



Leave No One Behind

Guidelines for Project Planners and Practitioners

Synopsis

As a federally owned enterprise, GIZ supports the German Government in achieving its objectives in the field of international cooperation for sustainable development.

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Introduction

The principle of “Leave No One Behind” (LNOB) – a guiding principle of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by the United Nation’s General Assembly in 2015 – shines the spotlight on the poorest and most vulnerable people and calls for all stakeholders to intensify their efforts to narrow existing gaps between population groups.

With the publication of comprehensive guidelines for LNOB project planners and practitioners, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) has filled many important knowledge gaps relating to LNOB implementation in international development cooperation, based among other things on knowledge and experience gathered from 11 inspiring projects (case studies).

The present synopsis of GIZ’s guidelines for LNOB provides a selective overview of concepts and tools that are highly relevant to the work of LNOB-sensitive project planners and practitioners. We hope that this synopsis, highlighting specific aspects of LNOB such as lessons learnt to date, how to implement LNOB in the project cycle, key challenges and potential entry points, will incite many project planners and practitioners to embrace the LNOB principle (if they have not done so already) in development cooperation and to seek further inspiration in the full version of the Guidelines.

Unlike GIZ’s comprehensive LNOB guidelines, the synopsis presents neither individual projects nor the numerous LNOB-relevant concepts and tools that have been designed and tested by these projects. Readers who are interested in these case studies, in issues of policy making for LNOB at the global and national levels, and in references to documents for further reading are advised to refer to the full version of GIZ’s guidelines for LNOB planners and practitioners.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION PLANNERS

1. **To ensure LNOB relevance in the design of development cooperation programs and projects.** This can be achieved through consideration of LNOB when evaluating possible target groups and relevant project regions; prioritization of segments of society that are the furthest behind in terms of multi-dimensional poverty; and focus on eradicating poverty and reducing inequality in sector, regional and country strategies and programs (cf. Annex 2).
2. **To facilitate significant participation by legitimate representatives of concerned poor and marginalized groups in the design, identification, appraisal and negotiation phases of project preparation.** This requires strong mechanisms for transparency and accountability in the delivery of LNOB-relevant results, as well as significant i.e., active and informed participation of poor and disadvantaged groups in program negotiation processes.
3. **To access planning and analytical expertise from in-house and external sources to address the structural and systemic causes of poverty and inequality during project preparation.** Executing agencies such as Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) dispose of significant in-house expertise in poverty reduction, human rights-based approaches, social protection systems etc. that can be mobilized for project preparation. They can also cooperate with specialized state and non-state actors in the concerned partner countries during project preparation to access information and knowledge relevant to project identification and appraisal.
4. **To identify and make use of best practices in target group analyses and other LNOB blind spot assessments for project planning purposes.** This involves among other things asking the right questions, such as "Who is excluded from what, by whom, where do those left behind live, why are they left behind, how and to what extent (how much)?" Evidenced-based target group analyses using suitably disaggregated data and LNOB-oriented brainstorming with stakeholders can provide answers to such questions during project preparation or, at the latest, during project implementation.
5. **To ensure strong LNOB relevance in the design of monitoring and evaluation systems.** The envisaged concepts and tools of project performance measurement should put special emphasis on how the project is expected to produce tangible results for specific poor and marginalized groups. The monitoring system should be designed with a view to providing up-to-date information in quantitative and qualitative terms regarding (i) the provision of outputs (goods and services) by the project and its partners to these target groups, (ii) the realization of intended outcomes (utilization of outputs by the target groups) and (iii) the likely impacts (consequences of outcomes) to the benefit of the target groups. Tools should also be put into place to monitor unintended results (e.g. stakeholder surveys) on a regular basis. Evaluations should be tasked with assessing, among other things, the LNOB relevance of the monitoring system and recommending measures to strengthen it.
6. **To enable rapid and flexible technical and financial responses to unexpected urgent needs among poor and vulnerable target groups.** Flexibility is often lacking in current development cooperation practice, but well-justified nonetheless, given the precariousness of the situations in which many poor and vulnerable groups live. Operational flexibility may be observed in several case study projects that employ dedicated funds and targeting mechanisms to support innovative approaches.
7. **To facilitate the design and steering of LNOB-sensitive evaluations and the sharing of their results.** LNOB-sensitive project evaluations should assess the quality of project-level responses to key questions such as "Who is being left behind? Why? What should be done? and How to measure and monitor progress?" based on internationally recognized methodologies and providing examples of lessons learned and good practices to share with other projects in this respect and to apply in the planning of new and extended interventions (cf. Box 1 and Annex 2).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION PRACTITIONERS

8. **To conduct LNOB self-assessments among project staff and other close collaborators on a regular basis.** Such self-assessments do not need to be costly in terms of time or effort. A simple self-assessment tool, based on various practice-oriented interpretations of the LNOB principle identified in these Guidelines and adaptable to the specific needs of the interested projects, is proposed in Annex 3.
9. **To assign roles and responsibilities among staff that reflect the need for (internal) LNOB competence and (external) LNOB-related communication.** Dedicated LNOB staff and expert pools as well as staff training in statistics (including data collection methodology) and analysis for LNOB can contribute to LNOB-relevant capacity building at the individual level. Job descriptions for project personnel with a strong focus on LNOB-relevant issues have been developed and implemented by several case study projects.
10. **To facilitate LNOB capacity building and awareness raising both within the project itself as well as in other projects that strive to enhance their LNOB relevance.** Numerous instruments have been developed and applied by case study projects for internal and external LNOB capacity building (cf. Figures 3 and 4). Regarding LNOB awareness raising, some good examples are the LNOB Power Walk in Burkina Faso, the Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) survey and LNOB awareness raising workshops in Palestine (cf. full version). Key questions for LNOB relevance have been defined by GIZ headquarters (cf. Annex 2).
11. **To develop, test, apply and share innovative LNOB approaches, methodologies and tools.** Innovation is given explicit high priority in initiatives supported by GIZ's Inequality Challenge fund and Oxfam Mexico's Inclusive Economies Project. At the same time, most if not all case study projects presented in Part 2 of the Guidelines (full version) exhibit high levels of creativity and innovation in LNOB implementation. This may require further development and utilization of already existing tools for new LNOB-relevant challenges.
12. **To strengthen available data collection and analysis capacities for purposes of LNOB-oriented monitoring.** Development cooperation projects should embed the LNOB principle in their own performance indicator systems. They can also help their partner organizations to do the same. The standard tools of project monitoring are largely adequate for LNOB-oriented monitoring. But broadly defined objectives and single-variable indicators may require revision including further disaggregation in order to meet the demands of the LNOB principle (cf. Box 1).
13. **To report on LNOB-relevant progress in a format and language that is accessible and understandable to diverse stakeholders including the concerned poor and marginalized groups.** Palestine's experience with "Readable Budgets" may be cited as a good practice in LNOB-friendly formatting. Local languages are employed in training programs for communal development in Burkina Faso while sign language translations and documents in braille are provided as needed in Cambodia.
14. **To identify legal and regulatory barriers to LNOB implementation and engage to remove these barriers through advocacy and significant stakeholder participation.** The aim is to establish legal and regulatory frameworks with strong LNOB relevance and thereby contribute to creating an LNOB-friendly legal and regulatory environment. In Cambodia, for example, the existence of an appropriate legal framework for the identification of the poor has been an important success factor for German development cooperation in this field.
15. **To establish functional networks / platforms of LNOB practitioners in the concerned sectors, regions and countries with a view to sharing LNOB-relevant experience and knowledge and channeling this information to policymakers and planners, within own and among other development cooperation agencies.** In Palestine, for instance, several networks including the Disability Representative Bodies Network in the Gaza Strip, have received project-sponsored support for their roles in coordination and advocacy.

15. To establish functional networks / platforms of LNOB practitioners in the concerned sectors, regions and countries with a view to sharing LNOB-relevant experience and knowledge and channeling this information to policymakers and planners, within own and among other development cooperation agencies. In Palestine, for instance, several networks including the Disability Representative Bodies Network in the Gaza Strip, have received project-sponsored support for their roles in coordination and advocacy.

16. To never cease to ask the crucial question: "Are we leaving specific segments of our target group(s) behind, and what can we do about it?" Various formats for "blind spot assessments" have been developed and applied in case study projects. These are generally affordable, easy to adapt, and easy to apply in a wide spectrum of contexts. They can be helpful in ensuring alignment with the LNOB principle in development cooperation.

Integration of LNOB into the Project Cycle

According to Figure 1, all five stages of the project cycle are potentially affected by the LNOB principle:

1. During the **program design** stage, project planners should assign priority to segments of society that are the furthest behind in terms of multi-dimensional poverty i.e., poverty defined as a set of specific deprivations such as low income, lack of education, poor access to basic health care etc. This approach may have significant consequences for the choice of target groups and/or regions. Also, more transparency and broad stakeholder participation in donor priority setting are required.
2. LNOB commitment during the stage of **project identification and appraisal** requires more emphasis on addressing the root causes of poverty in all its dimensions and prioritizing those segments of society that are furthest behind, with a view to ultimately empowering the poor and vulnerable. During this stage, significant participation by legitimate (i.e. recognized) stakeholder representatives in project appraisals should also be ensured.
3. During the stage of **project negotiation, financing and approval**, the foundations for the envisaged LNOB-sensitive monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system should be laid (cf. Box 1). Planners should also minimize contractual modalities that inhibit project management's capacity to react quickly and effectively to urgent and unexpected stakeholder needs.
4. Many development cooperation projects supported by Germany and other donor countries have already integrated LNOB into **project implementation and monitoring**. In some projects, LNOB plays a dominant role; in others, LNOB is a key element of some but not all expected results. During this stage, planners and practitioners face many issues of data collection and analysis, and they must ask how to best address poverty (in all its dimensions), marginalization, inequality and multiple forms of discrimination (intersecting factors).
- 5) **Project evaluation** is the final link in the project cycle. It creates a bridge of knowledge sharing between project implementation and program (re)design. LNOB relevance can be ensured at this stage by compiling and analyzing evidence of project-level outcomes and impacts that affect the lives of poor and vulnerable individuals and groups. Assessing the transferability and upscaling potential of LNOB-solutions and lessons learned is particularly relevant during this stage.

As evidenced above, many opportunities are available to render project cycles more LNOB-relevant, to enhance program and project outcomes in terms of putting the furthest behind first, and to honor the pledge to leave no one behind through more LNOB-focused development cooperation. Seizing such opportunities, however, is not necessarily an easy task. Many challenges must be faced. The table below highlights **selected key challenges in each stage of the project cycle**, identifies some possible entry points, and cites relevant knowledge and experiences that have been gathered through case studies, as documented in the full version of the Guidelines.

FIGURE 1: LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND IN THE PROJECT CYCLE

PROGRAM DESIGN

- Adopt sector, regional and country strategies that focus on eradicating poverty and reducing inequality
- Assign high priority to segments of society that are the furthest behind in terms of income and other dimensions of poverty
- Ensure active and informed participation of poor and disadvantaged groups (as stakeholders) in program design processes appraisals should be ensured, e.g. through multi-stakeholder reference groups to guide such appraisals

PROGRAM EVALUATION

- Provide sound evidence-based evaluations of program and project results in terms of poverty eradication and inequality reduction
- Emphasize the transferability and scaling-up potential of LNOB-relevant solutions and lessons learned
- Channel LNOB-relevant evaluation results (information and knowledge) into multi-level and multi-stakeholder policy dialogues



PROJECT IDENTIFICATION AND APPRAISAL

- Ensure focus in strengthening and empowering segments of society that are the furthest behind
- Address the structural and systemic causes of poverty and inequality: Who is excluded from what, by whom, where, why, how and to what extent?
- Include local planners and analysts as well as legitimate representatives of poor and disadvantaged groups in appraisal missions

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

- Develop, apply and share innovative LNOB approaches and tools on a continuous basis
- Provide baseline and current indicator values using suitably disaggregated data (both quantitative and qualitative) that is well protected from misuse and well appreciated by the concerned stakeholders
- Report regularly on project implementation in a format and language that is accessible and understandable to the intended beneficiaries

NEGOTIATION, FINANCING AND APPROVAL

- Ensure technical and financial flexibility to enable rapid responses to urgent and unexpected stakeholder needs
- Ensure significant participation of poor and disadvantaged groups in negotiation processes
- Establish strong mechanisms for transparency, accountability and participation in the delivery of LNOB-relevant results

TABLE 1: KEY CHALLENGES AND POSSIBLE ENTRY POINTS IN EACH STAGE OF THE PROJECT CYCLE

Stages of the Project Cycle	Key Challenges	Possible Entry Points	References to Inspiring Projects (Part 2)
Program design	Political will and commitment to LNOB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • handwashing with soap and flowing water • use of improved latrines 	Section 2.5
Project identification and appraisal	Ensuring focus in the choice of target groups and/or regions	Strong LNOB relevance through priority setting for the furthest behind	Sections 2.1, 2.4 and 2.8
Negotiation, financing and approval	Active and informed participation of target groups in decision making	Strengthen LNOB-oriented civil society organizations to effectively represent their constituencies	Sections 2.7 and 2.10
Project implementation and monitoring	Gather and analyze LNOB-relevant data for M&E purposes	Introduction of digital tools to facilitate communication with target groups	Section 2.5
Project evaluation	Gather and share lessons learned in implementation of LNOB	Establish platforms for LNOB information sharing between projects and programs	Sections 2.1 and 2.10



BOX 1: MONITORING AND EVALUATION FOR LNOB IMPLEMENTATION

The standard tools of project monitoring – surveys, interviews, SMART indicators, the 5 Ws etc.¹ – are largely adequate for LNOB-oriented monitoring. But broadly defined objectives and single-variable indicators may require revision in order to meet the demands of the LNOB principle. In the area of basic education, for instance, we might define our project objective as follows: “Access to basic education and the quality of basic education have improved”. One indicator that might be used to measure progress in this sense is “The average rate of pupil absenteeism in primary schools is reduced from X% to Y%”. This indicator, however, treats the target group “pupils” as a homogeneous mass and provides no insight into the distribution of the project’s benefits within that group: Will the envisaged change benefit for the most part children from poor and marginalized households (i.e., households at risk of being left behind), or will other, less disadvantaged children benefit more? To ensure the LNOB relevance of

the indicator and, with that, the LNOB relevance of the project’s interventions, an alternative formulation of the indicator may be considered, e.g., “The average rate of pupil absenteeism in primary schools among child from the poorest 20% of the households in the project’s zone of intervention is reduced from X% to Y%”. A multidimensional approach to ensuring the LNOB relevance of project’s intervention might take the same or a similar indicator and relate it to children living with a disability, children with an indigenous background, or children from single-parent households.

LNOB-oriented project evaluations may be expected to ask key questions like:

- (i) Who is being left behind? (gathering the evidence);
- (ii) Why? (prioritization and analysis);
- (iii) What should be done?
- (iv) How to measure and monitor progress?

¹ SMART stands in most cases for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Bound. The 5Ws are key questions whose answers are considered basic in information gathering and problem solving: Who, What, Where, When and Why (cf. Bours 2014).

Identification of Best LNOB Practices

The notion of **contextuality** plays a major role in assessments of what is best and what is not best in the realm of LNOB implementation. An LNOB tool may be effective in one country, but a failure in a different country. The issue of contextuality is closely related to the question of **transferability**: Can a specific approach to LNOB, tried and tested with success in one location, be transferred with success to a different location? Responses to such questions will tend to remain hypothetical as long as a real-life transfer has not been attempted.

Despite these conceptual and operational barriers, the identification of best practices relating to LNOB implementation in the realm of international cooperation for sustainable development is a feasible exercise, as illustrated in the following. For reasons of simplicity, only two criteria will be applied:

- **Specificity** regarding the intended poor and/or marginalized beneficiary group, and
- **Transferability** i.e., being realistically adaptable to a different context at a reasonable cost.

Applying these two criteria, we can rate any given LNOB approach, methodology or tool in terms of its potential as a best practice in LNOB implementation. A purely fictive application of this rating approach is illustrated in **Figure 2** below, focusing on instruments for individual LNOB competence building that have been applied in one or more of the case study projects described in the full version of the Guidelines.

FIGURE 2: RATING OF POTENTIAL BEST PRACTICES IN LNOB IMPLEMENTATION ³

No.	Approach / methodology / tool	Specificity	Transferability	Score (max. = 3)
1	Project-level LNOB focal points	Low	High	2.0
2	Dedicated LNOB staff and expert pools	Medium	Medium	2.0
3	Staff training in statistics and analysis for LNOB	Medium	Low	1.5
4	LNOB-oriented results models	Medium	Low	1.5
5	LNOB awareness-building workshops	High	Medium	2.5
6	Power Walk (internal group exercise)	High	High	3.0
7	LNOB-sensitive indicator systems	High	Medium	2.5

Note: The score is calculated as the average rating with low = 1, medium = 2 and high = 3.

The results of LNOB best practice rating exercises, such as the fictive one described here, will depend not only on the choice of eligible practices and selection criteria, but also on how levels are assigned to each criterion. In the present fictive example, the distinguishing characteristics of the “low”, “medium” and “high” categories are not predefined. The assignment of levels to each criterion is open and therefore highly dependent on the subjective comprehension of these categories by the participating persons. A more closed, objective approach would require the predefinition of each category. For example, transferability might be defined as

“low” if the application of the concerned practice requires a high level of education (university degree), “medium” if it requires a medium level of education (secondary school), and “high” if the necessary level of education is low (primary school) or negligible. Whether a more open or a more closed approach is preferable in the specific context of rating exercise application will depend, among other things, upon the homogeneity of the participating users in terms of their prior knowledge and understanding of the practices and selection criteria in question.

Capacity Development for LNOB

One characteristic shared by many LNOB-oriented development cooperation projects is their emphasis on **capacity building** in their endeavours to apply the LNOB principle. Some projects have focused on capacities to identify **LNOB blind spots** in their own strategies and operations, while other projects provide help to other projects and partners institutions in LNOB blind spot identification and mitigation. Some projects strive to develop internal and external LNOB implementation capacities simultaneously. In the process, many of them have established an impressive number and variety of approaches, tools and methodologies for these purposes (cf. in particular Part 2 and the technical annexes in the full version of the Guidelines).

The notion of **capacity development** is both systemic and multilevel. Systemically, it distinguishes between internal and external spheres of influence. Typically, the internal sphere is under the direct control of the actor (program or project) in question, whereas the external sphere is strongly influenced or even dominated by other actors. In terms of levels, the notion of capacity development concerns individual competence building, organisational development, the development of partnerships, and the development of enabling frameworks.

Figure 3 (below) represents a possible capacity development framework for LNOB. The left-hand side describes the internal sphere, the right-hand side the external sphere. Each sphere is divided into two levels. Each level is defined by its purpose and the means available to fulfil its purpose.

FIGURE 3: A CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK FOR LNOB IMPLEMENTATION**INTERNAL LEVELS
OF LNOB CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT****EXTERNAL LEVELS
OF LNOB CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT**

Individual LNOB competence building	Development of LNOB cooperation partnerships
<p>Purpose: To promote personal, social, technical, managerial, methodological and leadership competences in order to ensure LNOB relevance in project design and implementation.</p> <p>Means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project-level LNOB focal points • Dedicated LNOB staff (internal) and expert pools (external) • LNOB-oriented results models • LNOB-sensitive indicator systems • Staff training in statistics (including data gathering methodology) and analysis for LNOB • LNOB awareness-building workshops • Group exercises e.g., Power Walks 	<p>Purpose: To establish and develop cooperation between organisations to improve coordination and performance; establish and develop networks for knowledge sharing and co-creation for LNOB implementation.</p> <p>Means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LNOB awareness building in government, NGOs, private sector and research bodies • Exchange between donor agencies (e.g., brown bag lunches) for LNOB advocacy • Direct and open dialog with representatives of poor and marginalized groups in projects and programs • Proximity to groups at risk of being left behind even in remote areas • LNOB training, toolkits and advocacy in local languages • Peer learning and study visits for LNOB • Multi-stakeholder platforms for LNOB • Multi-project and multi-donor working groups for sharing LNOB-relevant information and knowledge • Systematic and regular quality controls for LNOB-relevant service delivery
Organisational development for LNOB	Development of LNOB enabling frameworks
<p>Purpose: To promote organisational learning and raise the performance and flexibility of an organisation in terms of LNOB implementation.</p> <p>Means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target group data collection & analysis • Focus on LNOB in strategic planning and project design • LNOB relevance assessments • Checklists for LNOB planning exercises • Internal standards for inclusion and LNOB sensitivity • Internal surveys e.g., Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) surveys among project staff eventually including partner organisation staff as well 	<p>Purpose: To develop enabling legal, political and socioeconomic frameworks so that individuals, organisations and societies can develop and raise their performance capability in terms of leaving no one behind.</p> <p>Means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal and regulatory frameworks with strong LNOB relevance • High-level coordination for 2030 Agenda and LNOB implementation • Mainstreaming LNOB into national and local plans and strategies • LNOB-sensitive performance budget preparation and implementation • Strong LNOB visibility and communication

Development of LNOB capacities within a given level of capacity development can affect the development of such capacities in the other three levels as well. Interactions between levels of LNOB capacity development are illustrated in **Figure 4**

(below). The figure provides several examples of how strategic inputs into one level of LNOB capacity development can generate positive effects at the other levels.

FIGURE 4: INTERACTIONS BETWEEN LEVELS OF LNOB CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT (EXAMPLES)

How each aspect below affects one or more aspects on the right	Individual	Organisational	Cooperation partnerships	Enabling frameworks
Individual		Increased individual LNOB competence facilitates integration of LNOB into rules & procedures for sustainable LNOB-sensitive organisational change	In-house LNOB awareness building expertise, tools and experience are used to raise awareness in partner organisations	Enhanced individual advocacy and leadership for LNOBfriendly frameworks drives negotiations to implement the 2030 Agenda leaving no one behind
Organisational	Organisational change makes it easier for individuals to translate their LNOB competence into action & results		Internal rules & procedures are conducive to creating and sustaining LNOB-relevant networks and partnerships	A stronger organisation helps representatives of poor & marginal groups to have a stronger voice in high-level policy dialog and decision making
Cooperation partnerships	Lessons learned from partners for tools etc. feeds into individual LNOB competence building	Enhanced coordination with & between partners facilitates efficient use of LNOB resources		LNOB coalitions across many segments of society can work together more effectively
Enabling frameworks	Individual LNOB competence is more easily incorporated into LNOB-sensitive dialog & negotiation outcomes	LNOB-sensitive planning & budgeting helps organisations to mobilize and use their resources to achieve LNOB-relevant goals	Policy dialog platforms provide ample space for organisations to exchange and induce LNOB-relevant change	

Some Lessons Learned and the Way Forward

Some important lessons learned in LNOB implementation have been derived from the knowledge and experience gathered by LNOB-sensitive projects around the world:

- 1. LNOB in project design:** Ideally, implementation of the LNOB principle in development cooperation projects is explicitly anchored in the project design. Integration of LNOB into a given project design should be based on the results of an ex ante target group analysis based on data that is suitably disaggregated (at least by income quintile, gender, geography, age and disability status) or other blind spot assessment addressing inter alia the systemic causes and drivers of poverty, inequality and exclusion, with significant (active and informed) participation by recognized representatives of the concerned.
- 2. Roles and responsibilities:** Clearly defined and realistic roles and responsibilities for LNOB implementation are important for its effectiveness. LNOB-sensitive projects may introduce LNOB focal points, dedicated staff and pools of external experts to ensure LNOB implementation in a focused and effective manner. Such division of labour and specialisation is also conducive to sharing LNOB-relevant information and knowledge between projects and across executing agencies.
- 3. Legal and regulatory frameworks:** These may be important for the creation of an enabling environment for LNOB. The potentialities as well as the limits of LNOB

implementation may be defined by these frameworks. In situations where legal and regulatory frameworks are lacking or ineffective, LNOB will tend to be more difficult but often even more important to implement. Projects support to LNOB-relevant legal and regulatory reform processes can make a difference. Training and guidelines for the application of such frameworks can also facilitate LNOB implementation.

- 4. Performance measurement:** Project performance indicators should be, at least in part, LNOB-sensitive. For example, objective-level indicators may refer explicitly to marginalized groups. During the redesign of performance measurement systems, taking previously ignored marginalized groups into account is a step in the right direction.
- 5. Due diligence:** When is a project well-aligned to the LNOB principle? While LNOB may be implicitly or explicitly important in the design and implementation of many projects, often they fail to systemically address the crucial question: Are we leaving specific segments of our target group(s) behind, and what can we do about it? Blind spot assessments may provide suitable responses to this question. The existence of such an assessment, conducted at least once during every project cycle and feeding into project-level activity plans and results frameworks, may serve as a good indicator (or marker) of due diligence in ensuring alignment with the LNOB principle in development cooperation.

The Way Forward

As illustrated in the previous sections, it is difficult to come up with a single, universally applicable “LNOB formula”, yardstick or minimal standard for good LNOB practice in development cooperation. Nevertheless, GIZ’s research has revealed many LNOB implementation practices that may qualify as models to be emulated.

One example is the **LNOB Relevance Assessment Matrix** that has been introduced in one of the case study projects reviewed during preparation of the Guidelines (cf. Annex 1). This approach relates project results and activities to processes for LNOB integration, the responsible actors and the concerned beneficiaries. It also categorizes each planned activity in

terms of how it affects the living conditions of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. The need to verify relevant information may also be indicated, providing orientation inter alia to staff in charge of data collection, monitoring and evaluation.

Another “model” that places special emphasis on “the way forward” is the **LNOB relevance checklist**, developed and applied by a GIZ project in Burkina Faso. Its purpose is to help German development cooperation projects assess the origins and consequences of inequality and marginalisation and to identify activities with high LNOB potential within the project’s sphere of intervention (cf. Box 2 below).

BOX 2: CHECKLIST FOR TAKING LNOB INTO ACCOUNT IN THE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES – A 10-STEP APPROACH

1. Define the purpose of the activity,
2. Identify the targets (actors contributing to the achievement of the objective),
3. Identify the least considered actors,
4. Define a strategy for taking into account the most marginalized (terms of reference, invitation, communication, participation, etc.),
5. Elaborate TORs by showing the relevance of LNOB for the activity and taking into account the strategy developed,
6. Foresee an occasion (10 minutes) to raise LNOB awareness (if with a consultant, provide pre-briefing with him or her to refine LNOB awareness),
7. Prepare the execution of the activity by refining LNOB awareness and by creating a framework with the consultant for consideration of LNOB in the process of executing the activity,
8. Execute the activity, taking into account the LNOB-specific actions that are planned,
9. Review the activity from the LNOB viewpoint, and
10. Monitor the activity with regard to LNOB aspects.

Another approach to identifying “the way forward” is to establish a list of expectations that are both desirable and realistic in development cooperation projects that strive to ensure the LNOB relevance of their design and implementation. In order to illustrate this approach, ten such expectations have been identified and formulated as “statements” in the **LNOB Self-Assessment Grid for Project Planners and Practitioners**, that may be found in Annex 3 to the present synopsis.

The LNOB Self-Assessment Grid is a tool that any development cooperation project may apply to gauge its own current LNOB relevance based on the perceptions of its own staff. As such, the active use of this or a similar tool may serve as a sort of “**minimal standard**” for good LNOB practice in development cooperation. Among other things, the Grid can help

identify LNOB-relevant knowledge gaps among staff, as indicated in the right-hand column “I’m not sure”. Most importantly, the Grid can help a project to draw on the LNOB-relevant knowledge and experience of project staff and to collect new ideas and approaches to better ensure LNOB orientation in future project design and implementation. To ensure contextuality, the list of statements may be adapted in accordance with the level of LNOB orientation that the project has already attained. Given such feedback mechanisms, LNOB-sensitive projects may benefit the utmost from in-house LNOB-relevant knowledge and experience on a regular basis. This will help LNOB-sensitive projects to create the foundations for a shared and dynamic vision of what LNOB relevance can and should mean in practical terms at the project level.

Annex 1: The LNOB Relevance Assessment Matrix ²

Results / activities	Process of LNOB Integration	Resp. partners	Beneficiaries	Cat. *
Support the development and validation of the deconcentration charter	Involve the sectoral ministries, the professional organizations in the local communities (CTs), the civil society organizations, the Parliamentary Network for Decentralization and Local Development (RPDDL) and the people in the validation process of the deconcentration charter. Take their concerns into account in the final version.	General Direction of Regional Planning (DGAT)	Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralization (MATD), territorial communities	(a) and (d)
Support the annual investment planning (PAI) process and municipal budgets for the water and health sectors (East: 6, Southwest: 17)	LNOB Advocacy with the local authority for the participation of representatives of all social groups (women, young people, people with disabilities, old people, opinion leaders, needy people, etc.) in planning workshops. Ensure the effective planning of actions in one of the objectives as recommended by the planning guide in the section "ensure the protection and promotion of socio-specific and vulnerable groups" e.g., take into account people who have difficulty feeding. In the realization of socio-community infrastructures, take into account people living with disabilities.	Mayor, executive board, civil society organizations	Population	(c)
Support the organization of peer training sessions on Modern Water Point Management (PEM) (including re-read)	Ensure the participation of all social groups (women, youth, people with disabilities, old people, opinion leaders, needy people, etc.). During the training emphasize the need to facilitate access to water for vulnerable groups (such as elderly, disabled, women ...).	Core of the regional Cluster "Water"	Water focal points, water user associations	(b) and (c)

* Categories:

- a) The activity is more inclusive vis-à-vis the project's partners.
- b) The activity targets disadvantaged groups for participation.
- c) The activity may affect the living conditions of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.
- d) The extent to which the activity affects the living conditions of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups requires verification.

² Extracts from the PDDC Plan of Operations, Burkina Faso 2019 (own translation)

Annex 2: Key Questions for the Assessment of LNOB Relevance ³

The key questions presented below are loosely attributed to specific areas of the project cycle. This attribution does not ignore that fact that certain key questions may be relevant for more than one area of the project cycle. Some key questions

asked during project preparation, for instance, may be relevant but difficult to answer, if they require more data to be collected and analysed during project implementation.

LNOB relevance in project design and preparation

- Is there any potential to include LNOB-relevant aspects in the project design (for new projects or follow-up phases), e.g. in indicators and M&E?
- Are there already strategies and approaches in our sector to integrate left-behind groups more in project interventions?
- Can we help to anchor LNOB more strongly in strategies, e.g. client, partner government, external structure?
- What consequences can be expected for the project design regarding e.g. cost implications, if hard-to-reach target groups are to be addressed?
- Which population groups are particularly disadvantaged and marginalized? Which forms of discrimination including multiple discrimination e.g. gender-specific and gender-based discrimination are particularly relevant? What is the manifestation of the disadvantage? Which social, legal and political structures solidify the disadvantage?
- Do we have sufficient knowledge of target groups and structural causes: who is left behind and why?
- Are there structural conditions in our sector / thematic area that may induce leaving behind certain groups (e.g. discriminatory legislation, social norms, lack of consideration of social policy needs)?
- Is access to justice guaranteed for the concerned disadvantaged groups?
- Which potentials for strengthening disadvantaged groups can be mobilised e.g. establishment and expansion of structures and capacities?
- What specialist knowledge and methodological skills must be strengthened among staff of the project and its partner organizations in order to integrate disadvantaged groups appropriately?
- How can the project contribute to the improved political, economic and social participation of particularly disadvantaged groups and / or improved public capacity for their participation?
- Which participation and grievance mechanisms will be made available to disadvantaged groups?
- What possible risks can the promotion of particular population groups have and what measures can prevent or mitigate these negative effects?

LNOB relevance in project implementation and monitoring

- Can we help to anchor LNOB more in project implementation, e.g. through pilot measures?
- Do policies and processes for which we provide advising affect disadvantaged people and groups negatively and/or positively?
- Can we point out risks and potential for disadvantaged people and groups in our sector of advising?
- How does the project monitor the evolution of risks and potentials for disadvantaged groups? Is the project responsive to the observed change processes?
- What are the main challenges for disadvantaged people and groups in our sector, e.g. access to public services, opportunities for participation, structural discrimination?
- Can we integrate representatives of disadvantaged groups into our project management structures, e.g. the project management board?
- Which actors are particularly relevant for strengthening disadvantaged groups and achieving results in their favour? Does the project work with them, e.g. civil society organizations representing the interests and rights of particularly disadvantaged groups?
- Can we measure the results (outputs, outcomes and impacts) of our work on disadvantaged groups through M&E, e.g. in LNOB-relevant indicators, data disaggregation in the intervention logic?

- Which reliable, disaggregated databases (state, non-governmental and independent) exist or do not exist?
- Are disaggregated data used in the partner country or partners supported in building up capacity for disaggregated data on particularly disadvantaged groups?
- Are monitoring results discussed in regular intervals with key stakeholders in order to identify bottlenecks and adopt countermeasures?
- How does the project ensure the monitoring of its unintended negative and/or positive effects on disadvantaged groups? How has the project reacted to such effects?
- Does the results matrix (logical framework) take LNOB explicitly into account while fulfilling established quality norms e.g. SMART indicators, full specification of baseline and target values, data and methodological triangulation, indicators relating to targeted population groups and their levels of disadvantage, and consideration of both quantitative and qualitative change processes?
- Is the project-level M&E system well-aligned to M&E systems on the partner side? Have partners and other stakeholders including target group representatives been involved in formulating indicators through a participatory process?

LNOB relevance in project evaluation

- Has a well-founded and differentiated target group analysis been conducted? Are its results understandable and relevant to the needs and aspirations of the target groups?
- Are the selected LNOB-relevant indicators and fields of observation regularly examined by both quantitative and qualitative methods to ensure they are LNOB-relevant and provide the required information? Have key stakeholders including target group representatives been involved in this process?
- Has an LNOB-oriented evaluation been planned from the beginning? Have respective data collection requirements been put in place? Have key stakeholders including target group representatives been involved in data collection and evaluations?
- Do the objectives, indicators and approaches of the project take into account the LNOB principle, e.g. the needs and legal situation of disadvantaged groups and structuring conditions?
- How does the project address the structural causes of disadvantage and inequality both in terms of content and sector as well as in methods and processes?
- To what extent was the project concept designed to reach particularly disadvantaged groups? How were identified risks and potentials for human rights and gender aspects included into the project concept?
- Is there solid evidence of results achieved at target group level? To what extent have targeted marginalised groups been reached?

Annex 3: LNOB Self-Assessment Grid for Project Planners and Practitioners

No.	Statement	Level of agreement			
		I don't agree	I agree somewhat	I agree strongly	I'm not sure
1	Our project assigns high priority to the needs of poor and marginalized groups.				
2	The benefits generated by our project accrue proportionately more to persons and groups with low levels of income or social status than to other persons and groups.				
3	Poor and marginalized groups are explicitly mentioned in at least one of our project's output and/or outcome indicators.				
4	The Leave No One Behind (LNOB) principle is explicitly mentioned in our project's project proposal and/or planning matrix (logical framework).				
5	Within the past 3 years, our project has conducted an assessment to identify persons and groups within our project's target group(s) that are at high risk of being left behind.				
6	During the past 3 years, the LNOB relevance of our project's activity and/or operational planning has been improved.				
7	Our project has developed and applied approaches, tools and methodologies that have a high LNOB relevance.				
8	In our project, there is at least one person whose job description includes support to implementation of the LNOB principle in our project.				
9	Our project cooperates closely with other projects in matters of LNOB implementation.				
10	Our project contributes significantly to the establishment of an LNOB-friendly environment within its sphere of influence.				

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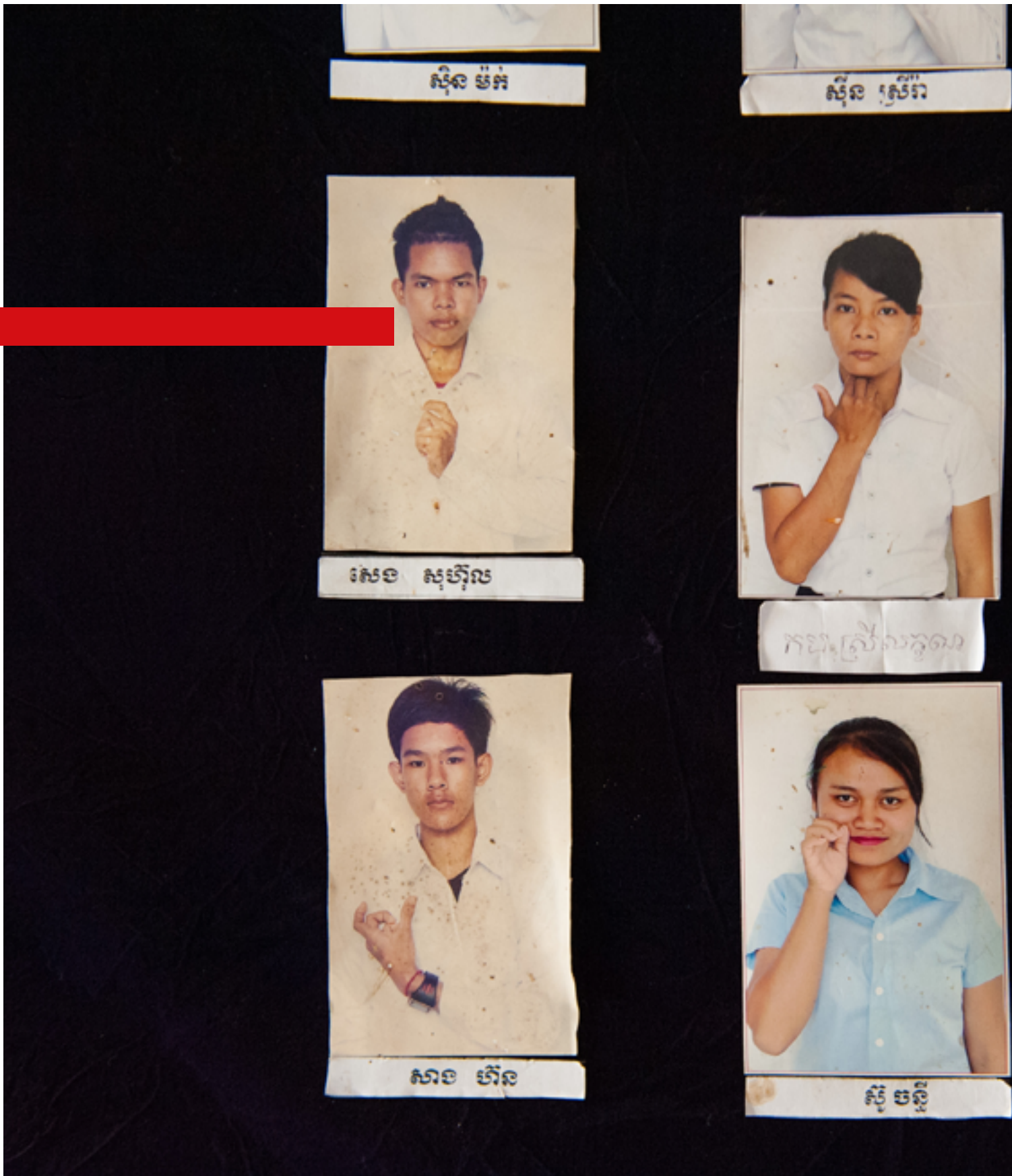
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