



# UN-EU Guidelines For Financing of Local Costs In Development Co-operation with Viet Nam Version 2013



Issued by UN Agencies in Viet Nam, the EU Delegation to Viet Nam  
and the Ministry of Planning and Investment of Viet Nam

Ha Noi, December 2013

**UN-EU GUIDELINES FOR FINANCING OF  
LOCAL COSTS IN DEVELOPMENT CO-OPERATION  
WITH VIET NAM**

**Version 2013**

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MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND INVESTMENT OF VIET NAM

## PREFACE

We are pleased to present these updated guidelines, including a set of unified norms for local costs related to the management of Official Development Assistance (ODA) in Viet Nam. This is a result of a joint collaboration between the Government of Viet Nam (GoV), United Nations (UN) and European Union (EU).

We commend the GoV for leading this tripartite initiative, thereby creating greater transparency and a basis for harmonization and alignment between donors and Government, in the spirit of the Ha Noi Core Statement on Aid Effectiveness.

The results of this joint endeavour can be found in these guidelines. The UN/EU is committed to follow these guidelines as much as possible subject to their respective rules and regulations.

Other donors are invited to use these guidelines for their ODA projects/programmes in Viet Nam.

We firmly believe that these harmonized cost norms will make a tangible contribution to improving aid effectiveness in Viet Nam.

*Ha Noi, 09 December 2013*



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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>GoV</b>	Government of Viet Nam
<b>IP</b>	Implementing Partner/Agency
<b>MOF</b>	Ministry of Finance
<b>MPI</b>	Ministry of Planning and Investment
<b>ODA</b>	Official Development Assistance
<b>TOR</b>	Terms of Reference
<b>UN</b>	United Nations

# INTRODUCTION

In June 2009, the GoV, UN and EU for the first time introduced the common UN-EU Guidelines for Financing of Local Costs in Development Co-operation with Viet Nam (Version 2009). This all-encompassing concerted effort - based upon an open market approach - was considered a significant step towards gradual alignment of donor cost norms and GoV systems for ODA-funded programmes and projects in Viet Nam. It also signified the GoV's intention to progressively update its cost norms closer to market conditions.

The second version of the UN-EU Guidelines (Version 2012) was made available following a review and updating process employing the same methodology and approach used for Version 2009.

The period of implementation since 2009 has proven that the common UN-EU Guidelines were based upon the correct methodology and approach that have brought about positive results for improving aid effectiveness and strengthening national ownership in Viet Nam.

To further facilitate the implementation of ODA-funded programmes and projects in Viet Nam, the common UN-EU Guidelines For Financing of Local Costs in Development Co-operation with Viet Nam (Version 2013) is introduced following a thorough review and updating process.

This common UN-EU Guidelines document is based upon the following principles:

- Reflect the spirit of the Ha Noi Core Statement in respect of harmonization and alignment, with increased ownership and capacity in public systems involved in ODA, at all levels
- Ensure transparency and accountability in utilizing ODA resources under specific ODA agreements
- Enable appropriate resourcing and effective implementation of projects in a timely manner
- Simplify structures giving clear guidelines for implementation
- Use of local market conditions through the application of qualitative standards linked to respective reference markets using an established methodology
- Encourage the adoption of best practices
- Facilitate periodical reviews of rates, at least annually, using the same methodology suggested by the Tripartite Working Group<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Tripartite Working Group consists of representatives from GoV agencies (MPI and MOF), the UN and EU.

## **GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS**

### **Implementing Partner/Agency**

Is the entity selected by the GoV, UN and the EU and documented in the detailed project outline or project document to directly manage and implement a programme or project supported by a UN Agency or the EU.

### **Project Personnel**

An individual (in a position as identified in Annex I) directly contracted through a selection process by the IP to provide services to the IP as per the agreed terms of reference (TOR).

### **Service Providers**

Individuals who are not project personnel and meet the requirements identified by the project to provide technical and professional support services in specific fields, issues and activities during a specified period as designated in the work plan. Service providers include the following:

#### *Consultants*

Tasked to provide specific and time bound outputs, for which they are contracted through a selection process, as per the agreed TOR.

#### *Interpreters/Translators*

Experienced professionals with a proven official record of providing high quality translation/interpretation services for UN agencies, the EU or other international donor organizations and (or) their projects, in relevant subject areas to provide interpretation/translation services in support of specific project activities.

#### *Resource Persons*

Individuals who are required to prepare and/or provide inputs to finalize resource materials, organize/facilitate and/or provide technical/intellectual inputs for training, seminar and workshop events of a specific project.

### **Regular Project Meetings**

Meetings that concern project management.



**A High Level Meeting, Conference or Event**

An event chaired or participated in by a representative equal to or higher than a minister or provincial people's committee chairman from the GoV side and/or a representative equal to or higher than an ambassador/head of mission from the donor side.

**Per Diem**

Comprises the total allowance intended to cover accommodation, meals and sundry expenses (incidentals), including transport costs from place of accommodation to the first meeting location in the area of official business, and vice versa.

**Authorization to Work for a Project**

Authorization to work for a project must be in the form of written permission from an appropriate representative of an employer to an individual to work as project personnel or a service provider for a project/programme for a specified period of time.

**Relevant Experience**

Full-time work experience after graduation in the area of expertise as required in the TOR.

## **SCOPE OF APPLICATION**

These common UN-EU guidelines are applicable to activities under projects/programmes funded by the UN and/or EU that are approved in project documents and/or work plans and implemented by IPs and other counterparts in Viet Nam.

The cost norms in these common UN-EU guidelines concern general project management and implementation costs.

For specific cost categories not covered in the common UN-EU guidelines, they can be addressed by additional sector-specific cost norms and/or cost norms established by legally recognized implementing partners approved by the MPI, MOF and donors.

The guidelines are available in English and Vietnamese languages and both versions are considered to be of equal official standing. In the unlikely case of discrepancies between the two versions, the English version will take precedence over the Vietnamese one.

These guidelines become effective for all new and ongoing project/programmes as of the date of signature of this document. In the case of ongoing and officially committed projects/programmes, the application is subject to their current financial year budget availability.

These common UN-EU guidelines, when implemented, will completely supersede all previous common UN-EU guidelines.

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

## 1. Viet Nam Contributions to Project/Programme Budgets

The GoV is expected to meet the following costs:

- i. Salaries and allowances for GoV officials of the implementing partners, and for GoV officials on secondment to the project/programme
- ii. Project office costs: encompassing electricity, local telecommunications services, water, office space as well as office equipment and furniture, if available in working condition
- iii. Project operational costs: encompassing electricity, water, work space, fuel, maintenance and repair costs for project equipment and vehicles if ownership of equipment and vehicles has been transferred to the IP
- iv. Use of IP's facilities, in principle when feasible, for trainings, workshops and seminars are to be provided on a gratis basis
- v. Costs of organizing regular project meetings.

Except in the cases of (i) and (iv) above, if the required contribution from the IP is beyond its capacity, upon formal approval of the corresponding donor, the shortfall in funding could be filled by the project budget based on the submission of an official request by the IP.

If a IP is not a GoV entity, the IP will be responsible for costs as outlined above in points (ii) to (v).

## 2. Project Personnel

Project personnel are employed from outside an IP in cases (a) when the IP is not in a position to provide personnel with a level of competence required for the implementation of the project/programme from its own resources, and/or (b) where other circumstances do not make it possible or feasible to use IP personnel.

Project personnel are recruited and remunerated under conditions specified in [Annex I](#).

If prospective project personnel do not resign from his/her current job to work/consult for the project/programme for a specific amount of time, authorization to work for the project is required from the appropriate representative of his/her employer.

## 3. Service Providers

- i. Consultants, interpreters, translators and resource persons must be recruited from outside IP to provide services for a specific task or assignment conducted during a specified period of time as designated in the work plan. In cases where the recruited service provider is currently employed, an authorization to work for the project is required.

- ii. In cases when the local labour market cannot provide the personnel as specified under item 3(i) above with specialized expertise as required by the project, staff members of the IP can be recruited as service providers provided that:
  - They have specialized expertise required and meet the qualifications as outlined in TORs;
  - They have authorization to work issued by the IP;
  - Their recruitment is agreed upon by the donor.
- iii. Service providers are remunerated as per the following:
  - Consultants are paid on an agreed basis (e.g. daily or monthly) at rates outlined in [Annex II-A](#) or as a fixed amount resulting from competitive bidding.
  - Interpreters or translators are paid at rates as per [Annex II-B](#) for interpretation services and [Annex II-C](#) for translation services.
  - Resource persons are paid at rates as per [Annex II-D](#).
- iv. Remuneration for consultants, interpreters and translators may also be determined by a competitive bidding process on a case-by-case basis.

#### **4. Per Diem**

Per diems are paid to cover the costs of participation in trainings, workshops, seminars, conferences, monitoring missions or any other mission in Viet Nam, including overnight stay(s) away from an employee's habitual place of residence as required by the project director or designated person based on the approved work plan.

The full per diem will only be paid in cases where accommodation, meals and other expenses are not covered by any other means. The per diem will be reduced if officially covered by project or project-related entities under the following circumstances: (a) if accommodation is provided, the per diem will be reduced by the amount specified as the room rate as per [Annex III](#), (b) if meals are provided, then the meals and incidentals amounts as per [Annex III](#) will be reduced by 30% each for lunch and dinner and 15% for breakfast.

Lunch should be provided by the project/programme for full-day events if the project decides it is more economical to do so. If lunch cannot be arranged, 30% of the applicable meals and incidentals column of [Annex III](#) is to be paid to participants who are not eligible for a per diem. For half-day events, a per diem is not provided to participants.

For official travel or a mission exceeding 10 hours, including travel time and returning the same day, the full amount specified in the meals and incidentals column of [Annex III](#) is applicable for the per diem.

If the last day of the official travel/mission exceeds 10 hours or more including travel time, 60% of the amount specified in the meals and incidentals column of [Annex III](#) is applicable for the per diem of the last day.

Payment will be made on a lump sum basis.

# QUALITATIVE STANDARDS

## 1. Payment

In the case of cost norm items stipulated in US Dollars, payments will be made in Viet Nam Dong, using the exchange rate of the day of payment applied by the corresponding donor.

## 2. Vietnamese Law

The IP is responsible for applying Vietnamese Law in terms of payment, retention, filing, etc. for taxes (PIT, VAT, etc.) and insurance (health, social, unemployment, etc.).

## 3. Rates

The rates in these common UN-EU guidelines are all-inclusive rates (i.e. inclusive of all applicable tax and insurance, and other subsidies, if any).

## 4. Per Diem

Per diem rates for participants of workshops, meetings and conferences are based on mid-range quality, equivalent to a three-star hotel. Breakfast, lunch and dinner are also based on mid-range quality, equivalent to that served in a three-star hotel. See [Annex III](#).

## 5. Travel

Transportation costs are set as follows:

- i. For air, land, waterway travel, the most direct and economic route in economy class in accordance with the least costly fare structure using public transportation and time least spent travelling should be taken into account when deciding the mode of transport.
- ii. Private transportation for project-related purposes is only permitted when point (i) above cannot be applied due to the unavailability of public transportation. The use of private transportation for project-related purposes is only reimbursed at a standard cost per kilometre on distance basis upon prior approval of the project director or designated person based on the approved work plan. See [Annex V](#).
- iii. The cost of use of individual/private transportation shall only be reimbursed when joint/pooled transportation cannot be arranged.
- iv. Rental of different transportation, which should be of a non-luxurious nature, shall only be undertaken for specific tasks such as project monitoring and with prior approval of the project director based on the approved work plan using the prevailing market rate.
- v. For air travel requiring journeys to and from an airport, a lump sum reimbursement of a person's taxi travel costs will apply. See [Annex VI](#).

With the exception of points (ii) and (v) above, supporting documentation must be provided with all expense claims.

## **6. Project Personnel**

The project personnel *pro forma* costs and categorisation will be referenced to local market surveys for equivalent work. The project personnel *pro forma* costs must be consistent with prevailing levels for similar services and comparable work in the local labour market. See [Annex I](#).

## **7. Meetings/Conferences/Events**

- i. Generally, meeting room costs for meetings/conferences/events and other associated costs should not be higher in standard and cost than those of a three-star hotel or equivalent.
- ii. In cases of high level meetings, conferences or events where a higher standard (higher than three-star) is required as approved in the quarterly work plan, the meeting package cost per participant of this higher standard for a half or full day event hotel should not exceed the rates specified in [Annex IV](#). In cases where high level meetings, conferences or events are to be held in a hotel of higher standard and have yet to be approved in the quarterly work plan, official written acceptance by the donor must be obtained.
- iii. The meeting package cost per participant is all-inclusive. It should include meeting room rental, costs for two tea breaks and a lunch for a full day event, a tea break and/or lunch for a half day event along with the provision of complimentary equipment such as table micro, wireless micro speaker, basic sound system, note pad, pencil and water for all participants following the policy of each hotel.

## **8. Service Providers**

Rates are established to broadly reflect pay that is comparable to the remuneration of project personnel and covers services for consultancies, translation, interpretation, resource persons, technical inputs, production of technical reports and policy papers, etc. See [Annex II-A](#) to [Annex II-D](#).

## **9. Resource Persons**

Resource persons can only be contracted if their input does not exceed five consecutive working days.

The number of resource persons providing organizational support to an event should not exceed more than two people. See [Annex II-D](#).

## **10. Hardship Allowance**

The hardship allowance aims to compensate non-resident service providers/project personnel living long-term in difficult conditions at locations declared by the GoV as the poorest districts in Viet Nam. The hardship allowance is applied to districts as indicated in the list of 62 poorest districts of Viet Nam published on 1 March 2010 in accordance to the Government Resolution No.30a/2008/NQ-CP on 27 December 2008 (See [Annex VII](#)). This allowance is based upon a maximum 10% increase in standard rates.

## ANNEXES

### Annex I - Project Personnel Pro Forma Costs

Maximum Monthly Pro Forma Cost <sup>2</sup> Per Project Personnel - USD (payable in VND)	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
Reference Category	2-5 Years Relevant Full Time Experience	6-10 Years Relevant Full Time Experience	11-15 Years Relevant Full time Experience	16-20 Years Relevant Full time Experience	20 Years Relevant Full time Experience and Over
1. Project Director/ Coordinator/Manager	1,242	1,451	1,659	1,867	2,075
2. Technical Specialist	1,035	1,142	1, 403	1,587	1,771
3. Project Administrative Assistant/Secretary, Accountant, Interpreter/Translator	702	830	959	1,086	1,214
4. Auxiliary Staff, Cleaner, Clerk, Driver, Messenger	331	378	425	472	518

*Note:*

Work experience is only counted if it is relevant to the scope of work for the position and full time after university graduation. Part-time work or experience gained during university study should not be counted.

Qualification for reference categories 1, 2 and 3 requires a University degree. Should an applicant possess a PhD or a Master's degree then the required relevant experience can be reduced by two years. For posts under reference category 4, the minimum requirement is secondary/high school education graduation.

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<sup>2</sup> The *pro forma* cost is all-inclusive (i.e. inclusive of employer's and employee's contributions and other applicable tax and insurance), and the maximum yearly cost is the monthly cost multiplied by 12 equal payments.



**Annex II - Service Providers****Annex II-A: National Consultants Rates**

<b>National Consultants Rates</b>				
<b>Category</b>	<b>Scope of Service</b>	<b>Relevant Minimum Education and Work Experience</b>	<b>Remuneration in USD (payable in VND)</b>	
			<b>Daily Maximum</b>	<b>Monthly Maximum</b>
<b>VNM 1</b>	Conducting assignments requiring policy and technical research	A University degree, plus 3-5 years relevant full-time work experience	70	1,057
<b>VNM 2</b>	Formulating or managing assignments requiring policy or technical research, analysis and formulation of advice, communication and/or writing	A University degree, plus 6-10 years relevant full-time work experience	114	1,713
<b>VNM 3</b>	Formulating, organizing and managing assignments requiring complex and specialized policy, technical research, analysis and formulation of advice, communication and/or writing	A relevant Master's degree, plus 10-15 years relevant full-time work experience	188	2,818
<b>VNM 4</b>	i) Formulating, organizing and managing assignments (that may also involve engaging and leading a team of top-quality experts), requiring complex and/or highly specialized policy or technical research, analysis, formulation of advice, communication and/or writing; and/or ii) Conceiving, implementing, monitoring development programmes and/or strategies of national scope or development policies.	A relevant Master's degree, plus more than 15 years relevant full-time work experience.	264	3,955

*Note:*

The guiding principle defining a suitable consultancy rate is based firstly on the nature of the assignment/scope of service and secondly on the relevant education and work experience required to accomplish it. The rate should not solely be based on a consultant's general education and work experience.

Qualification for the first two categories, VNM 1 and VNM 2, requires a University degree. But, if an applicant possesses a PhD or a Master's degree, the required relevant full-time work experience could be reduced by two years.

These rates are also applicable to international consultants as and when agreed upon between the related parties.

#### ***Annex II-B: Interpretation Services Rate***

<b>Interpretation Rates in USD (payable in VND)</b>	
<b>Level</b>	<b>Rate</b>
<b>Simultaneous <sup>(*)</sup></b>	
Daily	500
Half Day	250
<b>Non Simultaneous</b>	
Daily	200
Hourly	25

*Note:*

Rates may be increased by up to 50% in exceptional circumstances, (e.g. interpretation services provided to high level events) subject to availability of funds with justification by the IP and approval of the donor(s).

*(\*) The simultaneous interpretation services rate is paid per full or half day irrespective of the number of people providing the service.*

#### ***Annex II-C: Translation Rates***

<b>Translation Rates in USD (payable in VND)</b>	
English/EU Language to Vietnamese	USD 11 per page of 350 words
Vietnamese to English/EU Language	USD 11 per page of 350 words

*Note:*

Rates may be increased by up to 10% in exceptional circumstances, subject to availability of funds with justification by the IP and approval of the donor(s).

In cases where there is a change or revision to the original document requiring additional translation, an additional charge of USD2 per page of 350 words will apply.

**Annex II-D: Resource Person Rates (where applicable)**

<b>Resource Person Daily Rates (VND)</b>	
1. Complex tasks that require thorough technical knowledge, autonomy, analytical and problem solving skills, and ability to communicate clearly	860,000
2. Complex tasks that require technical knowledge, autonomy and analytical skills	720,000
3. Simple and structured work that requires application of a known methodology with technical knowledge and autonomy	430,000
4. Simple and structured work that requires application of known methodology with supervision.	290,000

**Annex III - Per Diem**

<b>Location/Area</b>	<b>Per Diem - USD (payable in VND)</b>		
	<b>Room Rate</b>	<b>Meals &amp; Incidentals</b>	<b>Total</b>
Urban Districts of Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City	40	33	73
- Urban Districts of Can Tho City, Da Nang City and Hai Phong City - Tourism cities including Da Lat, Do Son, Hoi An, Hue, Ha Long, Nha Trang, Phu Quoc and Vung Tau	36	29	65
- Other townships <sup>3</sup> and Sa Pa town - Rural Districts of Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City, Can Tho City, Da Nang City and Hai Phong City	21	18	39
Elsewhere	15	13	28

<sup>3</sup> A township is defined as an administrative centre of a province with local government offices.

#### **Annex IV - Meeting Package Cost**

<b>Location/Area</b>	<b>Maximum Per Participant All Inclusive - USD (payable in VND)</b>	
	<b>Half day event</b>	<b>Full day event</b>
Urban Districts of Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City	17	27
- Urban Districts of Can Tho City, Da Nang City, Hai Phong City - Tourism cities including Da Lat, Do Son, Hoi An, Hue, Ha Long, Nha Trang, Phu Quoc and Vung Tau	14	24
Elsewhere	12	20

#### **Annex V - Reimbursement per Kilometre for Use of Private Vehicle**

<b>Reimbursement rate per Km</b>	USD 0.175
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Reimbursement will only apply for missions, meetings and conferences, which take place outside of the office/project duty station.

**Annex VI - Airport Taxi**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Airport</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Airport Taxi - One Way (Amount in VND)</b>
1	Dien Bien	Dien Bien	30,000
2	Noi Bai	Ha Noi City	300,000
3	Cat Bi	Hai Phong City	115,000
4	Vinh	Vinh City	110,000
5	Dong Hoi	Dong Hoi City	170,000
6	Phu Bai	Hue City	220,000
7	Da Nang	Da Nang City	75,000
8	Chu Lai	Tam Ky City and Quang Ngai City	595,000
9	Pleiku	Pleiku City	105,000
10	Phu Cat	Quy Nhon City	365,000
11	Tuy Hoa	Tuy Hoa City	115,000
12	Buon Ma Thuot	Buon Ma Thuot City	165,000
13	Cam Ranh	Nha Trang City	315,000
14	Lien Khuong	Da Lat City	290,000
15	Tan Son Nhat	Ho Chi Minh City	150,000
16	Rach Soi	Rach Gia	145,000
17	Phu Quoc	Phu Quoc	85,000
18	Can Tho	Can Tho City	250,000
19	Con Dao	Con Dao	290,000
20	Ca Mau	Ca Mau	45,000

**Annex VII - Hardship (District) Locations**

<b>Province</b>	<b>Number of Poorest Districts</b>	<b>Districts</b>
Ha Giang	6	Dong Van, Hoang Su Phi, Meo Vac, Quan Ba, Yen Minh, Xin Man
Cao Bang	5	Bao Lac, Bao Lam, Ha Lang, Ha Quang, Thong Nong
Lao Cai	3	Bac Ha, Muong Khuong, Si Ma Cai
Yen Bai	2	Mu Cang Chai, Tram Tau
Bac Kan	2	Ba Be, Pac Nam
Bac Giang	1	Son Dong
Phu Tho	1	Tan Son
Son La	5	Bac Yen, Muong La, Phu Yen, Quynh Nhai, Sop Cop
Lai Chau	5	Muong Te, Phong Tho, Sin Ho, Tan Yen, Than Uyen
Dien Bien	4	Dien Bien Dong, Muong Ang, Muong Nhe, Tua Chua
Thanh Hoa	7	Ba Thuoc, Lang Chanh, Muong Lat, Nhu Xuan, Quan Hoa, Quan Son, Thuong Xuan
Nghe An	3	Ky Son, Que Phong, Tuong Duong
Quang Binh	1	Minh Hoa
Quang Tri	1	Da Krong
Quang Ngai	6	Ba To, Minh Long, Son Ha, Son Tay, Tay Tra, Tra Bong
Quang Nam	3	Nam Tra My, Phuoc Son, Tay Giang
Binh Dinh	3	An Lao, Van Canh, Vinh Thanh
Ninh Thuan	1	Bac Ai
Kon Tum	2	Kon Plong, Tu Mo Rong
Lam Dong	1	Dam Rong