

Caritas Italiana Micro-Project Grant: Guidelines and Applications Drawing up

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INTRODUCTION

1. *Micro-Project* - What is it?

Development is not only a question of big works and infrastructures, but the progressive self-development of the poorest and most helpless communities.

Caritas Italiana can support poor communities living in developing countries, helping them in providing human and social promotion through **small projects**. '**Micro-Projects**' are planned to sustain small initiatives **with immediate impact** in raising living conditions.

Every Micro-Project supported by Caritas Italiana is usually financed by one single donor: Diocesan or Parish Caritas, Religious Communities or Institutes, groups, families or private citizens. That means that an Italian 'community' (thanks to the contribution of its private donors) is answering to specific needs of a grass-root community in emerging/developing Country.

Therefore, Micro-Projects have an important **formative function**:

- they intend to spread **awareness of other populations' needs** among Italian communities;
- **establishing 'charity relations'** between two communities, in an on going partnership.
- Finally, Micro-Projects activities offer a chance to achieve in-depth knowledge of a people to answer positively and permanently its basic needs.

2. Basic Criteria

Basic criteria need to be considered:

- Micro-Projects intend to **promote and involve local people**, in groundwork as well in management, to assure harmonization with local culture.
- Micro-Projects need to fit into local available technical knowledge, that only allows their self-reliable implementation, durability and opportunity to reproduce them under similar conditions.
- Micro-Projects policy requires to be included in the local church's pastoral plan, and a previous agreement by local Bishop, and eventually by diocesan or national Caritas.
- Micro-Projects policy needs to take into consideration the region's overall development plan and local civil programs. A previous dialogue with local authorities (at regional, district and village level) will ensure that they are also involved in the Micro-Project's planning and implementation, so that they can be effectively contributing to Micro-Project policy.

3. General Outlines

3.1. Eligibility Requirements

3.2. Eligible Countries

- Eligible countries are: those countries already **considered emerging** and/or developing by International Organizations and the Italian Foreign Affairs Ministry.
- Caritas Italiana offers to provide balanced support to all regions around the world. Priority will be assigned to those communities which are in most need and less opportunities.
- Micro-Projects Activities may be occasionally suspended in some regions or countries for times to times, until certain specified conditions are satisfied:
 - a critical period has been removed
 - local situation assures secure control of funds delivery to the project managers
 - opportunity for project monitoring has been reopened.

4. Sectors of intervention

After a three-years period of testing, Caritas Italiana's Council of Presidency decided some additional notes to the sectors of intervention of the Guide-lines for the presentation of Micro projects.

4.1. They are considered as priority (and, in case of reduced financial means, exclusive):

- A. Training skilled programmes, income-generating projects in the rural sector, cattle-rearing, home-craft, like the constitution of small co-operatives/groups of women and youths associated, belonging to the less helped and weaker categories.
- B. Water supply projects for domestic use or irrigation, pisciculture, or rearing in general.
- C. Health programmes, as to the rural dispensaries/small health centres and neighbours, with preference to the new built ones.
 - The request for micro project must be exclusively related to the purchase of simple equipments, machineries and health materials.
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 - As to the medicines and consumption goods, it can be allowed a small starting contribution, in order to support – at the right time – the weaker belts belonging to the local population, on condition that successively it can be guaranteed, with local participation or thanks to other organizations, the sustainability of micro project proposed.

4.2. Inside such three priorities will be more privileged micro projects involving the poorest and less helped, as for example: disabled, orphans and widows, diseased people (HIV/Aids positive, etc.) victims of war or particular political situations, forced refugees, prisoners' families, ex-prisoners, grave social margined people, also related to particular cultural/political, and religious contexts (out-castes, aborigines, natives, etc.).

4.3. For some poorest Countries or areas deserted by the political and civil authorities, it's required to support also the small social/promotional programmes (little bridges, paths, roads, hygienic/sanitary and sewer system recovery) where is verified the absolute unavailability and impossibility of intervention on behalf of the qualified authorities.

4.4. At last, is confirmed - as already announced in other chapters of the Guide-lines - Micro projects have to be direct expression of the local Church and effected directly in the communities of villages and in semi-urban zones and suburbs. They are not considered as priority those programmes in favour of religious communities, NGOs, Associations, executed in their proprieties, or to support the maintenance of the institutes or their own activities.

4.5. Caritas Italiana – within Micro projects' sphere, cannot finance strictly pastoral initiatives (Liturgy, Catechesis, Oratories, etc.) means of transport, and particularly cars or vehicles in general, applications forecasting the construction of buildings, emergency projects, welfare/assistance projects and programmes concerning everything which not foresee a sustainability at their achievement.

4.6. They are not considered as priority "Micro" coming from areas or frameworks in which Caritas Italiana's other regional departments, or some other realities (for example the Italian Episcopal Conference) intervene actively.

5.Applicants and executive Micro projects' responsables

First of all, the Church meant in its articulations, missionary presences included and the civil society, as long as organized locally and promoted by the same local Church. It's not possible intervene regarding privates.

- They are considered as priority Micro projects addressed directly to the local communities and not to the ones which form part of proprieties of institutes belonging to the religious communities or the local Church.
- They are considered also as priority Micro projects which form unequivocally part of the pastoral planning of the Diocese (all that requires a particular letter of agreement on behalf of the Bishop, that confirms such peculiarity).
- They are not recognized any shares for administrative costs.

5.1. Indications to Micro-Project Legal Representative

Every Micro-projects has its **legal representative**: i.e. the Bishop, the National or Diocesan Caritas Director, the Congregation's Provincial or General Superior, the General Procurer, etc.; he or she generally is not the applicant.

Legal representative assures that the Micro-Project implementation will be monitored and carried out. He/she is the only responsible part, compromising himself/herself with Caritas Italiana to overcome any obstacle.

In case of substantial default, and lack of carrying out the projects, the legal representative, from the very beginning of the project is charged with the duty of returning to Caritas Italiana *all funds received*.

5.2. Indications to the Micro-Project Intermediary

Persons or organizations intermediaries between Caritas Italiana and the local project managers are welcome. No reward, nor any percentage charged on the project's budget, shall be provided for the service.

5.3. Review Considerations and Funding Decision

All Micro-Project Proposals are submitted to Caritas Italiana Micro-Project Commission which holds its regular meetings.

Standard grant attribution to a Micro-Project is about **€ 5.000,00 (Euro fivethousand/00)** on average. Taking into consideration the country living cost, a lower or exceptionally higher financial grant could be equally assigned.

No Micro-Project shall be financed twice. *After one grant attribution, no further attribution for covering extra-budget costs will be considered.*

No Micro-Project may be intended as a partial section or components of a bigger project. No Micro-Project may be taken as a granting support to implement some other or wider initiatives, eventually sponsored by other Organizations. Therefore Caritas Italiana will reject any request in this sense.

Grant Amount will be expressed in Euro [€]. Caritas Italiana Commission reserves the right to establish a **lower grant amount** than requested by the applicant.

Application approval will be communicated to the project manager, and money transfer on the bank account provided will follow. All procedure takes, generally up to 2-3 months.

In case the application is not approved, a formal communication will explain the reasons for this decision.

Caritas Italiana cannot grant more than one Micro-Project Proposal Application per year submitted by the same manager or intermediary, except in the case that the previous granted Micro-Project has been already completed and duly documented with appropriate narrative and financial reports.

6. Reporting

Micro-Project's manager may, occasionally, have a monitoring and evaluation visit from Caritas Italiana representatives to jointly evaluate and report the Micro-Project

implementation and impact.

Micro-Project implementation should be terminated usually no later than four months from funds' receiving.

Every Micro-Project is financed by several donors: Diocesan or Parish Caritas, Religious Communities or Institutes, groups, families or private citizens. In order to keep informed these donors, we need to receive its full report including a final narrative and financial report, and photographs or any material that helps to describe the project.

Normally financial report includes detailed financial expensens: all justifying pieces will be here annexed.

7. Requirements for Micro-Project Proposal

1) Project Title, Project Manager Application Letter

Project Proposal should have a specific title, and include a duly signed and dated application letter from its Micro-Project Manager to Caritas Italiana Micro-Projects Desk. Project Proposal should be as well signed; any picture will be appreciated.

2) Submitting Organization, Key Staff and Bank References Data

- submitting organization (name, address, telephone and fax numbers, e-mail) and its manager (name and his/her previous experiences in the project field)
- project's legal representative reference (name and address)
- Bank references, to whom the funds should be remitted in case of the approval (Bank Account number, Account holder, Bank's name and address; the IBAN - International Bank Account Number and the BIC - Bank Identifier Code, **SWIFT Code**).

3) Project Authorization

Annexed to the Micro-Project Proposal should be a formal letter from the local Bishop to Caritas Italiana. The Bishop who gives his authorization assures that the project implementation will be in tune with his Social Pastoral.

Caritas Italiana could additionally require an endorsement paper from the diocesan or national Caritas, especially when there are some prior agreements on this matter with local Caritas network.

4) Project Location

Please indicate Project Location (nation, region, district, municipality, ecclesiastical circumscription, parish) and its mailing address.

5) Social and Cultural Context

People's living conditions and other specific elements concerning the project's field: regional analysis, demographic data, basic needs, elements of crisis, required resources for human and social promotion.

6) Feasibility Assessment

The Project Manager, in so far as is assessing its feasibility, ensures that the planned activity will be suitable to local situation. Keep in mind the examples below:

- *feasibility of a professional training program means that there will be a reasonable chance for youth people to find a job corresponding to the training received, because priority justly goes to those programs that don't consider any training welcome in itself, but have the short term goal of providing a job, tools or knowledge for youth people to organize themselves and find ways of self support;*
- *feasibility of an agriculture program means at least that project manager should have at hand some irrigation tools to reduce the risk of losing crops...*

7) Project Description

Origins and justification: please set all starting evaluation criteria that led to give priority to the proposed Micro-Project.

Goals Implementation:

- please list general and specific goals, as well as some measurable targets of it;
- describe the planned activities to achieve the project's goals, specifying materials and methods;
- please mention and quantify all direct and indirect project's beneficiaries, specifying criteria followed to include them, their involvement in the project's groundwork and the advantages they may gain as soon as the project terminates;
- clearly describe how the project will be self-reliant in the future when its external grant expires;
- please indicate its time frame for complete implementation and enter the starting and ending dates;
- please produce a written obligation to carry out the micro project at least, if nothing unexpected happens, within four months from the receipt of Caritas Italiana's remittance and to provide its final narrative and financial report and photographs, followed by a later brief account on the micro-project's effects.

Financial plan: Please join a **detailed budget** including all individual expenses and sources of income. Pro-forma invoices and cost estimates are appreciated. If some items in the case have to be bought in a foreign country, please specify their total costs, including transportation costs, and clearly show the reasons of it. Transportation costs are normally not covered by grant assignment but are a local contribution.

Local contribution

Please add up in your budget all sources of income to the project: i.e. donations from your or other organizations (Dioceses, Parishes, Congregations, religious Institutions, etc.), or the same local people involved / beneficiaries. Local contributions from the very people involved in the project are greatly appreciated. Please recognise people's contribution in cash, equipment, land and work and express their total amount. All donations shall be duly mentioned also in final report.

Grant required

Please indicate in your national currency and Euro, grant amount required from Caritas Italiana. If Euro Rate Change is not locally available, please indicate it in

US Dollars. Grants provided by Caritas Italiana to the project will be exclusively indicated in Euro.

8. Address and contact

One signed original project-proposal and cover letter application sheet shall be submitted by regular mail to:

Caritas Italiana - Microproject Desk
International Department
Via Aurelia n. 796 – 00165 ROMA (ITALY)
Telephone +390666177222; + 390666177228
Fax: +3906-6617702
Email: micro@caritasitaliana.it

In some exceptional cases Micro-Project abstracts or summaries or proposals, could be preliminary submitted by fax or e-mail.