candidate should be fully committed to improving its capacity and expertise with the aim of meeting OIE standards, in accordance with the provisions of the *Terrestrial Code*.

Although the Parent is the driver of the project, the Candidate should be the main beneficiary of the end result achieved from the twinning project, and disseminate the project's outputs as widely as possible throughout the Veterinary Statutory Body.

The Candidate can nominate an expert to be the project leader who would be responsible for the activities in the Candidate's country.



## The OIE

The OIE Headquarters provides support and coordination for the twinning project.

The OIE:

- publishes and updates the *OIE Guide to Veterinary Statutory Body Twinning Projects*, which defines the principles, procedure and rules governing the twinning process;
- receives expressions of interest and submits the twinning applications to the relevant departments to obtain technical feedback during the project pre-evaluation and partnership development phases or the project evaluation phase;
- selects projects eligible for financial support, based on the project plan, the budget proposal and within the limit of the funds available;
- ensures, through the intermediate reports that it receives, that the Parent is working closely with the Candidate to implement the project;
- ensures that the technical and financial controls as foreseen in the twinning agreement are applied and comply with the requirements of the donors involved;
- publishes and updates a list of twinning projects in progress or completed, indicating the Parent and Candidate Veterinary Statutory Bodies involved;
- may collect data for the analysis and preparation of reports and publications, while respecting any confidentiality clauses.



# THE PROCESS

**Annex 2** provides a flowchart illustrating the various stages in a twinning project.

## 1. Expression of interest

Veterinary Statutory Bodies can individually or jointly express their interest in participating in a twinning project as a Candidate or as a Parent.

An expression of interest must be submitted to the Director General of the OIE. There is no set format, but it must include at least:

- a description of the reasons for and objectives of twinning;
- an assurance of the Veterinary Authority's tentative support;
- a brief description of the project and its contents;
- a brief description of the human and material resources that will be used for the project;
- a rough estimation of the human and financial resources required.

Where appropriate, the expression of interest should indicate the chosen partner(s).

If the expression of interest is not submitted by the Delegate to the OIE of the country concerned, it is compulsory that a copy be sent to the Delegate, whose opinion will be sought.

**The submission of an expression of interest confirms the acceptance of the principles, conditions and rules of the OIE Veterinary Statutory Body Twinning Programme.**

## 2. Pre-evaluation

In response to expressions of interest, a pre-evaluation of the twinning request verifies that each request complies with the principles and conditions of the OIE Veterinary Statutory Body Twinning Programme, and that the proposed objectives are eligible.

During the pre-evaluation, aspects such as the likelihood of success in the given context, the selection of partners and whether they are technically and materially capable of participating in or managing the project, and the technicalities of the twinning request are reviewed. An indicative budget envelope may also be established.

Once the twinning request has been pre-evaluated and should the Director General of the OIE tentatively agree to their participation in a twinning project, partners can then prepare a twinning project proposal (comprising the project plan and the budget proposal), taking into account the comments made by the OIE and guidance in the present *Guide to Veterinary Statutory Body Twinning Projects*.

If the scope of the project allows and if the partners have already reached an agreement and have the necessary competencies, the expression of interest and the submission of the project proposal could be combined in a single step. In this case, the pre-evaluation phase will be included in the evaluation of the project.



Project proposals are validated by the Director General of the OIE after consultation with the relevant OIE departments.

The process is transparent and the OIE can be consulted for assistance at any stage, including assistance to identify a suitable partner if none is specified in the expression of interest.

## Multi-partner expressions of interest

A twinning project is principally between the two project partners and the OIE; however, there is the possibility of involving other parties in certain activities if they can usefully contribute to achieving the objectives of the twinning project. This could be the case for other Parent Veterinary Statutory Bodies or public, private or non-governmental bodies working in areas directly related to the subject of the twinning project, notably those that could strengthen legal matters, training and communication.

Thus, for certain activities, a Parent could collaborate with other parties or work in conjunction with another Parent in its proposal. Whatever the case, a twinning project can have only one project leader. This must be taken into account in the expression of interest.

Conversely, several Candidates could be associated in a twinning project with a single Parent. This can be a practical arrangement, for example when a twinning project includes a major training component.

All participants in a twinning project should fulfil the same requirements as those applicable to the Parent or Candidate, as appropriate.

A Candidate or Parent wishing to take advantage of any of these possibilities must state this clearly in its expression of interest and be aware of the potential organisational and financial complexity of the arrangement.

## Conclusions and follow-up

Based on the information provided and the principles and rules of the OIE Veterinary Statutory Body Twinning Programme, the OIE will assess the suitability of developing a twinning project and its feasibility.

At any stage the OIE may provide advice on factors that could risk compromising the acceptance of a request, suggest changes to the way in which an expression of interest is worded, and issue recommendations for the preparation of a project, or request further information.

Following the pre-evaluation of a twinning request, the Director General of the OIE will inform the applicants of the outcome by:

- **Rejecting the application:** if the objectives are beyond the scope of the OIE Veterinary Statutory Body Twinning Programme, if they appear unattainable under the conditions presented, if the applicants do not meet the requirements, or in the case of an unfavourable opinion from one of the Delegates to the OIE.

A rejection may also be to avoid creating harmful competition between projects. This decision may be accompanied by recommendations for submitting a new expression of interest.

- **Tentatively accepting the request for twinning under specific conditions:** if points that are unsatisfactory are corrected or taken into account in the preparation of the final project proposal. These conditions are indicated in the reply and will be examined during the evaluation of the project.



- **Tentatively accepting the request for twinning:** if a partner is not nominated in the expression of interest, the letter indicating the tentative agreement may, if appropriate, suggest one or more potential partners. The letter will also indicate the subsequent steps for the following procedure.

### 3. Submission of proposals for OIE-supported twinning projects

Once the expression of interest has been tentatively, unconditionally or otherwise agreed, a Parent and, in most cases, a Candidate, would work together to undertake twinning. The Parent, represented by the nominated project leader, would draft a twinning project proposal and submit it to the Director General of the OIE. The project leader is the OIE's contact person and responsible for coordinating contact with project partners.

**Although the phase of submitting an expression of interest is strongly recommended, partners can nevertheless present a twinning project directly if they have been able to ascertain that it meets all the criteria examined during the pre-evaluation phase.**

During the project preparation phase prior to twinning, partners can hold a preliminary meeting, which is pre-financed by them, but can be charged to the project at a later date if the following conditions are met:

- the project needs, objectives or priorities are defined and the project proposal is drafted;
- the costs for the meeting are reasonable and in line with the budgetary rules of the OIE Veterinary Statutory Body Twinning Programme;
- all costs are justified in accordance with the rules of the Twinning Programme.

Costs associated with this preliminary meeting can be reimbursed by the OIE only once the twinning project has been signed by all parties. However, the parties organising a preliminary meeting are required to pre-finance it and bear the full cost of the meeting if the project is not approved.

### Contents of the project proposal

The project proposal (comprising the project plan and budget proposal) must be drafted using the OIE's template once the request for twinning has been tentatively accepted. This template can be provided upon request.

The project proposal should include a draft contract and the following items, which, unless otherwise stated in the contract, will constitute the annexes:

- an official joint letter, or separate letters, signed by the representative of the Parent Veterinary Statutory Body in charge of the project and the head(s) of the Candidate Veterinary Statutory Body(ies) indicating their agreement to the twinning project;
- a letter signed by the OIE Delegates of the two countries involved, indicating their agreement to the twinning project;
- these letters can be received at any stage of the approval process, but must be annexed to the proposal before any funds can be transferred. Ideally, they should be provided as early as possible in the project preparation process;



- a description of the structural organisation of each Veterinary Statutory Body party involved, and the way in which responsibilities are divided within each Veterinary Statutory Body;
- the *curriculum vitae* (CV) of the project leader, the contact person in the Candidate country and the persons in charge of project activities. As the qualifications of the project leader are crucial, any change of project leader after the project's validation must be approved by the parties involved and by the OIE;
- a detailed project plan;
- a budget proposal prepared in accordance with the template and the recommendations provided in **Annex 3**, including justification for the costs;
- a description of the financial management system and bank details of the Parent Veterinary Statutory Body. In addition, a description of the way in which responsibilities will be distributed regarding the authorisation and accounting of expenses incurred during the implementation of the project is required;
- a description of third-party cover, including sickness and repatriation insurance cover for persons taking part in the twinning project and required to travel in the participating countries;
- a paper and electronic copy of the proposal should be submitted to the Director General of the OIE in one of the official languages (English, French or Spanish) of the OIE.

However, based on previous experience, the use of English is recommended as this will facilitate communication between the partners, the OIE and potential donors.

## Recommendations on drafting the project plan

The project plan describes exactly what the objectives of the project are and how they will be met, at what cost, when and by whom. It lays out the details of the project and will serve as a reference point throughout the project.

The project plan should also include an accurate description of the proposed monitoring and performance indicators and foreseeable risks to the project. In addition, it should describe the expected results and underline the main areas of work where improvements will have positive effects.

Where appropriate, the project plan should be divided into stages with defined measurable outputs from each stage. At the end of each stage, it is important to review and assess project progress and address any outstanding issues. This would include checking that targets have been met, assessing budgetary expenditure, considering project risks and planning for the next stage. Any lessons learnt should be used to improve the next stages of the project.

To ensure optimal benefits and avoid duplication, the project plan should account for the activities of any other ongoing programmes if they are likely to have an impact on the Candidate Veterinary Statutory Body.

The project plan is a dynamic document and should, if necessary, be updated during the course of the project on the condition that the initial budget is not exceeded. Amendments or changes to the project plan should be highlighted in the interim and annual reports.

An outline of what the project plan should include is shown in **Annex 4**.



## Recommendations on budget presentation

A budget for the project is agreed between the OIE and the twinning partners. An initial draft budget is jointly submitted by the Parent and Candidate as part of the project proposal. It must reflect the subjects and activities outlined in the project plan.

It should be subdivided into subjects, activities and expense categories (travel, per diem, etc.). A subject is a general item, such as a competency that can be improved on, whereas an activity is more specific, such as a particular workshop.

Each activity forms a separate budget line. An activity should correspond to an isolated cost, i.e. separate, and not linked to any other costs in the budget.

The cost of an activity is subdivided into unit costs by expense category, and the corresponding quantities should be indicated in the column entitled 'Number of units'.

Justification for costs should be provided wherever possible. Lump sum amounts without any breakdown of costs should be avoided. For example, 'organisational costs' for meetings or workshops should be further elaborated so as to indicate where funds would be disbursed.

**All costs, including travel and per diem expenses (daily allowances), must be calculated in accordance with OIE rules.**

The budget should preferably be in euros (EUR), or else in US dollars (USD). In certain cases, where justified and if agreed by the OIE, another currency may be used (e.g. pounds sterling).

In all cases: budgets must be presented in a single currency.

## Eligibility of expenses

The only acceptable costs are those relating to activities that are themselves eligible, such as the purchase of supplies, services, and service charges such as visas and per diem allowances. Capital expenses and investments are non-eligible expenses.

The following are examples of eligible expenses:

- travel costs and per diem (daily allowance) for experts, participants and service providers travelling from the Parent to the Candidate, or vice versa, to participate in activities under the twinning project;
- supplies directly related to the twinning project: these include educational media used for practical training activities and workshops or registration of members; details of the costs related to training activities and specific costs must be submitted;
- translation expenses and honoraria for interpreters and translators for discussions, seminars or workshops;
- teleconferencing and telecommunication expenses, subject to the appropriate justification;
- honoraria for consultants, if they have been included in the project plan;
- insurance expenses incurred specifically in the implementation of the twinning project;
- setting up of a database of members of both the Parent and Candidate Veterinary Statutory Body.



The following are examples of ineligible costs:

- general overheads and administrative expenses of the Veterinary Statutory Bodies involved;
- salaries, miscellaneous expenses and contingencies;
- office equipment and furniture, construction, renovation or maintenance of premises;
- information technology hardware, office automation software and consumables;
- funds and provisions for the Veterinary Statutory Body such as social insurance funds, insurance, etc.

## Assessment of needs

During the twinning project, the Parent may arrange for an assessment of the material and capacity-building needs of the Candidate. This will take into account the expertise at the Candidate Veterinary Statutory Body, the level of expertise required, the capability and resources of the Veterinary Statutory Body to implement its functions.

## OIE-certified twinning between Veterinary Statutory Bodies without OIE financial support

Certain Veterinary Statutory Bodies may wish to apply for an OIE-certified twinning project without requesting financial support from the OIE. For example, they may receive funds from their own country or from other donors. In such cases there is no need to submit a detailed budget; the contract will be adapted accordingly. However, the project should comply with other aspects of the OIE Veterinary Statutory Body Twinning Programme, taking into account, in particular, the PVS Pathway in the beneficiary country, the project objectives and the monitoring of outputs and performance. A signed written agreement will ensure that the twinning procedures comply with the objectives and quality requirements of the OIE Veterinary Statutory Body Twinning Programme, and this should be submitted to the OIE.

## Training

Training is an inherent part of the OIE Veterinary Statutory Body Twinning Programme and must contribute to the overall objectives of the project, their sustainability, and developing the Candidate's autonomy.

There are no particular limits on training activities or the form that they should take. However, these activities should be regularly evaluated to assess whether the objectives are being met so that improvements can be made, when necessary. Arrangements for evaluating training actions must be described in the project plan.

Training may include:

- participation in meetings, technical conferences or seminars;
- short secondments of experts.

When planning a seminar it is important that participants are chosen for their experience and expertise or are chosen from a specific related area of work. Learning material must be relevant. The objectives of the training activity should be clearly defined from the outset so that suitable participants can be selected. When deciding on the suitability of participants, it may help to review the CVs or brief biographies of the applicant.



It is the responsibility of each VSB to address insurance issues for staff travelling under the twinning project. The OIE will not be held responsible for any illness or accident occurring while experts are on mission abroad.

## **Training trainers**

It is important that people are trained in a way that allows them to disseminate expertise to their colleagues and to stimulate debate in their own region. This involves selecting attendees for training sessions with good communication skills who are in a position to pass on their knowledge. Training activities should take this into consideration, when relevant, by incorporating capacity building skills into the work programme and using training material that is suitable for wider dissemination.

## **Secondments**

A member of one of the partner Veterinary Statutory Bodies may be seconded, either as a trainee or trainer, to the other.

These secondments must clearly meet the defined needs and be examined in advance so that they are well planned.

The maximum duration of a secondment financed by the OIE is one month, with the possibility of repeating this once.

As secondments are part of the activities of the twinning project, they must provide direct benefits to the twinning project.

## **External consultants**

The use of external consultants should be limited to certain specific consultancy activities or training activities for which outside expertise is required. The activities in question must be fully described and budgeted.

If the consultants are not identified in the project plan, but are recruited while it is being implemented, the choice of consultants will need to be validated by the OIE.



## 4. Evaluation of the proposal

Each proposal is examined individually by the relevant OIE departments, which will provide their comments on the technical and financial components. The final decision is made by the Director General of the OIE.

The evaluation will examine whether the proposal falls within the scope of the twinning and its compliance with the relevant and previously defined modalities and principles, notably those related to the PVS Pathway.

The evaluation will also analyse the objectives, the appropriateness and coordination of the activities stated in the proposal, and their eligibility in terms of how they conform to the requirements stated in this guide.

The Parent may choose to present the project in two stages: firstly submitting the project plan and waiting for it to be accepted, and then establishing the budget proposal. This will obviously lengthen the process.

If the procedures laid down in this guide conflict with the rules of the countries concerned and impede the conclusion of the project, the necessary adaptations may be adopted with the agreement of the parties involved and the OIE.

### Feedback following evaluation

The OIE will consider each proposal and respond by accepting the proposal, requesting further clarification or minor modifications or rejecting the proposal and stating its reasons for rejection.

The OIE may ask for additional information or adjustments to be made directly to the proposal at any time without having to start the entire process again.

If it is accepted, the project proposal will become the final version, and the final contract can be drawn up.

If it is returned with comments, the Parent will have the opportunity to consider these comments and submit a revised version, duly informing the Candidate.

### Signature of the contract after project approval and initiation of the project

A contract covering the conditions of the implementation and financing of the twinning project is to be signed by the Director General of the OIE and the representative of the Parent after the project plan and the budget proposal have been approved and when all the required documents have been submitted. These documents will form the annexes to the contract.

The project plan should be signed, and each page initialled, by all partners involved in the twinning.

If the beneficiary Veterinary Statutory Body has yet to exist or is not sufficiently independent, the project plan will be signed and initialled by the Delegate to the OIE.

The contract will be signed by the Director General of the OIE and the project leader at the Parent Veterinary Statutory Body. The OIE is responsible for sending the signed contract to all the parties concerned.



## 5. Financing and payments

Once the twinning contract is signed by the partners and the OIE, the OIE will transfer the funds corresponding to the validated budget in successive tranches solely to the Parent Veterinary Statutory Body, which is responsible for managing the funds.

As a general rule, approximately 50% of the total budget will be transferred to the Parent. The date of receipt marks the date of project initiation.

The remaining tranches will be paid in accordance with the conditions and schedule indicated in the contract.

They are calculated on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the duration of the project, the total budget for the project and depending on actual expenses, and may be conditional to the submission of technical and financial reports. These conditions are stipulated in the contract.

Expenses must be authorised by the project leader. They must correspond to activities provided for in the project and comply with the rules on eligibility.

They should be paid by the financial manager in accordance with the accounting procedures to which he or she is subject.

The financial manager must keep all evidence of expense commitments and payment as required by the OIE financial regulations for at least five years and provide a copy in support of the financial section of the reports.

Any budget that remains unspent at the end of the project must be refunded to the OIE (or will be deducted from the final payment, as appropriate).

## 6. Project initiation

Project initiation commences as soon as the first tranche of funding has been received by the Parent Veterinary Statutory Body.

The project is carried out under the authority of the project leader by the designated persons in charge of the various activities as per the project plan.

The project leader is responsible for ensuring the smooth running of the project. He or she will oversee the risks.

Any amendments or changes made to the project plan must be documented in the interim and annual reports.

## 7. Project risks

It is important to be realistic and have an awareness of the factors that may hamper project progress and increase project costs. These risks may be present from the beginning of the twinning project or arise once it has started.



Identifiable risks should be described in the project plan along with an assessment of their potential consequences. These risks should be taken into account when developing activities and scheduling project timelines.

Before starting and during the course of the project, it is advisable to:

- identify project risks;
- consider the impact that they may have on the project if they occur;
- consider how likely they are to occur;
- consider what action can be taken to minimise their impact;
- document contingency plans in the event of an identified risk occurring.

Political risks may also need to be taken into account, such as the frequent replacement of the Chief Veterinary Officer, a change of supervisory Minister or the instability of legislation and its interpretation or application.

The OIE must be notified immediately if a risk becomes an issue that may affect the entire project or budget.

## 8. Reports and monitoring

### Reports

In collaboration with the partners involved, the following reports are to be prepared by the Parent and submitted to the OIE Headquarters:

- **Interim report.** This is prepared between the fourth and eighth month of the first year and should provide a brief summary of the implementation, state of advancement and technical and financial situation of the project;
- **Annual reports.** These are submitted within one month of the end of each year from the project start date;
- **Final report.** This should be submitted as soon as possible and no later than two months after the completion of the project. The final report should be jointly prepared and co-signed by the partners. It should include the items listed in **Annex 5**;
- **Exceptional report.** See Section 11.

Reports should be factual and concise, describing the activities undertaken, their level of completion, the difficulties encountered and any initiatives taken. Reports should be written in the same language as the contract.

They should provide comments and proposals on ways of improving how the project is being implemented or its results.

Annual and final reports must include a statement of actual expenditure.

If the project plan consists of several stages, it is recommended that a report be submitted at the end of each stage. These reports should follow a similar format to that of the final report.



## Monitoring

Monitoring is essential to ensure that the project remains within its scope, meets its objectives and uses its financial resources effectively. Monitoring can also detect problems at an early stage, allowing the necessary corrective action to be taken. It is based on the reports and reviews performed under the responsibility of the project leader at the Parent Veterinary Statutory Body, who determines how frequently and in what form monitoring should be carried out.

The purpose of a review is to analyse the implementation of the project and summarise the outputs. The review can also demonstrate whether objectives are being met and, if this is not the case, determine the cause and take corrective action.

## 9. Modifications

Although the project plan justifies the budget, it may need to be amended in order to take into account the potential risks and any problems or new developments that may arise during the project.

Minor changes, for example to the timetable or the way in which activities are carried out, that do not require any change in the budget can be decided by mutual agreement between the partners. The project leader of the Parent is responsible for these changes, and they should be described in all reports to the OIE.

Change, requiring a revision in the distribution of the budget, but not affecting the total budget, should be submitted to the OIE for approval.

Changes that risk affecting the content of the project and the eligibility of activities, regardless of the said changes having no financial impact, require the prior approval of the Director General of the OIE.

Changes that would result in a budget over-run are not permitted.

During the course of the project, there may be changes to leaders, lead experts or contact persons in either the Parent or the Candidate Veterinary Statutory Body. A change of project leader would require an amendment to the twinning contract. The amendment should be prepared by the Parent and must be approved and signed by the partners and the OIE.

Changes involving other personnel should be approved by the parties and notified to the OIE in an exceptional report.

## 10. Verification of expenditure

Financial commitments must comply with the project plan, the validated budget and the eligibility rules.

During the project and up to five years after its completion, the OIE or a donor may, without prior notice, request a financial audit, which may require access to any accounting document or financial report relating to the twinning project.

The audit would be carried out by an authorised OIE member of staff or an independent financial expert appointed by the OIE or by a donor with the agreement of the OIE.



## 11. Unforeseen events

In the case of a serious event that could affect the project programme or the budget, the OIE should be notified immediately in an exceptional report. This report should provide a full description of the problem and identify possible solutions. Examples of such events include legislative or regulatory changes affecting the organisation of the Veterinary Services or conditions relating to the practice of veterinary medicine and changes in key officials.

The OIE will examine the notification and proposals with the project leader to decide what action to take.

### Premature termination of the project

In the unlikely event of premature termination, the OIE, the Parent or the Candidate can terminate the project by providing three months' notice to the other parties in writing.

Should this be the case, payment of any eligible expenses incurred or indissolubly committed during the project must be reimbursed by the OIE, subject to provision of the necessary documentary evidence. No payments other than these and no compensation will be due to the Parent or Candidate.

### Extension of the project

External factors may delay the implementation of twinning activities. This may require the project to be extended. If the twinning partners consider that an extension to the project is required, they should submit a request to the OIE, stating their reasons for the project to be extended.

Under no circumstances may an extension give rise to a change in the global budget. It may simply lead to a readjustment of the schedule of activities and payments.

The OIE will address each request on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the justification provided and any restrictions imposed by donors.

The extension would require an amendment to the contract.

## 12. Project closure

Unless it has been extended, a twinning project would terminate on the date stipulated in the contract.

A final report, comprising a technical section and a financial section, must be prepared upon completion of the project, and must then be finalised and submitted to the OIE within the two months (see point 8) following the project's end date.



## Checklist of documents to be provided

### **Project proposal** – including:

- official letter signed by the Heads of both VSBs;
- details of the experts (including their CVs) and VSBs;
- project plan;
- budget proposal.

### **Following project approval:**

- official letter(s) signed by the Delegates of both OIE Member Countries (this can be submitted to the OIE at any time; however, the OIE will not transfer funds to the Parent VSB until the letter(s) has (have) been received);
- signed financial contract between the Parent VSB and the OIE;
- project plan and budget signed by the Parent and Candidate VSBs (initialled on each page).

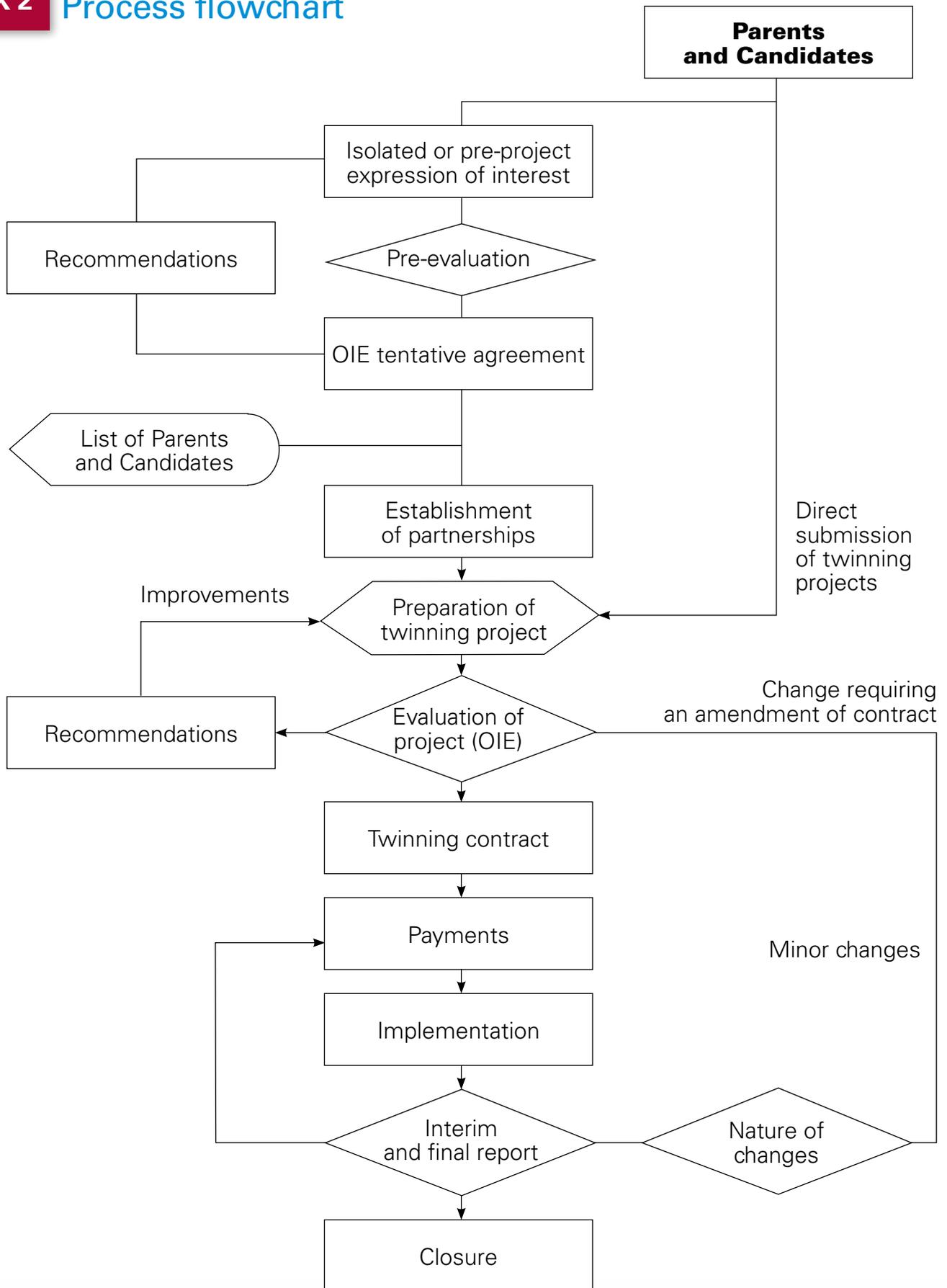
### **Project reports** – as a minimum:

- an interim project report;
- annual project reports;
- a final project report.

### **Notification of project closure**



## ANNEX 2 Process flowchart



## Budget proposal template

Parent VSB:	
Candidate VSB:	
Project start date (day/month/year):	
Project end date (day/month/year):	

Currency (EUR preferred; USD as second option):

Budget item	Unit cost (a)	Number of units (b)	Subtotal [(a) × (b) = (c)]
<b>Subject 1: (e.g. training) (1)</b>			
<b>Activity 1.1: (e.g. Workshop on ... ) (2)</b>			
Travel costs (3), (4), (5)			- €
Visas			- €
Per diem			- €
Venue rental			- €
Training materials (printing, translation, etc.)			- €
Shipment of training materials			- €
Subtotal Activity 1.1			- €
<b>Activity 1.2:</b>			
Travel costs			- €
Per diem			- €
Material (printing, etc.)			- €
Subtotal Activity 1.2			- €
<b>Activity 1.3:</b>			
[ ... ]			- €
[ ... ]			- €
[ ... ]			- €
[ ... ]			- €
Subtotal Activity 1.3			- €
<b>Subtotal Subject 1</b>			
<b>Subject 2:</b>			
<b>Activity 2.1:</b>			
[ ... ]			- €
[ ... ]			- €
[ ... ]			- €
[ ... ]			- €
Subtotal Activity 2.1			- €
<b>Activity 2.2:</b>			
[ ... ]			- €
[ ... ]			- €
[ ... ]			- €
[ ... ]			- €
Subtotal Activity 2.2			- €



<b>Activity 2.3:</b>			
[ ...]			- €
[ ...]			- €
[ ...]			- €
[ ...]			- €
Subtotal Activity 2.3			- €
<b>Subtotal Subject 2</b>			- €
<b>Subject 3:</b>			
<b>Activity 3.1:</b>			
[ ...]			- €
[ ...]			- €
[ ...]			- €
[ ...]			- €
Subtotal Activity 3.1			- €
<b>Activity 3.2:</b>			
[ ...]			- €
[ ...]			- €
[ ...]			- €
[ ...]			- €
Subtotal Activity 3.2			- €
<b>Activity 3.3:</b>			
[ ...]			- €
[ ...]			- €
[ ...]			- €
[ ...]			- €
Subtotal Activity 3.3			- €
<b>Subtotal Subject 3</b>			- €
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>			- €

- 1) A **subject** is a general item (e.g. training; alignment with the OIE Guidelines on Veterinary Education Core Curriculum; staff exchange programme), whereas an activity is more specific (e.g. a workshop)
- 2) Each **activity** should form a budget line. An activity should be an isolated cost, i.e. separate and not linked to any other costs in the budget plan
- 3) Each activity should be subdivided into budget lines detailing the **nature of the expenses** for said activity (i.e. travel, daily allowances, etc.)
- 4) The following are examples of **eligible costs**, to be confirmed on a case-by-case basis by the OIE after project budget proposals are submitted:
  - travel costs (economy class) and per diem, for example for experts visiting the Parent or Candidate VSB to participate in activities directly related to the twinning project;
  - training materials and publications, including translation costs;
  - shipment of educational and training materials;
  - training activities and materials such as stationery specifically for seminars, excluding certain items such as printers, information technology (IT) equipment, photocopiers;
  - communication costs for telephone conferences (with sufficient justification).
- 5) The following are examples of **non-eligible costs**:
  - general overheads, administrative costs, and contingencies;
  - hardware (such as information technology hardware, office automation software and consumables).

The project plan should include the following:

1. the background of the project;
2. a concise summary of the strategic goals and objectives and how they will be met;
3. a work plan with defined stages of the project and task descriptions (showing who is involved in which task, including administration and budget management);
4. timetables and measurable outputs (targets) for each stage;
5. foreseeable risks to the project and mitigation measures;
6. a coordination plan (where relevant – to avoid duplication and ensure synergy if other projects involve the Candidate VSB);
7. details of the Heads of the VSBs and experts involved (including their CVs);
8. reporting schedule;
9. payment chart;
10. bank details.



### Intermediate reports

The interim report, to be prepared between the fourth and eighth month of the first year, and the annual report(s), to be submitted within one month of the end of each year of the project, should include at least:

- a summary of the project's aims and objectives, as set out at the start, including justification for the project;
- a description of the state of advancement including a description of the activities carried out;
- a description of the technical and financial status of the project;
- a description of the situation in the Candidate VSB at the end of the period covered;
- a description of the activities planned for the next period;
- a report of expenditure.

### Final report

The final report must be submitted as soon as possible and no later than two months after the completion of the project. The report should be prepared jointly by the partners who should co-sign it.

The final report of the project should include the following:

- a summary of the project's aims and objectives, as set out at the start, including justification for the project;
- a description of the situation in the Candidate VSB at the start of the project and the priority areas that were selected for improvement;
- any changes made to the initial project plan, such as a change in direction or scope;
- a description of activities;
- a description of the situation in the Candidate VSB at the end of the project, including its ability to maintain the achieved objectives;
- a final report of expenditure;
- lessons learned and recommendations to improve future projects;
- a medium- and long-term strategy for the Candidate VSB, which maintains the link between the two VSBs.

### Payments

Funds are transferred by the OIE to the Parent VSB, which is responsible for their management. Payments will be made when the project is initiated and on receipt of the intermediate reports. Payment amounts are a proportion of the total budget and are calculated on a case-by-case basis. As a rule, approximately 50% of the total budget will be transferred to the Parent VSB. The date of receipt marks the date of project initiation.

The remaining budget will be transferred to the Parent VSB over the course of the project, following receipt of the interim, annual and final reports, in accordance with the provisions of the contract for each twinning project. Any portion of the budget remaining unspent at the close of the project (or non-eligible expenditure) must be refunded to the OIE (or will be deducted from the final payment, as appropriate).



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