

**Capacity Building for the NGO Sector**  
**A Practical Guide**  
**To**  
**Programme/Project Design**

By  
NGANG Carol Chi



*Southern Africa Social Development Agency*

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**Project Management Tools & Techniques**  
**for**  
**Capacitating the NGO Sector across**  
**Southern Africa**

This guide was prepared by

Ngang Carol Chi  
Southern Africa Social Development Agency (SASDA)  
604 Church Gardens, Bourke Street  
Sunnyside 0002, Pretoria  
South Africa

Tel: +27 (0) 78 491 4620

E-mail: [ccngang@sasda-hq.org](mailto:ccngang@sasda-hq.org)

Website: [www.sasda-hq.org](http://www.sasda-hq.org)





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# INTRODUCTION

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## **Brief Description**

The development of this practical guide is intended to facilitate the designing of social development programmes and projects, provide guidance for implementation and a framework for evaluation. The guide is designed as a generic tool for social development programmes and projects that seek to create transformation. It presents an overview of the relevance and importance of programme and project design in the context of social development programmes and project management and explains its role as a valuable support material to training workshops on programme or project design.

## **Purpose of the Guide**

Well designed social development programmes and projects are not only cost-effective but also have the advantage of addressing multiple social problems simultaneously. Such programmes and projects will ideally attract community participation and ownership, contribute in community development and promote sustainable livelihoods and are also more likely to attract a diverse portfolio of donor funding and stakeholder involvement. On the contrary, poorly designed programmes and projects can greatly compromise and adversely affect programme/project outcomes.

Although major concern is being placed on replication of best practices to social development, the momentum of effort invested in developing such holistic programmes and projects is relatively minimal. This guide has been formulated therefore with a mind to promoting the designing of programmes and projects that deliver credible and significant social benefits in an integrated and sustainable manner.

Since the NGO sector, to a very great extent rely on donor funding, success in steering a project or programme through the process of obtaining funds depends largely on developing a clear, accurate and comprehensive programme/project design document. Such a document is the key instrument that donor agencies and stakeholders make use of to evaluate a programme or project's potential and assesses its merit. The document needs to clearly demonstrate that the project or programme will create increase social development beyond what would have occurred without the proposed intervention and that the programme or project will support and contribute to the social development agenda. It is the purpose of this guide therefore; to assist you and your organisation to go through the elaborate process and to enable you design programmes and projects that are of quality.

## **Skills to be Developed**

Programme or project design is a means of presenting a programme or project to donors and stakeholders and as such must be given considerable attention. This guide forms part

of a training toolkit that focuses on developing specific skills relating to programme/project design and thus provides guidelines on:

- Carrying out preparatory work
- Developing a comprehensive programme/project design.

The use of this guide together with other SASDA practical guides will enable you to develop the skills and competences and the ability to design a social development programme or project successfully.

## Who will need to use the Guide?

The guide is prepared to meet the capacity needs of social development practitioners who have had little or no experience in programme or project design and who require fundamental knowledge about the approach and its application to be able to design programmes and projects. It is designed purposefully to capacitate those that will be involved in programme/project design and management. The following category of people will find it very useful.

- **Programme and Project Managers:** Programme or project design is an indispensable management tool. This guide is therefore useful to programme and project managers as a tool for designing interventions that meet with stakeholder expectations and aspirations and have the potential to deliver a host of benefits to the community. A well designed programme or project is a roadmap to diligent implementation and successful outcomes.
- **Programme/project implementers:** Not only programme and project designers but also implementers need to understand good design principles so they can adapt the programme or project strategy and operations in response to changing contexts and lessons learned from implementation.
- **Stakeholders:** The guide will help stakeholders in identifying high quality projects or programmes that are unlikely to compromise vested interest, thus mitigating portfolio risk. Success-story programmes and projects will invariably create valuable goodwill and other ancillary benefits for the stakeholders.

As part of a training toolkit, the guide will be useful both to the trainer as well as to the workshop participants in facilitating learning, understanding and application of the concept and processes and in improving skills and techniques in programme or project design. Used for training, the guide should be accompanied by other elements of the programme or project design toolkit.

## When will the Guide be useful?

The guide will be useful not only in the programme or project design process but also as a workshop training tool for organisations that may want to organise in-house training for their staff on programme/project design. The guide is therefore not only useful for designing new programmes and projects but also for developing existing ones. In both

cases the guide will serve as a reference document to help in developing social development programmes and projects.

- For a new or existing programme or project the guide will provide useful directions in developing the programme or project concept, planning, and drafting of funding proposals. It will also provide guidelines for implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
- As a workshop training tool the guide will provide useful guidance on workshop proceedings, provide practical exercises and stimulate creative and analytical thinking on the concept.

At such times when donor funding for social programmes/projects is becoming scarcer than ever the advantage of well designed programmes and projects cannot be over emphasized.

This practical guide takes you through a step by step process of programme/project design, capacitates you with the skills, competences and ability to design effective social development programmes and projects and empowers you with the skills and ability to utilize programme/project design as a valuable tool for effective and efficient programme and project management.

A glossary of terms is included to give an explanation of the terms and concepts as they are used within the context of the guide.

The guide serves as a post workshop reference and support material to the application of techniques and approaches learnt during the training.

## About this Guide

### Audience

Programme & project managers & development practitioners who want to gain knowledge about programme and project design as a tool for effective and efficient programme and project management

### Content

Defines & illustrates the basic principles, concept and components of programme and project design, step by step description of how to design a social development programme or project and includes a checklist and worksheet to guarantee quality in the design process.

### Outcomes

Users of this guide will gain knowledge and understanding of the principles, components & processes of programme or project design & its benefits in management processes, develop the skills and techniques necessary for effective and efficient programme/project management & consequently increase organisational capacity.



# BASIC GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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## What is Programme/Project Design?

Programme or project design is a process that culminates in a written document (the programme or project design plan) on the project's objectives, methods, timetable and resources, providing the framework for executing a programme or project.

Programme/project design is an essential project management tool and one of the four processes that form a logical sequence of events known as the programme/project cycle, consisting of different phases. The design phase consists of three components, namely:

- Conceptualisation, which entails defining the scope, goals and objectives and the methodologies for action
- Planning, which entails formulating the programme or project elements
- Proposal writing, which entails converting the concept and the plan into a project document

Programme or project design is therefore the result of conceptualisation, project planning and the project proposal. The three components are essential for developing a concrete programme or project design. For example, you cannot possibly write a quality programme or project proposal without a good concept and without proper planning.

## The Programme/Project Cycle

### Definition

The *programme or project cycle* describes the sequence or pattern through which programmes and projects are planned and carried out and how they relate and affect each other. The cycle starts with an idea which is developed into a working plan that can be implemented, monitored and evaluated. The basic components of a programme or project cycle are generally identical but how they are formulated varies. The breakdown of the programme or project cycle into phases helps to orientate managerial action.

### The Structure of a Programme/Project Cycle

The life cycle of a programme or project is a diagrammatic description of the process that starts from the identification of the programme or project idea through design, implementation and evaluation. According to this concept a programme or project goes through different phases. The number of phases and the duration of each phase vary according to the nature of the programme or project.

The structure of a programme/project cycle does not follow any unique pattern. However, four principal phases are usually identified.

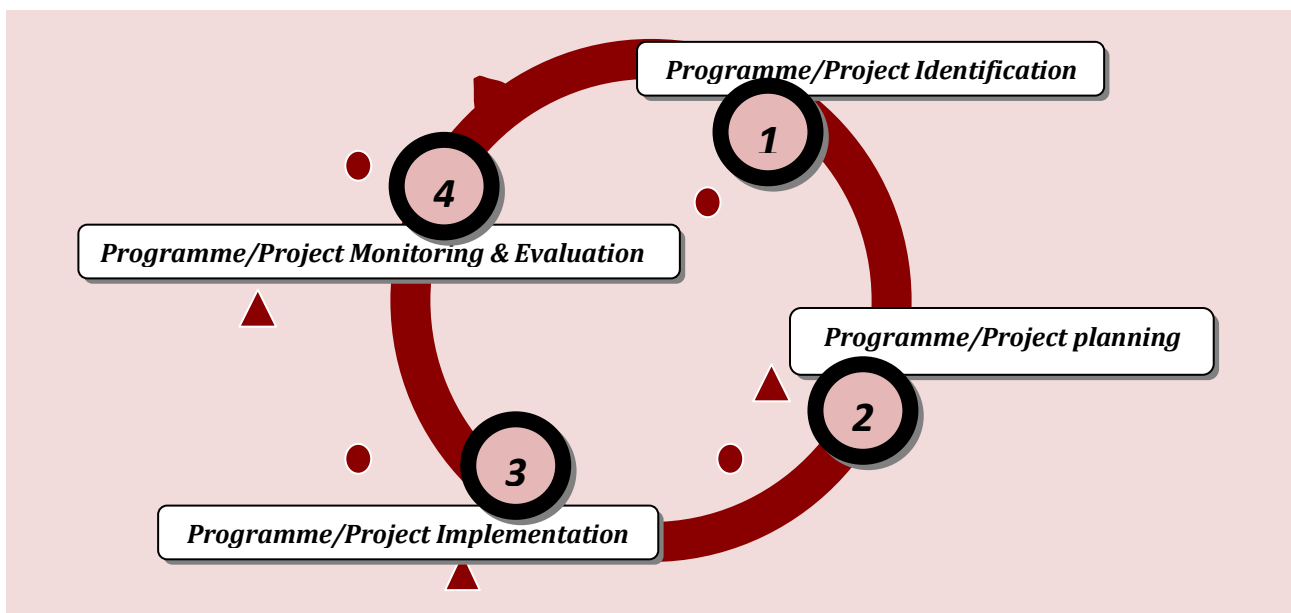


Fig. 1 – Basic structure of the programme/project cycle indicating the main phases

### Analysis of the Main Phases

The cycle defines the various phases in the life of the programme or project, with a well defined process of involvement of different stakeholders, management activities and decision making processes that need to happen during each phase.

**Identification:** This phase consists of the framework for analysis of problems, needs and interest of potential stakeholders and the identification of options to address the problem. The analysis will also help in understanding the programme or project context with regards to its relevance, feasibility and sustainability and the chances of funding based on comparison of the programme or project objectives with the funding criteria of potential partners. The implementing organisation plays a leading role during this phase and the output is the development of the programme or project concept.

**Design:** This involves an intensive participatory process that brings together the principal actors into a thinking and planning process and allows for relevant ideas to be developed into operational issues such as activity and resource scheduling. All significant aspects of the idea are studied, taking into account stakeholders' views, relevance to the problem, feasibility and sustainability. The result of the process is a decision to carry the programme or project forward or not. If the decision is reached to go ahead then a proposal is developed, aimed at securing funding for the proposed intervention.

**Implementation:** Implementation involves carrying out programme or project activities as planned. To ensure that the programme or project stays on course, constant and proper monitoring and mid-term evaluations are necessary to measure the extent to which results and objectives are being achieved, to identify any shortfalls and to enable adjustments to

the changing circumstances. During this phase, all the actors get directly or indirectly involved.

**Evaluation:** Evaluation is carried out to measure the result of the intervention in relation to the objectives – whether they were achieved or not. It helps to determine the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the programme or project. Evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, allowing for valuable lessons learned during the course of the intervention to be incorporated into decision making and to influence further action. The results of evaluation would determine if the intervention should be carried on, terminated or if the strategy should be changed and the conclusions would be relevant for planning and implementation of other programmes and projects. The evaluation phase may require external expertise but the role of the implementing organisation and the affected group is very important in conducting an affective evaluation. The outcome may consist of lessons learnt and feedback that is channeled into future programming and/or policy frameworking.

#### ***Best Practice Considerations for Programme/Project Design***

- Ensure relevance of programme/project in addressing identified problems
- Ensure stakeholder involvement/participation
- Ensure a logical intervention strategy
- Plan for capacity development & sustainability
- Plan for documentation of lessons learnt and adaptation

## **Before Starting the Design Process**

If you are in charge of designing programmes and projects for your organisation you should avoid the temptation of hastily jumping into the design process without sufficient preparatory work.

- ❖ **Situation analysis:** Completing a detailed situation analysis is a key element to effective programme or project design. This relates to assessing stakeholder interests, the problem and the factors that are likely to have an impact on the intervention, and mapping out strategies for addressing the problem. This involves looking at the best ways to make an impact on the problem the programme or project seeks to address given the specific internal and external contexts.
- ❖ **Relevance:** Ensure that the designing of the programme or project is relevant in addressing the social problem identified during the identification phase and that the design is crafted to increase anticipated positive effects and to eliminate the negative ones.
- ❖ **Programme or project feasibility:** Ensure your organisation (implementing organisation) has the capacity, resources and stakeholder support to implement the programme or project.
- ❖ **Baseline studies:** A baseline study would provide accurate data to inform the programme/project design process. Programmes and projects that are designed

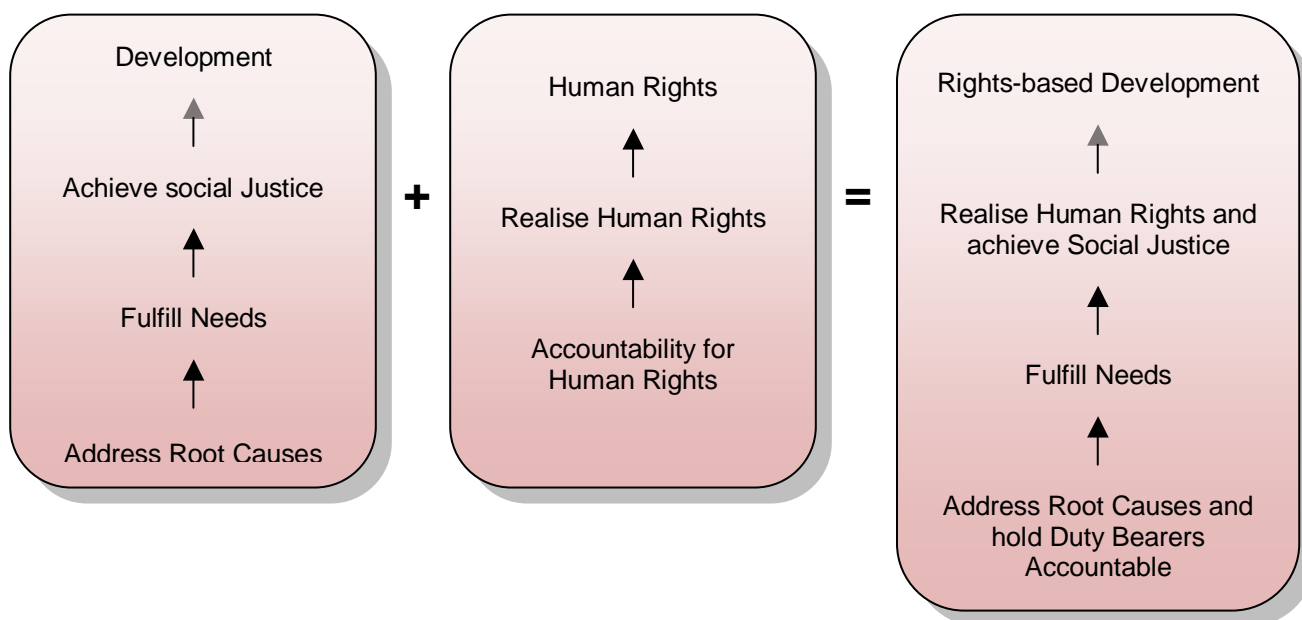
based on assumption have a high probability to face a backlog during implementation.

- ❖ **Check for best practices in programme/ project design:** Avoid the assumption of knowing it all. Identified best practices in programme or project design can provide valuable inspiration. We encourage and recommend replication of strategies that have proven to work
- ❖ **Seek expert advice or technical assistance:** The services of an expert or consultant will do much good than doing it yourself and doing it wrongly. Sometimes it is best to avoid the syndrome of *business as usual* way of thinking and seek other perspectives of doing things, especially when you are aware that you don't have sufficient knowledge and skills on the subject.
- ❖ **Stakeholder participation:** Programme/project design should be done in the best interest of target groups and communities and with their full participation. It is a right that peoples and communities are entitled to, to participate in decision making on issues that affect them. This gives credibility to the programme or project and increases the chances of success. People will easily buy into a programme or project that they have been part of designing.

## How to Design a Social Programme or Project

### Rights Based Programming

Increasingly, *rights-based* as opposed to *needs-based* programming is gaining popularity among development agencies, the NGO sector and donor community. Rights-based programming means taking a different approach to programme and project design.



**Fig. 3** – Complementary systems and approaches: Development and human rights (Adapted from the Save the Children UK Practical Guide to Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation and Impact Assessment)

This implies shifting from considering development from the perspective of addressing the needs of peoples (right holders) to actually recognizing their inherent rights and holding those responsible (duty bearers) to respect, protect and fulfill those rights. The process of social development programme and project design should therefore focus on determining what is preventing people’s rights from being fulfilled and the obligation of duty bearers in fulfilling these rights and to plan intervention strategies on the basis of these analyses.

When we acknowledge that duty bearers owe the responsibility to account to right holders for the fulfillment of the latter’s rights and that instead of focusing on the needs of a particular target group and the immediate causes, rights-based analysis looks much more broadly at all levels of responsibility, this affects how a situation analysis is carried out, how programme and project scope are determined, affects the emphasis and purpose of planning. In fact, this will greatly shape the focus and approach of project and programme design. In this light, every programme or project design will need to incorporate an advocacy component. *(Our acknowledgement to Save the Children UK for this analysis on rights-based programming)*

In designing programmes and projects you must have it in mind that your task is to convert the programme or project concept and plan into a workable strategy that aims to produce desired results. Remember that the design phase of the programme/project cycle consists of three principal components, namely conceptualization, planning and proposal writing.

	Needs-Based Approach	Rights-Based Approach
1	People deserve social assistance	People are entitle to social assistance
2	Governments ought to do something for the people but no one has definite obligations	Governments have binding legal and moral obligations towards the people
3	People can participate in order to improve service delivery	People are active participants by right, to shape the course of their own development
4	Given scarce resources, some people may have to be left out in the distribution of services	Everybody has equal rights to share in national resources in order to fulfill their potential
5	Each piece of work has its own goal but there is a unifying overall purpose	There is an overarching goal to which all work contributes
6	Certain groups have the technical expertise to meet people's needs	Any person can play a role in achieving people's rights
7	Looks at specific, immediate situation	Analyse root causes
8	Ownership of programmes and projects belong to a select group	Ownership of programmes and projects belongs to the people

**Fig. 4 -** Key features of a needs-based approach and rights-based approach to development

## Developing the Programme or Project Concept

### Problem Identification

The process of programme or project design actually begins with identifying a problem that your organisation believes can and should be addressed. The problem identified presents opportunities for your organisation to do something about. This stage in the design process is very important. In identifying the problem, you must look out for cross-cutting issues such as gender and human rights and deal with them sensitively. Issues of this kind can greatly influence the way a programme or project is designed.

In some cases the problem might already be established and your organisation or a funding agency might request intervention to address it. In other cases, a funding agency might request or your organisation might need to carry out a thorough situational analysis of a particular sector, area, community, region or country before being able to establish the problem and opportunities for intervention.

### Situation Analysis

A situation analysis provides a detailed review of the context in which stakeholders operate. The success of a programme or project will depend on how precisely and accurately the problem is articulated and understood. This involves an in depth analysis of root causes to social problems and the responsibilities of duty bearers in addressing them, definition of the problem or opportunity that the project will seek to address (with the rights of beneficiaries placed on high priority). A proper analysis of the current situation will give you the opportunity to identify the problem and the actual needs of the community and the inherent rights of the people. This cannot be done in isolation of the people. Communities will hardly ever be homogeneous and therefore their needs cannot be assumed on the basis of one community having the same characteristics as another.

An organisation with particular focus on HIV/AIDS programmes across sub Saharan Africa had recorded resounding successes in its community intervention programme in rural and sub-urban communities in some countries across the region. The organisation decided on the basis of the successes registered to replicate the programme in other communities with similar characteristics as those they had worked in previously.

The organisation contacted a donor agency and put up a proposal to that effect. The agency requested an independent study in order to establish a baseline for measuring the results of the programme. The results of the baseline study established that the immediate problem in one of the identified communities was actually not HIV/AIDS but poverty. Thus the needs of that community were those of alleviating poverty and not combating HIV/AIDS. The survey pointed out that the community held the view that HIV/AIDS was also a problem but a secondary one. The priority of the community was to fight poverty.

The collection and analysis of information at this stage is often directly related to the proposed work your organisation will be carrying out. The situation analysis will help in analysing the context within which the organisation will be working, establishing priorities and making appropriate choices as to what the organisation should address and how it should work, understanding the complexities of a problem, its causes and what kind of

interventions are already in place to tackle it, how the problem impacts on the target groups and also the constraints and opportunities for intervention.

A situation analysis will also help to establish the capacity of your organisation in implementing the programme or project as well as the environmental factors that may impact on the success of the intervention.

Essential tools that can be used in carrying out a situational analysis are:

- Baseline surveys
- Community needs assessment (participatory learning)
- Problem tree
- SWOT analysis
- Stakeholder analysis
- Case study reports
- Statistical information

The situational analysis should result in the development of a *Concept Paper* (see Fig. 17) for the programme or project. It is a draft summary of what the programme or project will look like. Let us examine the following two tools used in carrying out a situational analysis:

### **Problem Analysis**

Once the problem has been established the next important step is to articulate the problem by seeking answers to the following questions:

- What is the problem?
- What is the origin of the problem?
- What are the main needs generated by the problem?
- What significance does the problem have?
- Why should anything be done about the problem?
- What effect will the problem have if nothing is done about it?
- What needs to be done about the problem?

Note that the involvement of beneficiaries of the programme or project at this stage is a matter of right and very significant in determining community interest and support for the project or programme.

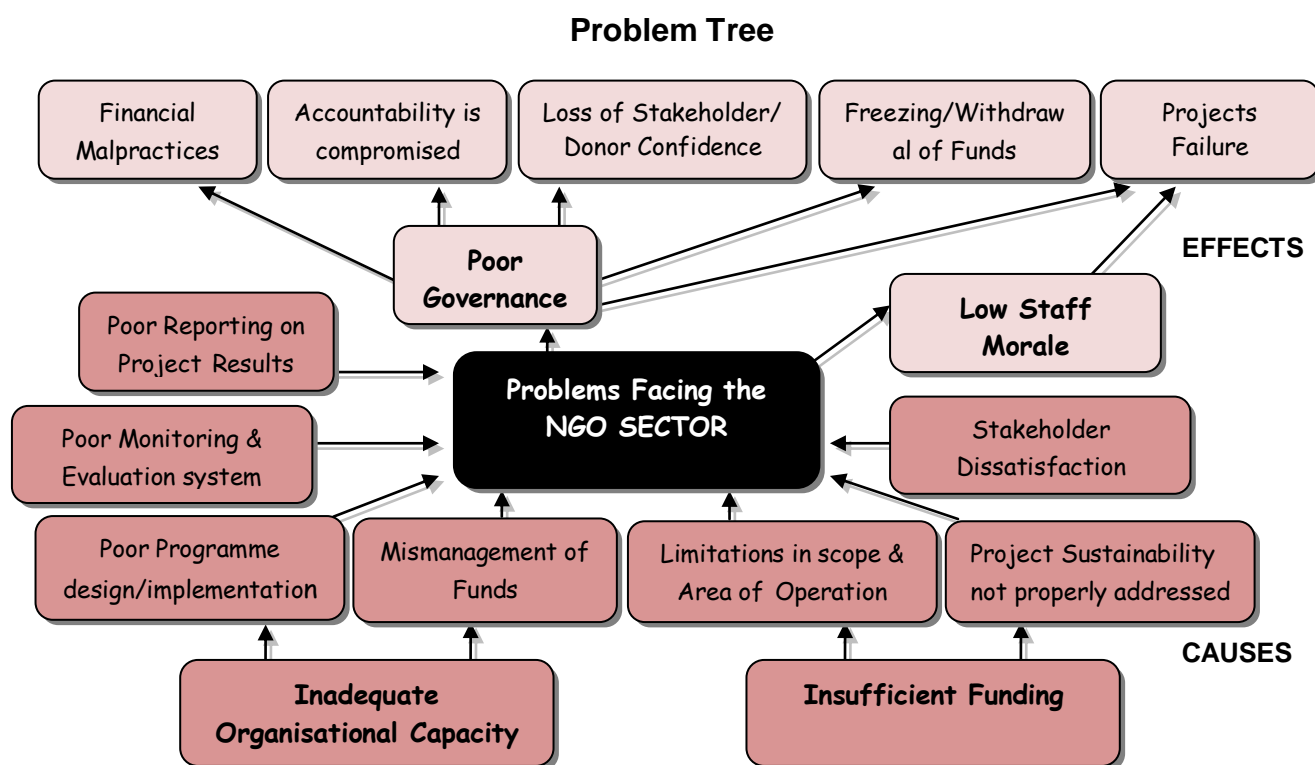
A variation to the problem analysis concept is to analyse the resources and skills that people have rather than what they lack. If you should adopt this approach then you will have to consider doing a **capacity analysis** or better still focus on **objective analysis** than on problem analysis.

**Problem Tree:** Problem analysis can also be represented on a problem tree with a cause effect relationship. The problem tree is a useful analytical method, which allows participants to focus on a central problem, identify its causes and effects, rank the factors and from it define objectives for an intervention.

The procedure for developing a problem tree is as follows:

1. Identify a core, central or focal problem.
2. Brainstorm to produce a list of causes and consequences of the focal problem.
3. Rank them in terms of importance. The facilitators can discuss each topic as it is raised and how it relates to the central problem.
4. Write the 'core problem' in the centre of a piece of paper and arrange the causal factors below and the effects above. Discuss the links between the factors and draw arrows linking them where appropriate.

Once this is done, you can then turn each causal factor on the problem tree into an issue to be addressed. For example, if *lack of organisational capacity* were given as a cause, then the objective would read, *build capacity*. Do the same with consequences, so an effect that says *programme & project failure* would read, *increase potential for sustainability*. This helps identify key problems, objectives and indicators, though not all the objectives may be relevant to the project.



**Fig. 6** – Example of a problem tree indicating the problems facing the NGO sector

What to note about a problem tree

- The people experiencing the problem must be actively involved in the process of developing the problem tree.
- You need hard facts – accurate information about the community
- There is no ideal format for a problem tree. The one illustrated above is just an example. Problem trees can take different shapes. The important thing is to get a comprehensive understanding of the problem and the relationship between causes and effects.

## SWOT Analysis

SWOT analysis is a tool that will help you to identify the strengths and weaknesses of your organisation as well as the opportunities and threats facing it. A proper analysis of this should be able to demonstrate how you intend to build on the strengths, address the weaknesses, take advantage of the opportunities and overcome the threats. It is a tool that provides a framework for group analysis of a given situation. It encourages input from many people, helps people brainstorm potential solutions (opportunities) and constraints and is a way of gathering information that can be useful in problem analysis.

An analysis of this kind will give assurance to potential donors and stakeholders that your knowledge and understanding of the situation is accurate and realistic and that you have the insight and determination to realise the project and ensure its sustainability.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ The strong points of the programme or project</li><li>❖ The things that have worked</li><li>❖ Things that one is proud to say about the project, situation, activity or your organisation's capacity in carrying out the programme or project</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ Those things that have not worked so well</li><li>❖ Times when things could have been done better</li><li>❖ The shortfalls of the project, programme or your organisation</li></ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ The circumstances that present the opportunity for your organisation to do something about</li><li>❖ The resources available for your organisation to take advantage of</li><li>❖ Other external factors that present an advantage to make use of.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>❖ The threats and constraints that exist, which reduce the range of opportunities</li><li>❖ The uncertainties and unforeseen circumstances that may impact negatively on the success of the programme or project</li></ul>

Fig. 5 – SWOT Analysis

In effect SWOT analysis is an assessment of the internal as well as the external environment of the organisation. Strengths and weaknesses represent internal factors - those factors that the organisation can manipulate and control while opportunities and threats represent external factors that the organisation has no direct control over.

## The Programme or Project Concept

The concept of the programme or project is developed when all the ramifications of the problem have been identified and appropriate strategies and methodologies worked out for addressing the problem. The programme or project concept must fit with the overall goal, vision and mission of your organisation.

# Programme/Project Planning

## The Purpose of Planning

The purpose of planning is to define the exact parameters of a programme or project and to ensure that pre-requisites for implementation, monitoring and evaluation are in place. It is done to increase the likelihood that a programme or project will be implemented efficiently, effectively and successfully.

Planning involves defining what you want to do and how you are going to do it. It involves identifying priority needs and opportunities, choosing the most appropriate courses of action, agreeing on expected outcomes, calculating the human, material and financial resources needed to achieve the objectives, anticipating possible problems and getting agreement from all concerned on clear targets and timeframes for execution. Proper planning enables you analyse and assess present needs and future challenges that may undermine and threaten the success of the programme or project. Generally planning increases chances of success. The effectiveness of the design process depends to a large extent on how well the programme or project is planned.

## Scope Definition

Once the problem has been established planners need to clearly define the scope of the proposed programme or project.

Goals and objectives should be set to help guide the work. A plan of action can then be drawn up, bringing together activities designed to achieve the objectives. Clear goals and objectives are essential for monitoring and evaluation later on in the programme/project cycle. The goals must be clearly linked to the activities. Goals are broad statements that describe the long term focus of the project or programme while objectives are much more specific and concrete.

## Goals

Goals are usually formulated based on the broader strategy, policies, principles and values of the organisation and what it can realistically hope to accomplish, the objectives of other stakeholders involved and the particular needs and rights that the organisation intends to address. Note that goals are hardly achievable.

## Objectives

Objectives describe the change that the programme or project intends to bring about so that activities can be planned accordingly. They are used to focus the work and to assess what progress is being made. To be able to demonstrate whether or not they have been achieved objectives should be:

- **Specific:** What exactly will change (e.g. behaviour, attitude, access to resources), for whom, what proportion of the population, in what geographical area? Is the change going to increase the situation or reduce it?
- **Measurable or can be monitored:** There should be some means of demonstrating - qualitatively or quantitatively that the expected change has taken place.

- **Achievable:** Objectives should be achievable, given the resources and organisational capacity available, in context and under the prevailing conditions.
- **Relevant or realistic:** Objectives should be relevant or realistic to the context and perceptions of those involved.
- **Time-framed:** The change should take place within a specified period

Setting objectives is not a very simple thing to do. The most common problems associated with this are:

- Setting objectives that are not realistic and are not achievable within timeframe.
- Setting vague and ambiguous objectives – objectives that cannot be measured over time and the extent of their achievement cannot be determined. For example, “improve living standards,” and “combat the HIV/AIDS pandemic.” There is no way by which one can tell if these objectives have been achieved or not.
- Expressing activities as objectives. An objective that looks like this one, “to organise HIV/AIDS campaigns to raise awareness about the dangers of the pandemic within the community,” is more of a description of an activity than an objective.

A more realistic objective would be: “increase living standards by 40% in Poverty Village by 2014” or “Reduce the rate of HIV/AIDS infection by 25% among teenagers in Pandemic High School within three years.”

Clear, realistic and ambitious objectives help to clarify the ultimate purpose of programme or project activities. Conditions are never static when it comes to development work. There are always lessons learnt, which need to be incorporated into future programming. Objectives thus need to be flexible to accommodate changing circumstances. It is obvious that in the course of a programme or project, original objectives might have been achieved or might not be working towards the achievement of the goal and therefore no longer relevant. They need to be changed.

### **Programme/Project Description**

Programme or project description is a detailed description of what the programme or project intends to achieve and how. It is a description of how the programme or project will be implemented – the strategies chosen for solving the problem identified and precisely how it will lead to improvement.

Programme or project description should include information relating to:

- Title of the programme or project activity
- Measurable goals and specific objectives,
- Background and feasibility of the programme or project
- Beneficiaries and the extent of their involvement
- Management capacity and collaborating organisations or agencies
- Methodology and anticipated outcomes
- Timeframes

## Planning Methods and Tools

At this stage, the specific objectives of the programme or project need to be converted into planning steps and the details of programme and project implementation need to be determined. The following planning tools will facilitate this process:

### Logical Framework Analysis

The Logical Framework Analysis (logframe), otherwise known in other development circles as the Project Framework Approach (PFA) is the most important tool for planning especially complicated programmes and projects. Gilroy Coleman, in his book; *The Logical Framework Approach* defines the logframe as, “a set of interlocking concepts which must be used together in a dynamic fashion to permit the elaboration of a well designed, objectively described, and valuable project.”

The idea of this tool is to enable you identify all the elements of a new programme or project and examine how they fit together. It is a way of testing the cause-effect relationship of a plan of action by analysing it in terms of means and ends – to check how one step will lead to another to produce the expected results. This helps to:

- Clarify how planned activities will help to achieve objectives and goals
- Explain the implications of carrying out the planned activities in terms of resources, assumptions and risks.

The LFA approach can be used to analyse the logic of the relationship between programme or project goals and objectives and proposed activities. The first step is to think of a programme or project as a series of activities where one step leads onto the next in a logical sequence. This is done by listing the inputs at the bottom and then working up the logic towards the goal in the sequence described in the diagram below:

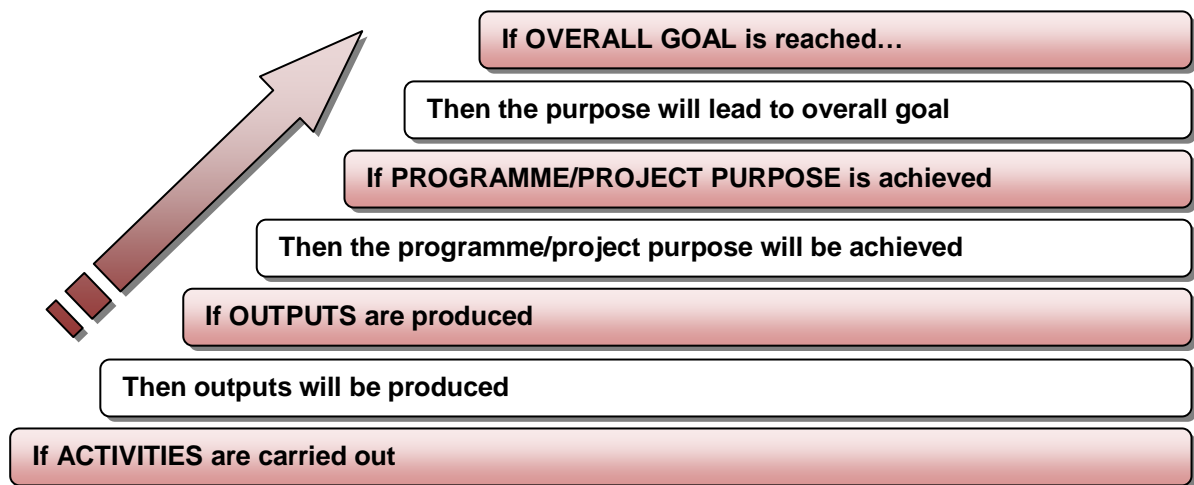


Fig. 7 – Logical Framework Analysis (LFA)

The logic of the logframe is based on assumption. Whether one step leads to the other depends on whether your planning assumptions are correct. In the above example, the inputs will only contribute to the activities, “Organise conferences, workshops, seminars & training sessions to disseminate knowledge to participants” if our assumptions about the expertise of the trainers and facilitators, relevance of training materials and sufficiency of financial and material resources are correct. Otherwise, the activities may not take place.

According to this logic, the project or programme should first be described as a series of hypotheses. *If* we put in all the INPUTS required to carry out the activities *then* conferences, workshops, seminars and training sessions would be organised. *If* ACTIVITIES are carried out and conferences, workshops, seminars and training sessions are organised *then* the OUTPUTS would be produced - knowledge would be disseminated and participants will acquire skills, competences and techniques. *If* participants acquire the necessary skills, competences and techniques *then* the OBJECTIVE or PROJECT PURPOSE of seeking to capacitate the NGO sector would be achieved. *If* the objective is achieved and the NGO sector is capacitated *then* the GOAL of developing an NGO sector with increase capacity to respond to the challenges and constraints facing the sector would be reached. And, *if* the overall goal is reached and the NGO sector is developed and capacitated *then* it will contribute to social development with a broader and widespread impact.

This can be illustrated by the following two diagrams:



**Fig. 8** – Programme/project hypothesis (Logical Framework Analysis)

The Logical Framework Analysis is a very important programme/project management tool, the most important purpose of which is to summarize key elements of programme or project design rather than present self-contained and comprehensive programme or project information. Thus, it does not need to cover detailed information on activities. The items specified under activities should indicate only the main activities. A detailed breakdown of activities should be covered by the activity or implementation plan

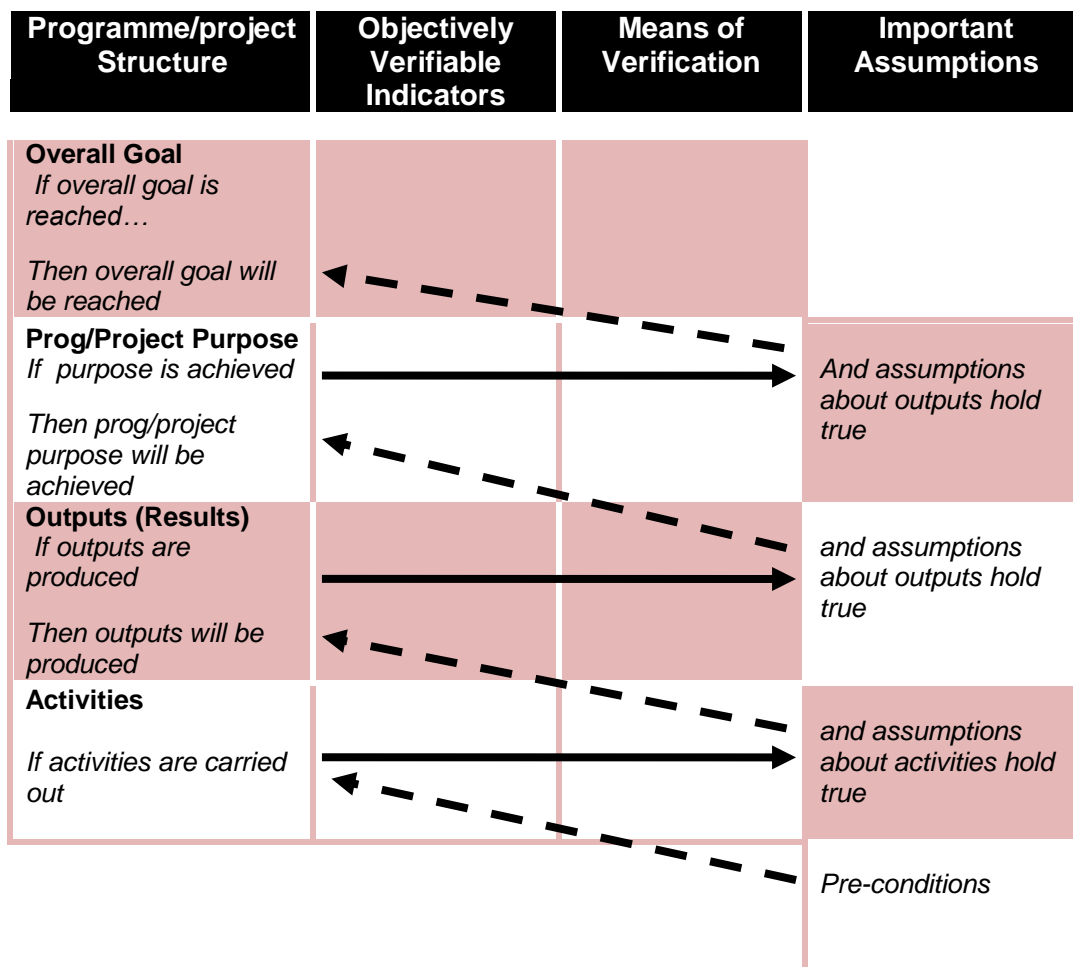


Fig. 9 - Programme/project hypothesis (Logical Framework Analysis)

### Activity (Implementation) Plan

The activity plan includes specific information and explanations of each of the planned activities. Each objective must have a clear plan of action designed to meet it. The activity plan should describe in vivid terms:

- what activities will be undertaken
- How they will be carried out
- When they will be carried out
- Who will be responsible for what
- What resources or inputs are required (money, people, assets, etc)?
- The intended results or output of each activity
- How the outputs will be measured

Developing an activity plan follows the following steps as described in Fig 10:

Steps for carrying out an Activity Plan		
Step	Activity	Description
1	List all programme or project activities that you intend to carry out	Develop a single list of all activities planned
2	Break activities into sub-activities and manageable tasks	Activities are broken down first into sub-activities and then into tasks. The tasks are then allocated to individuals. The main idea here is to get the level of details right, which will enable the planner to estimate the resources needed.
3	Clarify the sequence of activities	Relate activities to each other in order to determine their relationship and dependence. For example, the start-up of one activity may depend on the completion of another.
4	Draw up a timeline for each task	Each task should be given a start-up date, duration and completion date. The schedule should then be followed as closely as possible.
5	Summarise the scheduling of main activities	The scheduling of the individual tasks should be followed by that of the main activities
6	Use Milestones	Milestones are important events that provide a measure of project progress and targets for the programme or project team to aim for.
7	Define expertise	The level and type of expertise needed should be decided for each task separately
8	Allocate tasks among the programme/project team	Distribute responsibilities in consultation with team members

**Fig. 10** – Steps to developing an activity plan. Adapted from the *Guide to Project Proposal Writing* by Besim Nebiu

Generally the activity plan can be expressed in two formats – a simple table with rows and columns and on a Gantt chart. The simple table (Fig. 11) is a clear, easily understandable format that describes activities, sub-activities, tasks, timing and responsibilities, while the Gantt (Fig. 12) chart is a more technical format for presenting activities in certain timeframes, the dependence and sequence of each activity.

Activity	Objective	Process	Requirements	Time Frame	Person Responsible	Expected Outcome	Process Indicator
<i>What do we want to do</i>	<i>Why do we want to do it</i>	<i>How are we going to do it</i>	<i>What do we need to do what we want to do</i>	<i>When will it be done?</i>	<i>Who will be responsible for doing it?</i>	<i>What will be the result?</i>	<i>How do we know we have done what we planned to do?</i>
<b>Programme/project objective 1</b>							
Activity 1							
Activity 2							
Etc							
<b>Programme/project objective 2, etc</b>							

**Fig. 11** – Sample Activity Plan Format

### Gantt Chart

The Gantt chart, when used to accompany the activity or implementation plan can be very beneficial in determining what unit of time is necessary for each activity, for measuring progress and for mapping important milestones. This can be conveniently represented on a chart with a matrix format outlining the activities vertically and timeframes and allocation of responsibilities horizontally.

Since most social development programmes and projects cover a life span of over a year, it is ideal to draw up timelines in monthly intervals to allow for sufficient details in relation to activities.

*Activity Timelines:* Proceed by indicating in the chart when each of the activities is planned to occur, taking note to indicate the start and end dates (indicated in the chart by S=Start and F=finish). Activities that are on-going and do not require full time commitment can be highlighted with a light shading while those that require immediate attention and full time commitment can be represented by a dark shading. Different colours can be used for different activities.

Notice that activity 2 has an on-going life-span, starting from late January and running up to the month of December with a major milestone that must be met at the end of July. Activity 1 has a definite start and finish date, i.e. from mid January to mid February. Activity 3 starts in mid February and ends in late March. Activity 4 has a life-span that starts from late march and ends in mid June with a major milestone, and so on.

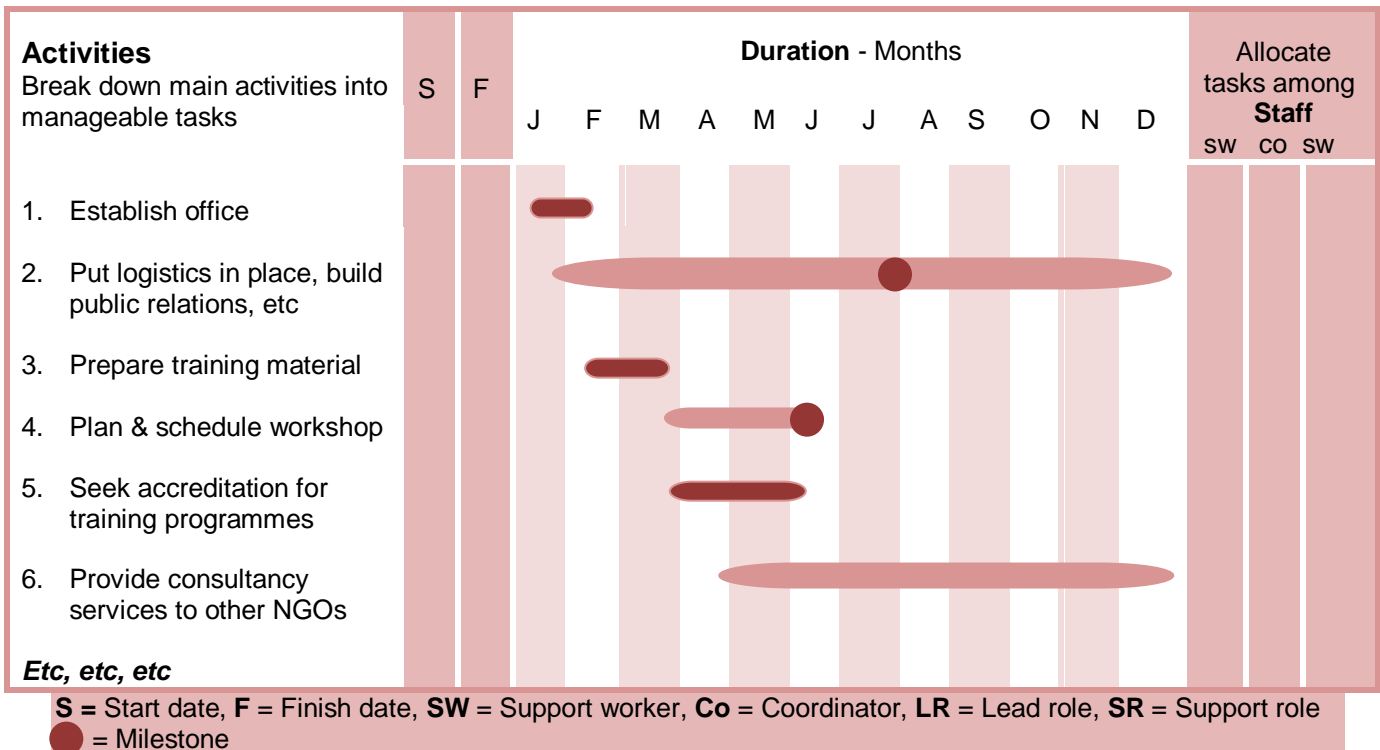


Fig. 12 – Gantt chart template illustrating activity timelines and milestones

*Representing Milestones:* The Gantt chart can also be used to indicate important milestones for each activity, for example meetings or deliverables. This can be represented by symbols as shown on the table above.

The milestone symbol indicated against activities 2 may indicate an important deliverable that must take place by the end of the month of July, while the symbol indicated against activity 4 may indicate reporting dateline for that particular activity.

### **Resource Plan**

In developing the activity plan, resources such as money, people, assets, and materials are identified that are essential for realising the activities. A resource plan is therefore necessary to determine how the resources would be secured. The resource plan provides information on the means necessary to undertake the project. This enables cost categories to be determined in order to facilitate budgeting.

Cost categories would include staff remuneration (salaries and wages), equipment and maintenance, administration, running or direct costs. The next step is to identify units, quantities per period and estimated unit costs. This would allow an easy calculation of costs per period, total project or programme costs and would help in monitoring of expenditure and to ensure that it is done in compliance with the plan.

### **Budgeting**

A budget, which is a result of the resource plan, is an itemized summary of an organisation's expected income and expenditure over a specified period. It is a document that translates plans into monetary terms – money that needs to be spent in order to get your planned activities done, otherwise known as expenditures and money that needs to be generated to get the planned activities done, otherwise known as income. However, the format for preparing a budget may vary greatly with different organisations, especially with non profit organisations because their sources of income are too diversified. Good practice in budgeting involves clarity of purpose, detailed planning and considerable thought.

*Income:* Income is a source of support to the programme or project. It is also known as revenue and includes a total of financial assets and contributions in-kind. Since most non profit organisations have a diversification in sources of incomes, it is advisable to draw up an income side of the budget to show the share of contribution from each of the sources.

*Expenditure:* Expenditure is the total amount of money that is estimated or anticipated to be spent during implementation of the project or programme. These costs should be a direct and reasonable reflection of the activities outlined in the activity plan, with considerable breakdown where necessary.

<b>Your Organisation - Annual Budget</b>				
<b>Currency - Rands (ZAR)</b>				
<b><u>Income:</u></b>				
Donor organisation X	=	200,000.00		
Donor organisation Y	=	480,000.00		
Donor organisation Z	=	320,000.00		
Organisation's own contribution	=	262,000.00		
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>1,262,000.00</b>		
<b><u>Expenditure:</u></b>				
<b>Salaries</b>	<b>No. of units</b>	<b>Unit Cost</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>
Executive Director	1	18,000	12 months	216,000.00
Programme Coordinator	1	12,000	12 months	144,000.00
Programme Staff	3	6,000	12 months	216,000.00
<b>Total Salaries</b>				<b>576,000.00</b>
<b>Administration</b>				
Rents	1	6,000	12 months	36,000.00
Bills		2,500	12 Months	30,000.00
Transport & Communication		5,000	12 Months	60,000.00
<b>Total Administration</b>				<b>126,000.00</b>
<b>Equipment &amp; Maintenance</b>				
Furniture		26,000	Once off	26,000.00
Computers & Software	4	6,000	Once off	24,000.00
Office Supplies		2,000	4 Quarters	8,000.00
Car lease & Maintenance	1	8,000	12 Months	96,000.00
<b>Total Equipment &amp; Maintenance</b>				<b>154,000.00</b>
<b>Programme Activities (Direct Costs)</b>				
Trainers/Facilitators' Fees	2	4,000	4 Quarters	32,000.00
Training Materials		6,000	4 Quarters	24,000.00
Printing/photocopy of Manuals		250	80 participants	20,000.00
Venue Hire	1	500	20 days	10,000.00
Catering for participants	80	100	20 days	160,000.00
Transport fare for participants	80	500	4 Quarters	160,000.00
<b>Total Programme Activities</b>				<b>406,000.00</b>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>				<b>1,262,000.00</b>

**Fig.14 – Sample budget format for a training programme indicating income, expenditure & cost categories**

## Developing a Monitoring and Evaluation System

Development work would hardly make any reasonable sense without an appropriate monitoring and evaluation system to assess the work done and to measure the level of change or improvement of the current situation. Good programming invariably relates to the availability, control and utilization of resources. As social development programmes and projects are aimed at changing - increasing or improving a favourable situation or reducing a deplorable one, a monitoring and evaluation system is needed to track the change process.

The effectiveness of a programme or project in achieving its objectives and reaching its goals depends to a great extent on an effective monitoring and evaluation system, which in effect should be incorporated into the planning process.

The purpose for developing a monitoring and evaluation system is two-pronged: first, it establishes the role of monitoring and evaluation as a valuable tool and part of the process of programme/project management and secondly as a system for information management. Developing a monitoring and evaluation system involves:

- Developing indicators against which progress and impact will be measured.
- Setting up systems for data collection, analysis and interpretation, storage and reporting.
- Documenting results to inform decision making and for potential replication

Monitoring and evaluation, though commonly used together, refer to two separate processes.

### Monitoring

Monitoring refers to the continuous process of systematic collection and analysis of information on a day-to-day basis to follow up on the performance of programmes and projects in relation to their targets. It involves:

- Defining programme or project indicators
- Setting up systems and tools for data collection relating to the indicators
- Collecting and compiling necessary data
- Analysing and interpreting the data

Fig. 15

### *Why Have a Budget?*

- The budget tells you how much money you need to carry out your planned activities.
- The budget forces you to be rigorous in thinking through the implications of your activity planning. There are times when the realities of the budgeting process force you to rethink your action plans.
- Used properly, the budget tells you when you will need certain amounts of money to carry out your activities
- The budget enables you to monitor your income & expenditure and identify any problems.
- The budget sets the basis for financial accountability & transparency. When everyone can see how much should have been spent & received, they can ask informed questions about discrepancies.
- You cannot raise money from donors unless you have a budget. Donors use the budget as a basis for deciding whether what you are asking for is reasonable and well-planned.

*Source:*

*Project Proposal Writing  
by Besim Nebiu*

- Using the information produced to inform day-to-day management, decision making and policy formulation.

In designing a monitoring system, note that you are establishing a system that will provide useful information on an on-going basis so that you can improve on the work you do and how you do it.

### **Evaluation**

Evaluation is mainly concerned with the comparison of actual programme or project impact against strategic plans. It involves:

- Looking at what the programme or project aimed to achieve – the difference or impact it wanted to make.
- Assessing progress towards the achievement of impact targets.
- Assessing the effectiveness of the strategies in achieving the programme or project goals and addressing shortcomings.
- Drawing lessons from what worked and what did not work so well and how the shortcomings were addressed.

Designing an evaluation system means developing Terms of Reference (TOR) for the process or drawing up a sensible proposal to meet the needs of the programme or project.

Both processes should be designed to measure efficiency, effectiveness and impact. Through monitoring and evaluation, you can:

- Review progress
- Identify problems in planning and implementation
- Make adjustments accordingly to ensure that the programme or project is likely to make a difference.

***Developing Indicators:*** Part of the planning process involves setting and defining indicators against which results will be measured. Indicators provide a quantifiable basis on which to judge the programme or project's success in achieving its objectives. They provide the framework for the monitoring and evaluation system. Indicators help to tell you what you want to know about the programme or project, what kind of data to collect, how to collect the data and who should be involved in data collection. If key indicators are closely measured, they should be able to inform you if things are changing. If not, it means your strategy is not working and therefore needs to be revisited. Indicators need to be developed in the early stages of planning so that data collection relating to the indicators can commence as soon as the programme or project activities start.

The following steps are essential for setting indicators:

- Identify the problem situation you want to address
- Develop outcome indicators by developing a vision of how you would want the situation to be after your intervention. Outcome indicators will inform you of the product of the work or what has been achieved.

- Develop process indicators by defining how you would want things to be done in order to achieve the vision. Process indicators will inform you how the work is being done.
- Develop performance indicators that will help you measure effectiveness and efficiency.

Ensure to make your indicators both qualitative and quantitative. Quantitative measurement gives you information on how many or how much of something is being achieved. For example, number of people trained in community gardening, number of orphans and vulnerable children that are receiving support grants. Qualitative measurement will give you information about how people feel about a situation. Quantitative indicators measure quantity while qualitative indicators measure quality of work done.

**Data Collection:** Data collection is important in determining if progress is being made or not. Your programme or project should be designed to facilitate a steady flow of information about the work and how it is being done. A well planned monitoring and evaluation system would engage the broad range of staff working on the project or programme so that data collection is integrated into everyone's job. But note that it is vital to make use of appropriate data collection tools and ensure to collect only relevant information that will help you know what you want to know. For instance, if you want to get information about the number of male and female students in a class, collecting information about their parents or about their dates of birth is really not relevant.

Make sure to keep your data collection tools simple, easy to understand and easy to use by those who do the data collection. In some cases it might be necessary to include instructions on how to fill in the data collection tools so that it is not clammed with junk information.

Ideally, it is best to carry out a baseline survey at programme or project inception so as to have relevant data about the situation before your intervention. This information will set the baseline for measurement of the impact of your intervention. It is hard to measure the relevance of your programme or project or the impact it intends to create without relevant information on what the situation was at the onset of your intervention.

When information relating to the indicators is collected a plan should be made how the information will be analysed, stored so that it can be easily assessed and also how it is going to be used.

**Reporting:** Monitoring and evaluation will not be complete without reporting on the information obtained. When data collected has been analysed the resulting information needs to be communicated. You will obviously need to report to different audiences, both internal and external to your organisation, in different ways and forms and at different intervals.

There is no unique format for reporting. In designing your reporting format it is up to you to choose the most appropriate format for your programme or project. Some donors have specific reporting formats that they expect their clients to use.

The planning process, if done accurately should result in the development of the *Programme/Project Proposal*.

(More on programme and project planning is provided in our *Practical Guide to Programme & Project Planning*, which we recommend you to use alongside this one.)

## Developing the programme/project Proposal

Developing a clear, thorough and targeted programme or project proposal is the last stage in programme/project design and the result of a well developed programme/project concept and proper planning. Programme or project proposal writing is in effect converting the concept and the plan into a programme or project document.

The proposal is a detailed description of a series of activities aimed at solving a certain problem. The contents of the proposal should contain:

Fig. 16:

### **Summary Outline of a Programme/Project Proposal**

- ❖ Cover or Title page
- ❖ Executive Summary
- ❖ Rationale for Intervention
- ❖ Background (overview)
- ❖ Programme/Project Description
- ❖ Budget
- ❖ Monitoring & Evaluation Plan
- ❖ Sustainability Plan
- ❖ Organisational Information

- Justification of the programme or project
- Description of activities and implementation timeframes
- Methodology, and
- Resources needed (human, material and financial)

The programme or project proposal even though it forms part of the design process, is a unified programme/project management tool and a means of presenting the programme or project as it has been designed – that is, the concept, how it will be implemented and what will be required.

The principal purpose of the programme or project proposal is to source funds to support your proposed programme or project. You need to be very persuasive but keeping true to facts so that the donor can find good reason to support your programme or project.

### **How to write a Programme/Project Proposal**

The most important decision to make at this stage is about the structure. The structure of a proposal is hardly universal. It is determined by the nature of the programme or project as well as by the funding agency's requirements. Some funding agencies have application forms or specific proposal formats that require the client to just fill in the required information but a generic proposal usually includes the following outline:

#### **Cover or Title Page**

This contains the title of the proposal, name, logo and address of your organisation, name of donor agency to which proposal is being submitted and name of contact person or

author of the proposal, place and date when proposal is written. The title of the proposal should be short, concise and descriptive of the programme or project.

### **Contents Page – Table of Contents**

This page carries an outline of the proposal, listing main headings and their corresponding page numbers. This is relevant for proposals that are over ten pages. This allows for easy navigation through the document.

### **Executive Summary**

The executive summary should briefly and without redundancy summarise the content of the whole proposal. It should contain a statement of the key problem that will be addressed and information relating to what the current situation is, your organisation's perspective in addressing the problem using its expertise, the impact that will be achieved, description of the main beneficiaries, timeframes, overall cost and how the programme or project meets the donor's objectives and priorities. The executive summary should summarise all the components of the proposal in one or two pages. Though it comes at the beginning of the proposal, it is usually the last section of the proposal to be written.

### **Rationale for Intervention (Context)**

Here, you have to give a description of the critical issues and explain why the programme or project is being proposed. Explain the specific problem, why it is a problem for the community or society and how it affects the target groups, the gravity and implication if the problem is not solved. Needs assessment reports and statistics from reliable sources will help to provide a scope of the problem.

### **Programme/Project Background (Overview)**

In this section of the proposal you need to describe the location, the social, economic and political background as it relates to the programme or project, the relevance of the intervention and the key problem that it seeks to address, how the problem was identified, what qualifies your organisation to address the problem, how the programme or project fits in with the donor's objectives and priorities. You might also want to describe the risks and assumptions that have to exist for the programme or project to be undertaken and how you intend to address them.

*Stakeholder Analysis: Consultation and Participation:* Two main categories of stakeholders should be clearly identified in your proposal – beneficiaries (direct and indirect) and partners. Explain how each main stakeholder group was consulted in identification of the programme or project and how they will be involved in project planning, implementation and in the monitoring processes.

### **Programme/Project Description**

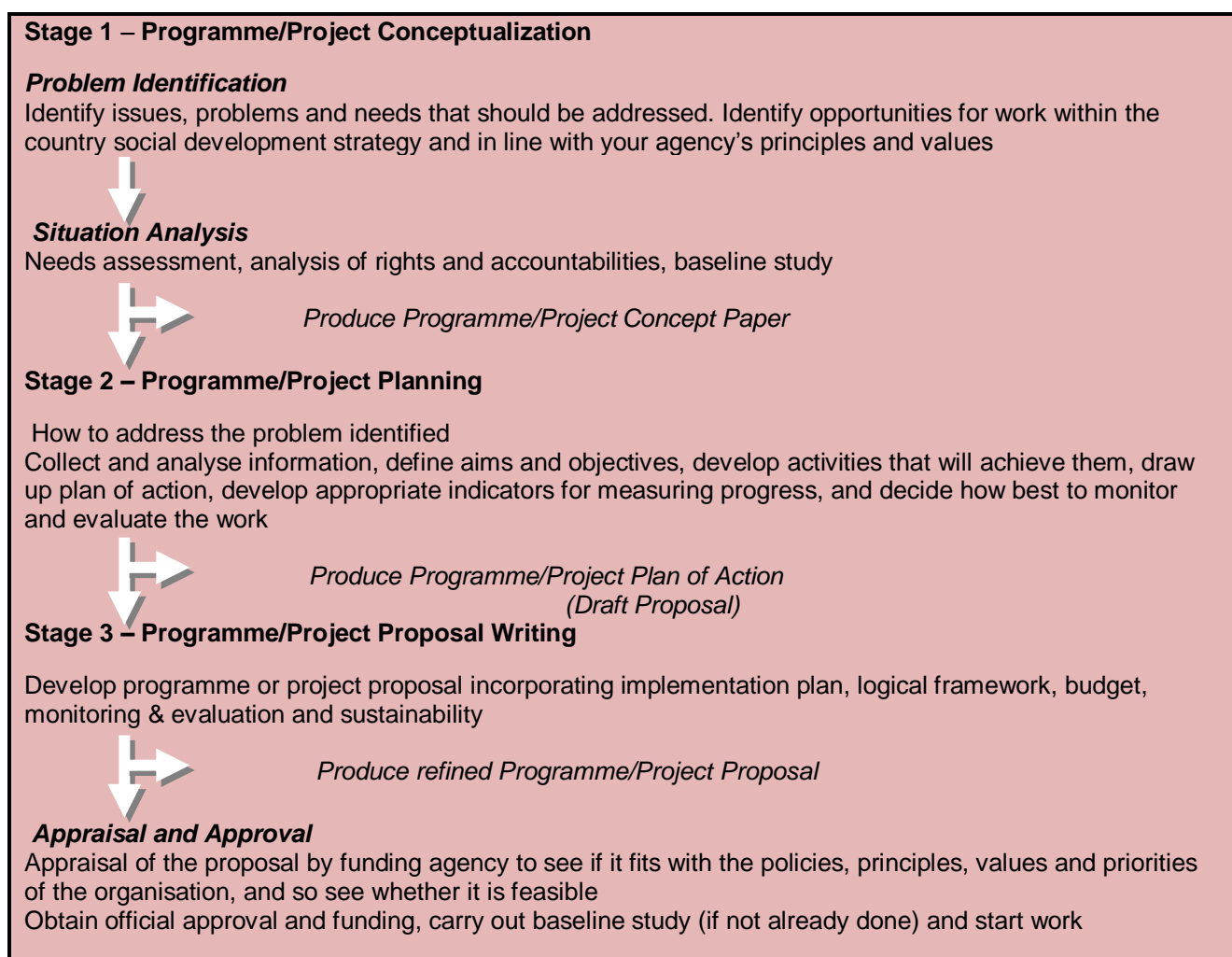
This section should give a detailed description of what the programme or project intends to achieve and how. This covers the programme or project goals or aims, objectives, activities and results. Usually, one major goal is declared, which is then broken down into various objectives and then into activities and expected outcomes or results.

*Goal:* The goal is a general aim that explains what the core problem is and what the long term benefits to the target beneficiaries would be. An example of a programme or project goal might be:

- Reducing the incidence of HIV/AIDS amongst adolescents.

**Objectives:** The objectives should address the core problem in terms of the benefits to be received by the beneficiaries as a direct result of the intervention. As stated earlier in this guide, objectives provide a more detailed breakdown of the goal. A programme or project will likely have multiple objectives but only one goal. Examples of objectives would be:

- Reduce by 25% the rate of HIV/AIDS infection amongst high school youths within two years.
- Reduce by 60% the rate of sexually transmittable diseases
- Increase by 80% the level of knowledge and awareness about the dangers of HIV/AIDS



**Fig. 17 – Stages in programme/project design indicating by-products of the process**

**Results or Outcomes:** Results or outcomes describe the services or products that the programme or project promises to deliver to the intended beneficiaries. Results are more detailed and measurable by the use of objective indicators. The results should address the main causes of the problem affecting the target group. Examples of how programme/project results or outcomes are presented:

- Reduced rate of HIV/AIDS infection amongst high school students
- Reduced number of high school students with sexually transmittable diseases
- Knowledge and awareness about HIV/AIDS increased.

*Target Beneficiaries:* Define and give a detailed description of the size and characteristic of the target group and show how it will benefit from the programme or project.

*Methodology:* Methodology describes how you plan to achieve your goals and objectives and the specific activities that must take place in order to achieve the objectives. This must be in conformity with the set objectives and should enable the reviewer to visualize the implementation of the programme or project. Methodology consists of:

- Methods, which are a bit broader, general and somehow vague. Examples of methods may include; campaigns, workshops, lectures,
- Activities, which are more specific and detailed.

A series of activities can be contained in an *activity plan*, which is a more detailed description of the step by step process for achieving the objectives. The activity plan should include specific information and explanation of each of the planned activities, timeframes and resource allocation. The activity plan can be represented on a simple activity table or on a Gantt chart. Examples of activities relating to objectives may include:

- Organise lessons in schools to provide HIV/AIDS education and train high school students as peer educators.
- Organise youth clubs within the community to initiate behaviour change among the youths.
- Carry out door-to-door campaigns and meet people on a one-on-one basis with discussions relating to their sexual lives and to help them make informed choices.
- Carry out condom distribution as a preventive and protective measure against the spread of HIV.

## **Budget**

A budget is a financial plan relating to activities to be carried out within a specified period. It is an estimate of how much money you expect to have, when you expect to get it and how you intend to spend it.

You don't need to include the detail budget when crafting your proposal - just the outline or cost categories and an overall total. A complete and detailed budget should be included in the appendix. The budget or budget summary should be:

- Specific: it should state upfront what you want the donor to fund, whether you want the donor to fund the whole programme or project or part of it.
- Realistic: Your budget should not be exaggerated or over inflated. You need to have done enough research and got actual prices for items in your budget. The budget too should correspond with planned activities and expected outcomes.

Use a clear layout and format – table format preferably with cost categories and budget lines which you can report against.

If there is a donor format for presenting the budget it is advisable to use it. If dealing with a foreign donor you need to state the currency and exchange rate on which your budget is based.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation Plan**

You need to show how the programme or project will be monitored and evaluated to ensure that it is on track and that the results are being achieved. Explain what monitoring systems will be established and how stakeholders will be involved. Explain if the programme or project will have a formal assessment, e.g. mid-project review, end of project evaluation or both. Who will be involved in the evaluation, e.g. external consultants, stakeholders, donors? Remember to include cost for evaluation in your budget. Evaluation is a very costly exercise and if you plan to carry it out you need to also budget for it.

### **Sustainability Plan**

When we talk of sustainability we mean a description of how the programme or project will maintain the benefits it has produced after the end of the funding period. You will need to show that the programme or project will be financially as well as organizationally sustainable. Have you ensured adequate funding for the proposed tasks and funding mechanisms to ensure continuity? Will the programme or project provide lessons for replication, scaling-up and development of individual as well as organisational capacity?

Funding agencies will certainly not shoulder the financing of your programme or project indefinitely and most would not want to invest their funds in a programme or project that has little likelihood of survival. As much as you show proof of sustainability and continuity, the greater the chances of success for your programme or project.

### **Organisational Information**

You may want the potential donor to know more about your organisation. Here is where you should provide the information, showcasing your organisation's legal status, background, track record and experience in similar programmes or projects. You also need to articulate your organisation's mission and its capacity to realise the programme or project, its governance structure, its networks and collaboration.

### **Appendices**

The reason for appendices is to keep the body of your proposal at reasonable length, while ensuring that the funding agency to which you are sending the proposal gets the relevant technical details to justify your programme or project. Items that can be included in the appendix include:

- The Logical Framework Analysis
- Detail budget
- Annual reports
- Audited financial statements
- Recommendation letters from stakeholders
- Photos of programme or project activities
- CVs of programme/project staff and/or board members, etc.

*(More on proposal writing is provided in our Practical Guide to Programme/Project Proposal Writing, which we recommend you to use alongside this one.)*

# QUALITY ASSURANCE

## Quality Assessment

This is a rapid review assessment of a programme or project's essential elements. It is a necessary evaluation tool for use by programme or project managers and evaluators at various stages in the programme or project design process to ensure that the process meets quality standards.

The assessment consists of a checklist which addresses the various components of the programme or project design phase and a sample design worksheet to assist you in documenting the design process into a plan that can serve as a programme/project management tool.

The checklist is designed to assist in ensuring that you are meticulous and systematic at every stage in the design process and that the output meets required standards. The checklists can therefore not surpass sound technical considerations and judgment.

## Quality Assessment Checklist

### Programme/Project Design Quality Assessment Checklist

Assessment		Programme & Project Elements		
Yes	No	Item	Checklist Description	Guidance
		<b>Relevance &amp; Effectiveness</b>		
		1	Do objectives & goals match the problem or needs that are being addressed	Sufficient details enable stakeholders & external parties to contribute more effectively to the programme or project
		2	Is the intervention good enough to achieve the objectives	Has the intervention been tried elsewhere successfully
		3	Are the target beneficiaries involved in the programme or project	Explain how you identified the problem or opportunity & what part the beneficiaries would play
		4	Are other stakeholders involved	State who else is involved in the programme or project & what their contributions would be
		5	Does the programme or project address the strengths & needs of the community	Was the target community consulted in identifying the problem & have they made any input towards starting up the programme or project

		6	Have the rights of all the people that would be affected by the programme or project been sufficiently addressed	Identify the rights of right holders & hold duty bearers responsible for respecting & fulfilling those rights
		7	Is there balance between all the groups involved in programme or project preparation and implementation	The programme or project must take consideration of balance between all social demographics involved – gender, youth/adult, marginalized, ethnic groups, disabled, etc
		8	Is there a mechanism to track, monitor & evaluate change	Every development initiative is intended to bring about change & therefore must have a well designed monitoring & evaluation system to track & measure the change process
<b>Feasibility &amp; Efficiency</b>				
		9	Has the approach been tested – attempted elsewhere	This will help to measure the probability of success of the programme or project. Is it a replication of a pilot or a new intervention
		10	Is the proposed approach practical	Give sufficient guarantee that the approach will work within the context taking into consideration the resources available
		11	Is the budget appropriate for the scope of the programme or project	The budget must be properly estimated. An under estimation or over estimation may mar the prospects of the success of the intervention
		12	Is there a time frame for the programme or project & is it realistic	The timeframe & the rationale for determining the duration of the programme or project helps to set the parameters for measurement of results
<b>Organisational Capacity</b>				
		13	Has the organisation succeeded in a similar endeavour of equal size, scale & focus	Demonstrate that organisational capacity is appropriate to the scale of the programme or project.
		14	Does the organisation have sufficient human resources to carry out the programme or project	If relevant experience is lacking indicate how other organisations will be partnered with to support the intervention
		15	Does the organisation's staff, volunteers & board possess relevant skills to ensure success of the programme or project	Document key technical skills that will be required & identify programme or project team members or from partner organisations who possess the appropriate skills
		16	Does the organisation have a well defined governance structure	The organisation's governance structure helps to build credibility
		17	Is the organisation legally registered	The programme or project must be

				based on a solid legal framework. The programme or project proponents must guarantee that no laws will be broken by the programme or project
<b>Impact</b>				
		18	Is anything likely to happen as a result of the programme or project	The programme or project must guarantee net positive impact within the area of operation & over the programme or project lifetime
		19	Is the intervention going to make a difference in the community	Document the outputs that the programme or project is likely to produce and show how they will benefit the community
		20	Do the proposed and planned activities have any influence beyond their aims	Demonstrate that the net impact of the intervention will give a positive result in terms of overall benefit according to policy frameworks
<b>Sustainability</b>				
		21	Are there lasting benefits after the intervention	Demonstrate that the benefits generated by the programme or project will be able to continue after the major part of funding or external support has ended
		22	Are there key partnerships with other organisations, development agencies, or government that will help sustain the programme or project	Sufficient partnership mechanisms will ensure sustainability of the programme or project
		23	Have funds from other sources been identified	Securing funds from other sources is a sure guarantee for the continuation of the programme or project
		24	Does the programme or project have prospects to continue after funding has ended	Has the programme or project ensured adequate skills transfer and utilization to ensure that knowledge gained & skills acquired are sustained
		25	Is there a well established plan for the programme or project's future	What is the exit strategy for the implementing organisation or external support? Does the target group have the technical, technological as well as human capacity to continue with the programme or project
<b>Credibility</b>				
		26	Is there evidence that the programme or project is achieving its goal	Proof of a monitoring mechanism to quantify & document changes resulting from activities. Monitoring mechanisms are established sources of data for the indicators and targets & the means & frequency for collecting the data

		27	Does the organisation have a close & good relationship with the community	Demonstrate evidence of community support, participation & ownership of the programme or project
		28	Does the organisation have a good reputation beyond the community	What external support is there for the programme or project
		29	Is the organisation a member of a network(s)	Networking helps to strengthen technical collaboration & the exchange of knowledge & skills
		30	Has the organisation got collaborating partners	collaboration facilitates technical know-how & the exchange of knowledge & skills
		31	Has the organisation had any contributions from external sources	Previous or current support from external sources is evidence of your organization's credibility & the ability to project manage donor funding efficiently
<b>Financial Matters</b>				
		32	Does the budget include income, expenses & contributions from the different funding sources	Some funders require a specific percentage of in-kind contributions while others would require a certain percentage of the organisation's own contribution towards the proposed programme or project
		33	Are budget items reasonable & justifiable	A well outlined budget is indicative of sound financial management
		34	Is the budget allocation for salaries sustainable & justified	Most funding agencies do not want to pay for salaries or if they do, it is most often only for the staff that are directly involved in the programme or project implementation
		35	Is the proportion of the budget allocated to programme or project activities reasonable	A programme or project that allocates a greater proportion, say 70% of its budget to activities that will benefit the target group is highly likely to receive approval & external support
		36	Have sufficient internal control systems been put in place	Internal control systems will guarantee accountability
		37	Are financial decision making processes well defined	Well defined financial decision making processes is indicative of sound financial management & accountability
<b>The Programme or Project Proposal</b>				
		38	Is the programme or project proposal properly written, taking into consideration all the tips about proposal writing	The proposal is the marketing tool for your programme or project. You must therefore make sure that it captures the attention of the reader or reviewer

		39	Did you follow the instructions for proposal submission	Some funding agencies do not accept unsolicited proposals. Check to see how the proposal could be submitted.
		40	Have you articulated the understanding of your unique situation	Providing information about the external trends and internal organisational challenges demonstrates funders that you have a good understanding of the factors that may affect the chances of success
		41	Is the budget complete	The budget should include all funding sources both in cash & in-kind. A complete budget creates a positive image about the organisation's capabilities
		42	Have you demonstrated knowledge of good practice in your field	A demonstration of an understanding of the issues will indicate to funders that you have knowledge of what works and what has been tried in the past.
		43	Did you include concise and specific information that provides evidence of your organisation's capacity as it relates to the proposed activities	This will ensure the organisation's ability to implement the proposed programme or project

**Fig. 18** – Programme/Project Design Quality Assurance Checklist

# Quality Assessment Worksheet

## Sample Design Plan

### ***Suggested Format for the Programme or Project Design Plan***

**Please note:** The following is a suggested format for the Programme or Project Design Plan, including headings and specific guidance on what to include in each section. You are encouraged to include any relevant information that is essential to developing a detailed programme or project proposal that will demonstrate a match with the (Donor Agency) requirements and have good development merit.

#### **Heading:**

**Programme or Project Design Plan for the Programme or Project (*insert title*)**

#### **Section 1: Programme/Project Design Phase Objectives**

The objective of the programme or project design phase is to: (*List objectives, e.g.*)

- Develop a concept paper for the programme or project following the situational analysis that addresses specific needs and requirements identified.
- Develop a comprehensive strategic as well as activity plan for the programme or project that is consistent with national and international sectoral development agenda.
- Identify partnerships for funding of the programme or project
- Develop a detailed programme or project proposal.

#### **Section 2: Programme/Project Design Phase Outputs**

The design stage will result in the following outputs: (*List outputs, e.g.*)

- Concept paper for the programme or project developed
- Strategic and activity or implementation plans drawn up
- Partnerships identified for the programme or project
- Programme or project proposal developed

#### **Section 3: Implementation Plan for the Programme/Project Design Phase**

*This is just a sample implementation plan to guide you. You can adapt as appropriate or draw up one according to your own specifications*

<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Responsibility (Parties involved)</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>
<i>Concept Paper for the programme or project developed</i>	1. <i>Hold participatory workshop in the community to identify the problem</i>	- Programme or project team - Community members	1 <sup>st</sup> week of Oct. 2010	R 12,000.00
	2. <i>Develop concept paper</i>	- Programme or project team	2 <sup>nd</sup> week of Oct. 2010	R 2,800.00
	3. <i>Etc, etc</i>			
<i>Programme/project Strategic and Implementation Plan</i>	1. <i>Organise and hold planning workshop involving stakeholders</i>	- Programme or project team	3 <sup>rd</sup> week of October 2010	R 6,000.00
	2. <i>Etc, etc.</i>			
<i>Funding partnerships identified</i>	1. <i>Etc, etc</i>			
<i>Programme/Project Proposal developed</i>	1. <i>Etc, etc</i>			

**Fig. 19** – Programme/project design phase sample implementation plan format

## Section 4: Programme/Project Design Phase Budget

This is a sample budget. You can adapt as appropriate or draw up one according to your own specifications

Items	Description	Unit Cost	No. of Units	Total Cost/Item
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>				
<b>Situational Analysis</b>				
Travel	Local transport fares ( <i>taxi, bus, train etc</i> )			
Communication	Phone, fax, e-mail, etc			
Per diem	Out-station payments for programme/ project team			
Participatory workshop	Venue hire,			
	Equipment hire			
	Materials			
	Consumables			
<b>Sub-Total</b>				
<b>Stakeholder Consultation</b>				
Transport fares	Taxi, bus, hired vehicles, etc			
Communication	Phone, fax, email, etc			
Meetings	Venue hire			
	Materials			
	Consumables, etc			
Facilitation fees	Professional facilitator, etc			
<b>Sub-Total</b>				
<b>Programme/Project Planning</b>				
Planning workshop	Venue hire			
	Equipment hire			
	Materials			
	Consumables, etc			
Facilitation fees	Workshop facilitator			
<b>Sub-Total</b>				
<b>Technical Assistance (if required)</b>				
Consultation	Baseline survey & draw up Terms of Reference			
<b>Sub-Total</b>				
<b>Total Expenditure</b>				
<b>INCOME</b>				
<b>Your Organisation's own contribution</b>				
<b>Contribution from the community (if appropriate)</b>				
<b>Contribution Requested from donor or stakeholders</b>				
<b>Total Income</b>				
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>				

Fig. 20 – Sample programme/project design phase budget



## **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

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<b>Activities</b>	These are the actions and inputs that have to be undertaken to produce the results. Activities summarise what will be undertaken by the programme or project.
<b>Activity Plan</b>	A tabular representation describing tasks and their processes, allocating responsibilities, resources, expected outcomes and setting out timeframes and indicators for measuring progress.
<b>Beneficiaries</b>	These are the ultimate users of the product or output of the services provided by a programme or project. They are usually the principal stakeholders of every programme or project.
<b>Concept Paper</b>	The concept paper is the product of a situation analysis and consists of a description of the identified problem, set goal and objectives and an analysis of proposed strategies and methodologies for addressing the problem
<b>Evaluation:</b>	This is a periodic assessment of the relevance, performance, efficiency and impact of an intervention against its stated objectives. It is carried out as an independent objective examination with a view to drawing lessons that may be replicated more widely.
<b>Feasibility Study</b>	This is a study that is conducted during the life time of a programme or project to verify if the intended intervention is well founded and is likely to meet the needs of the intended beneficiaries. The results of the study are used to inform programme/project design and justification for funding.
<b>Gantt Chart</b>	A graphical presentation of activities, timelines and milestones for completion of activities and allocation of responsibilities.
<b>Indicators</b>	These are the informants that help to determine if what was planned has been achieved. Indicators provide the basis for designing an appropriate monitoring system.
<b>Intervention</b>	An intervention is a series of planned strategies and activities with considerable human, material and financial input aimed at addressing a particular problem.
<b>Logical Framework Approach</b>	This is a methodology for thinking through a programme or project and for planning, implementing strategies and evaluating results. It involves analyzing problems and

objectives and designing the implementation of identified strategies.

**Monitoring**

This refers to the systematic and continuous collection, analysis and use of information for management control and decision making.

**Outputs**

Outputs are the results or what a programme or project would have achieved by the completion date of certain activities. Outputs are produced by carrying out a series of activities.

**Problem Analysis**

A structured assessment of a negative situation in order to establish their causes and effects

**Problem Tree**

A diagrammatic representation of the cause and effect relationship of an established problem

**Programme**

A programme is a series of projects with a common overall objective.

**Project**

A Project is a series of activities with set objectives, designed to produce a specific outcome within a limited time frame and budget.

**Programme/Project Cycle**

Describes the life of a programme or project from conception of the initial idea through to its completion. It is usually divided into phases and provides a structure to ensure that stakeholders are consulted, defines the key decisions, information needs and responsibilities at each stage so that informed decisions can be made at the different phases of the cycle. It draws on evaluation to build on lessons learnt from experience into the design of future interventions.

**Rights Based Programming**

Rights based programming is the theory of designing development interventions from the perspective of recognizing the inherent rights of peoples (right holders) and addressing their needs by holding those responsible (duty bearers) to respect, protect and fulfill those rights.

**Replication:**

This is the process of transferring best practices and lessons learnt from an intervention for implementation elsewhere at considerably lower cost than the initial programme or project.

**Situational Analysis**

A situation analysis provides the basis upon which an existing situation is assessed to develop a vision of the future desired situation and to select the strategies that will be applied to achieve them. It involves an assessment of stakeholders, problem and strategies.

**Stakeholders**

These are individuals, groups or institutions with an interest or relationship with a programme or project. They may directly or indirectly, positively or negatively affect or be affected by the process or outcomes of a programme or project.

**Sustainability**

Sustainability refers to the ability to generate a continuous stream of benefits for a target group and the wider community after external support has ended. While a programme or project is limited by the constraints of time and budget, the benefits should be able to continue and the activities should be developed long after the programme or project has ended.



## RESOURCES

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1. Regional Management Support Unit, *Training on Project Design*
2. UNDP Project Design Document, *The Clean Development Mechanism: A User's Guide*
3. ADAF-PSD: *Guidance on Developing an ADAF-PSD Project Design Plan*, 2006. [www.nzaid.govt.nz](http://www.nzaid.govt.nz)
4. Liezl Parajas, *Project Design for the Development of the ASEAN NHRI Forum Protocol Against Trafficking of Women and Children*
5. CCBA 2005; *Climate, Community and Biodiversity Project Design Standards* (First Edition). CCBA, Washington DC. May 2005. At: [www.climate-standards.org](http://www.climate-standards.org)
6. The World Bank; *Engendering Justice: A Gender's Assessment Impact on Project Design*. No. 98, May 2005
7. Linking Project Design, Annual Planning and M & E, [www.ifad.org](http://www.ifad.org)
8. Janet Shapiro, *Toolkit on Action Planning*, CIVICUS
9. I.F.R.C.R.C.S, *Project Planning – Disaster Preparedness training Programme*. Geneva, June 2000
10. *A Practical Guide to Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation and Impact Assessment*, Save the Children UK, May 2003.



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## About SASDA

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**Southern Africa Social Development Agency (SASDA)** is a development aid agency that focuses on value added and sustainable livelihood, the attainment of quality of life and improves standards of living among marginalized populations in disadvantaged communities. The organisation establishes programmes and projects that promote the development of local communities by mobilizing, organising and empowering community members and vulnerable groups to improve their livelihood. It also provides mentoring and capacity building to grassroots and emerging community based organisations as a measure for sustained social growth.

SASDA was founded in 2009 and registered in South Africa as a **Section 21 Company, Reg. No: 2009/008569/08**. It is also registered with the South African Department of Social Development as a **Non Profit Organisation, NPO Reg. No: 068 – 915**. The Head Office is situated in Pretoria, South Africa.

