PROJECT PROPOSAL WRITING FOR HUMANITARIAN AND DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

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Learning Objectives

➢ Identify needs and priorities for a project

➢ Design relevant and effective proposals

➢ Develop parts of a project proposal

➢How to win proposals?

Introduction

❖A project is a **temporary endeavor** undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result. Based on this definition, the purpose of project management is to **plan, organize and manage resources** to bring about the successful completion of the specific project **goal, outcomes, and outputs.**

❖A project proposal is a **written document** outlining everything stakeholders should know about a project, including **the goal, objectives, timeline, budget, and expected results.**
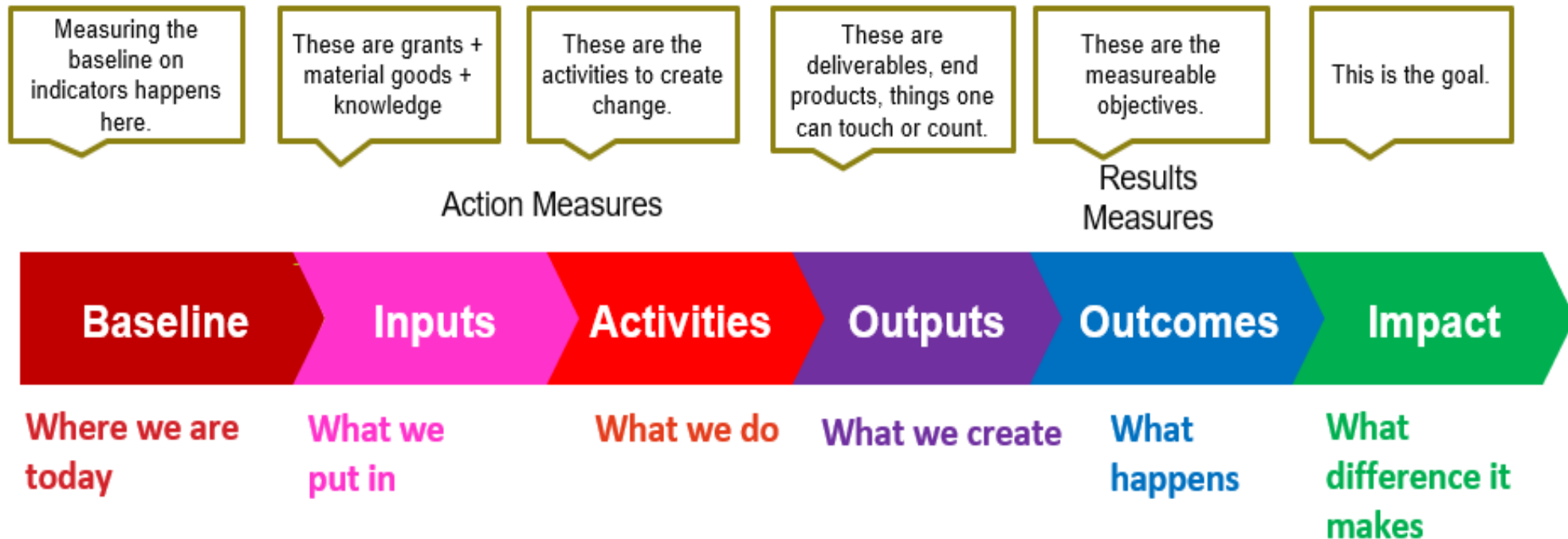
Project Lifecycle
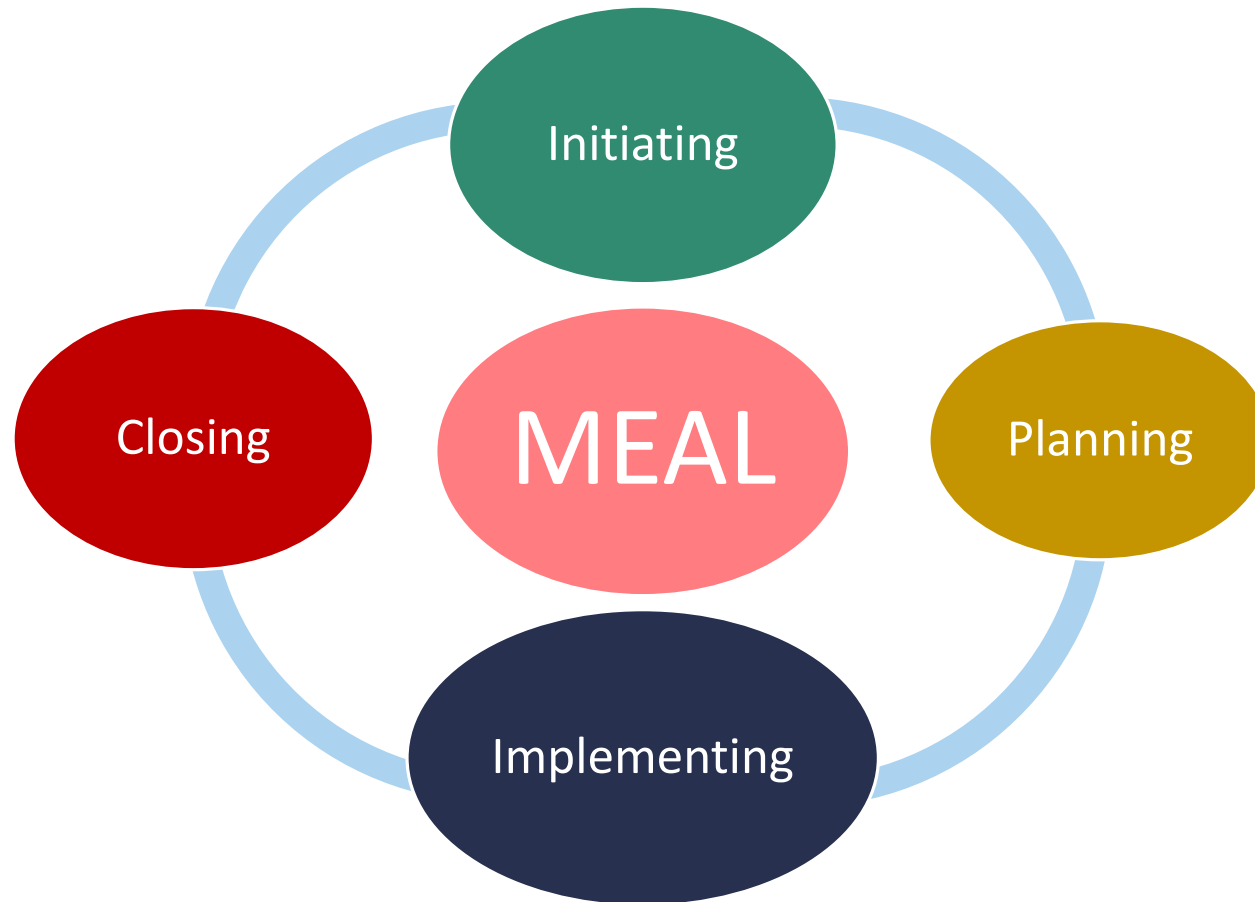
Project Triangle
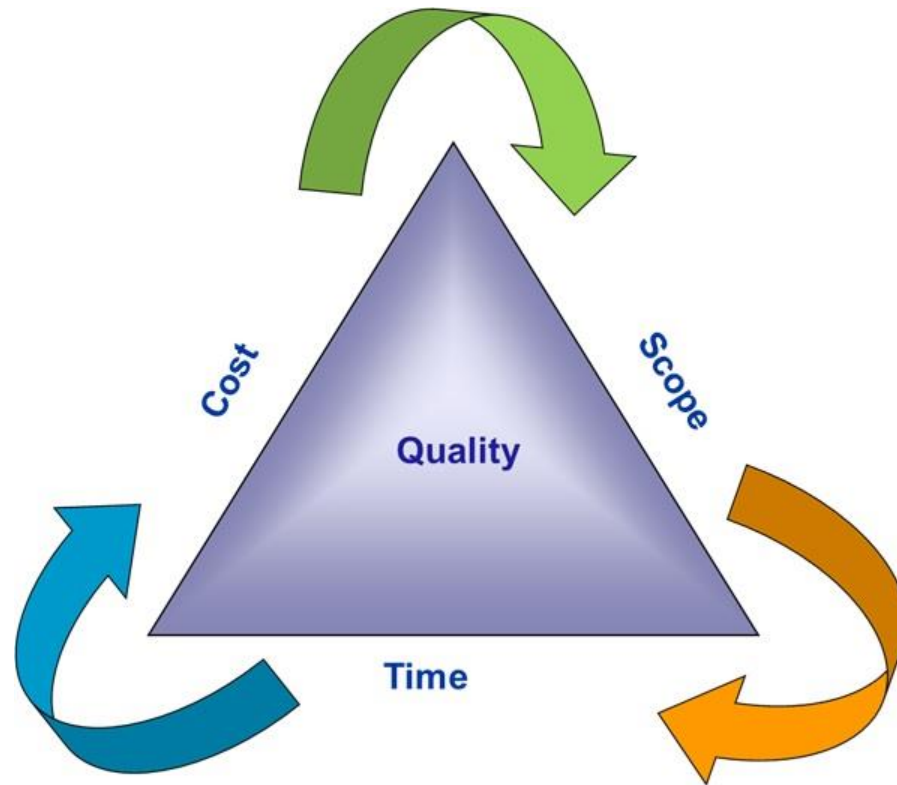
Project Logical Model

3 Qs: WHAT, WHY, HOW

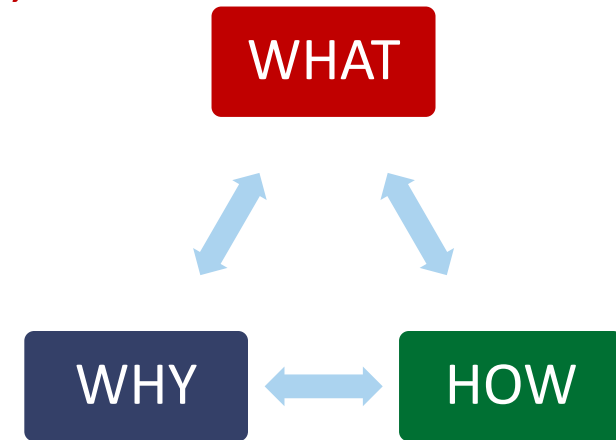➤ **What** do you want to write about? background, problem/gaps, priorities, goal, objectives?

➤ **What** is required? Resources: human, financial, materials?

➤ **Why** it is essential to happen? Rationale?

➤ **Why** we are good at doing it? Justifications?

WHAT

WHY ↔ HOW

➤ **How** do you want to solve the problem & achieve the objectives? methodology, activities, expected outputs/outcomes, etc.

Project Proposal Structure

1. Title
2. Background
3. Problem Statement
4. Project Description
5. Capacity Statement
6. Goal and Objectives
7. Activities
8. Methodology
9. Timeline
10. Staffing
11. Logframe
12. Monitoring & Evaluation
13. Sustainability
14. Lessons Learned

Common Mistakes

- Not Following Instructions (ToR)

- Target Group not clearly defined

- Lack of proper plan

- Budget does not match the narrative

- Donor fund the solution to problems, NOT activities

Prior to Starting the Proposal

✓**Check about Donor**: Vision, mission, current and previous programs, winning proposals as well as Call for Proposal's priorities, guidelines, templates, and annexes.

✓Gather the **team with the relevant expertise** that will design and develop the proposal

✓ Explore **possible partnerships** and get them involved in the opportunity appraisal process as well.

✓Proposals **can't be written behind the desk**, it is assessment, communication, and engagement of other stakeholders.

✓To win, you don't have to the be the best organization, but you should have **the best application.**

*Assessment

- What are the **needs/gaps/Problems** (*main and secondary causes*)?
- What is the **scope** (*included and excluded – direct and indirect*)?
- Main **Stakeholders** (*avoid duplication and complementary approach*)
- Target **Community** (*participatory approach, internal capacity, ownership*)
- **Available Capacity and Required Resources** (*by the organization and others*)
- **Risks** vs **Assumptions**!
- **Sustainability/Scalability**
- **Other elements of** Gender, Environment, COVID-19, Do NO Harm
- The main **priorities** - possible/recommended actions
- ❖ Do not forget needs by **Gender & Age and People with Specific Needs**

Assessment

❑ Data Collection & Data Analysis

▪ **Qualitative:** Perspectives and Descriptive

▪ **Quantitative:** Numbers and Counting

▪ **Primary Data (You):** Surveys, Interviews, FGDs, Observations, etc.

▪ **Secondary (Others):** Collected and analyzed for your needs assessment

❖ **Data** vs **Information**

1. Project Title

- **Informative, Reflective, Concise, Catchy, Straightforward**
- **Main Title – *Sub/Secondary Title* – Title Capitalization**
  - ❖Supporting Vulnerable Refugees in Duhok through Livelihood Activities

- **Organization's Contact Details**
  - Organization's Name:
  - 1 and 2 Contact Persons:
  - Positions:
  - E-mail addresses:
  - Phone numbers:
  - Address:

2. Background

✓ **General Introduction:** What is the general background of the population/ location/situation/economy/security/weather/etc.?

✓ **Target Population/Area:** Who are the target people including categories, gender, age, socioeconomic state, general numbers, etc.

✓ **Situation Analysis:** This section should briefly explore the current situation, existing capacity, and undertaken and planned activities in the area for the target population/gap.

3. Problem Statement (Rationale)

- What specifically is the Problem/Gap?

- What are the main and secondary causes?

- What are some important facts/evidence related to the problem?

- Why it is essential (priority) to address and solve the problem?

- What could happen if the problem is not solved?

4. Summary Description (Rationale)

- What is the project about?

- Concise, comprehensive and provide an overview of all the key details of the project!

- Includes preliminary supporting data where appropriate

- What are the main activities?

- How are activities integrated with one another and linked as means and ends to achieve the results?

- What are the main expected results?

- How do they contribute to achieving the project objective – meeting the gaps and needs?

5. Capacity Statement (Rationale)

✓**Vision & Mission:** How are they related to the donor's vision, the problem/gap and the project, and the target beneficiaries/field?

✓**Organization's Strength:** Why your organization is suited to conduct the project – strength: staff, presence, mobility, capacity, etc.?

✓**Past Experience:** What did you do successfully did in the past that is relevant to the project?

✓**Capability:** How **your organization** and **the proposed project** will address **the needs** with the **funding support** expected from the donor?

✓**Added Value: How and What** can your organization bring to the project's success and the target people – creativity, sustainability, scalability?

6.1. Project Goal

Goal (Ultimate/Overall Objective) is a broad statement and a marketing tool that defines the plan and the purpose of the project proposal

• **Only One** goal for a project proposal

- Avoid vagueness

- Link the Goal with the problem statement

-Use simple language to write a goal

❖ **You can use words like:** *decrease, increase, develop, improve, enhance, strengthen, empower, etc.*

6.2. Project Objectives

Objectives are detailed statements describing the ways through which **you intend to achieve the goal.**

- **Two to Four** Objectives for a project proposal

- All the objectives should contribute to and supports in achieving the specified goal

- **SMART** Objectives (**Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-Bound**)

➢ *What, When, Where, Who*

❖**Objectives should always be written using action verbs like:** *identify, create, deliver, establish, promote, develop, etc.*

7. Activities

- A work-breakdown structure **(WBS)** is a deliverable-oriented breakdown of a **project scope**. It is a **hierarchical decomposition** of the total project scope to be carried out by the project resources to achieve the project objectives and required deliverables.

- Project's activities planning should be rooted in the recommendations established by **problem trees and objectives trees**, as well as **assessments** conducted.

- Brainstorm with **team members** and **relevant stakeholders** including **beneficiaries**.

- Refer back to **the lessons learned** from previous projects.

- **Activities** by as identified in the **Assessment** vs **Capacity/Resources.**

- Identify **best practices** from other agencies/ projects/sources.

- Activities **represent tasks** or work you are going to perform in a project, in order **to reach the objectives/ goal** of the solving of the problem targeted by the project

- ❖ Activities have to be closely **correlated/connected** to the objectives, methodology of implementation to bring the desired results (**Chain**). *If not, it means the proposal is not well organized!*

Activities

✓ **What** are the main planned activities according to **priorities and objectives**?

✓**Describe** the **activities** and **necessary steps** (sub-activities) under each main activity

✓Develop activities and sub activities/steps by listing numbers (1., 1.1., 1.2.; 2., 2.1., 2.2., etc.) so that to be referred back to easily

✓**Who** will be served or affected? How many people will be involved? Are there any specific criteria for people to be involved in this project? Discuss any collaborative efforts that will be part of the project.

✓**What** will be happening? What are the specific strategies or methods that will be used?

✓**When** - What is the timeline for activities? It's helpful to lay out a graphic timeline, whether it is a GANTT chart or a simple **chart with three columns** that describes **"who" will do "what", and "when".**

✓**Where** will the work take place?

❖**Follow the same logical order of the Objectives!**

8. Methodology

- **It is the "How" of a Project – Activities**

- It clearly outline **how you will use the requested funds to accomplish your project's** objectives.

- It is where you **bridge the gap between the objectives and the eventual outcome**.

- It contains detailed descriptions of **how the project - activities will be carried out.**

- The methods you describe should be presented **in a coherent manner, naturally progressing from start to finish.**

- Submitting an application with a detailed yet clear project methodology **will increase your chances of securing the funding** needed to make your project possible.

Methodology

✔ **How** will the work be **accomplished**? **What resources** will be used to get the job done?

✔ What **approaches (methods)** do you use to conduct the activities?

✔ Why did you choose this/these **particular method/methods**?

✔ **Have you or others used this approach** and been successful?

✔ Is this approach considered to be **a best practice** or a model in your field?

✔ Methods of data collection and data analysis, as applicable

✔ Project **partners/stakeholders** and **their parts** in the project, if applicable

❖ **Follow the same logical order of the Objectives and Activities!**

9. Project Timeline

- Use the Gantt Chart by Henry Gantt **(1861–1919)**

- Use different colors per group of activities

- E.g. Use GREEN for Preparation (Start)

- E.g. Use RED for Project Closure (END)
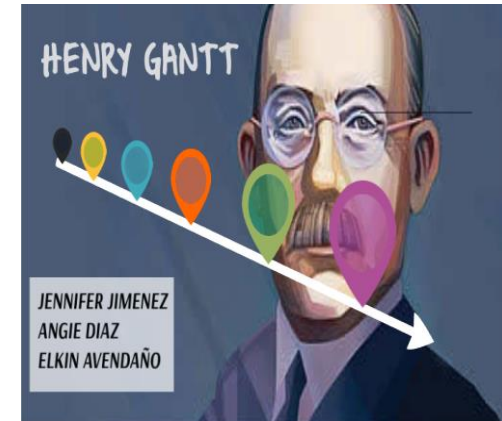
❖**Follow the same logical order with objectives, activities and methodology!**

Project Timeline – Schedule

Project Name	
Location	
Duration	
Start Date	
End Date	

Activity	Tasks	Duration	Start	End	FC	Jan				Feb				Mar			
						W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4	W1	W2	W3	W4
1. General Preparations & Arrangments	1.1. Job vacancy	14 days	1	13	HR	██	██										
	1.2. Saff interviews, appointment contracts	5 days	16	20	HR & PM			██									
	1.3. Coordination with government and approval letters	10 days	5	10	PR/Proj M	██	██										
	1.4. Workplace: work stations, equipment, materials	10 days	10	20	Admin/Log			██	██								
2. Project arrangments	2.1. Identifying venues and agreement contracts	15 days	1	14	Log/Admin/Proj					██	██						
	2.2. Prcocuring training materials	10 days	10	19	Fin/Prc/Admin					██	██						
	2.3. delivering & Installing materials	11 day	13	22	Log/Admin						██						

10. Staffing – Personnel

- How do you do the **selection process**?

- How **many staff** are needed in total as part of the **human resources/input**?

- What are each staff's (or each team's) **roles and responsibilities**?

- Also include what **duration** should each staff will be engaged.

- Create a **table to provide the information** in brief, if required

- This staffing part should also be in line with the budget breakdown.

- ❖**Follow the same logical order of Budget – Activities!**

- ❖**Separate Project Staff from Admin/Support Staff**

Staffing Table

Section	Position	Line Manager	Main Duties	Type	Duration
Project	Project Manager	Program Director	Overall supervisor, a focal point with the donor, managing project activities, approving reports	Full-Time	Jan-Dec 2021
Project (Services Provider)	Trainer	Project Officer	Organizing training materials, providing training materials, and training reports	Part-Time (50%)	Mar-May 2021
Administration					
Finance		4.			
Logistics		5.			

11. Logical Framework (Logframe)

Result	Description	Indicators	Means of Verification	Risks/ Assumptions
Impact/Goal	The highest-level desired end results or impacts to which the project contributes	N/A	N/A	N/A
Outcome/s	If there is one outcome for your project, this outcome is usually also the goal of the project. If the project has more than one outcome, then the goal should be separated from the outcomes on the top row above	%	How to verify?	See the slides risks and assumptions
Outputs	What is expected to be achieved as a result of implementing the activity (ies). Insert new rows for each output then under each output insert the related activities	#		
Activities	Each activity should be under its specific related output	#		

	Results chain	Indicator	Target	Sources of verification	Assumptions
Impact — **Overall objective (Goal)**	The broader, long-term change to which the action contributes at country, regional or sector level, in the political, social, economic and environmental global context which will stem from interventions of all relevant actors and stakeholders (e.g. Improved decision making at local level based on increased transparency and accountability of the Governorate).	Quantitative and/or qualitative variable that provides a simple and reliable mean to measure the achievement of the corresponding result %	The intended final value of the indicator(s)	Ideally to be drawn from the partner's strategy.	Not applicable
Outcome(s) — **Objective/s** — **Specific objective(s)**	The main medium-term effect of the intervention focusing on behavioural and institutional changes resulting from the intervention (improved management of public services). (It is good practice to have one specific objective only)	(see definition above) %	(same as above)	Sources of information and methods used to collect and report (including who and when/how frequently).	Factors outside project management's control that may influence on the impact-outcomes linkage.
Other Outcomes	Where relevant expected results of the intervention focusing on behavioural and institutional changes resulting from the intervention (e.g. improved capacities of the local communities to cope with the COVID pandemic, improved healthcare services in the local community)	(same as above) %	(same as above)	(same as above)	Factors outside project management's control that may affect the outcome(s)-other outcomes linkage (e.g. if I buy a hat (output) and the sun is shining (assumption) I will be protected from the sun (outcome)).
Outputs	The direct/tangible products (number of workshops held, produced reports, printed materials, etc.). (*Outputs should in principle be linked to corresponding outcomes through clear numbering)	(same as above) #	(same as above)	(same as above)	Factors outside project management's control that may influence on the other outcome(s)-outputs linkage.
Activities	What are the key activities to carry out to produce the intended outputs? (*activities should in principle be linked to corresponding output(s) through clear numbering)			Factors outside project management's control, which if not true would impede the implementation of the activities and delivering the outputs (e.g. if I want to buy a hat (activity), I assume that the shop is open when I go there. If the shop is open (assumption) and I have the money (means), I have one hat (output achieved)).	

Indicators

Indicators are **SMART** measures used to track progress, reflect change or assess project performance (*Quantity and Quality measures to describe progress & change*).

Indicators are the operational descriptions (**quantity, quality, target group, time and location**) of the **results of a project**

Quantitative indicators are measures of quantities or amounts. They help you measure project progress in the form of numerical information, such as: Numbers, Percentages, Rates, Ratios, etc.

Example: *"By Year 3 of the project, 85 percent of IDP households are located no more than 500 meters from a water point."*

Qualitative indicators measure judgments, opinions, perceptions and attitudes toward a given situation or subject.

Example: *"Female IDPs feel safe collecting water from IDP water points."*

Specific	Indicators must be very **closely related to the desired areas of improvement expressed in the objectives statements** that they represent, and should include the following characteristics: • **Quantity:** The expected **numerical representations** of what is to be achieved • **Quality:** The **expected achievements** described using words and/or graphics • **Location:** The **geographic boundary** of the expected achievements • **Target population:** The **person or people** expected to make/experience the anticipated change.
Measurable	Indicators should be written in a way that promotes an **accurate assessment of progress**.
Achievable	Indicators must be **attainable** given **the budget, time and resources** available.
Relevant	Indicators must accurately **measure the change** you want to track.
Time-bound	Indicators must **identify the timeframe within which the change is expected to occur**.

Indicator statements	Each quarter, 100 percent of water points managed by community water boards meet WHO water quality standards	By Year 3 of the project, 80% of IDPs demonstrate knowledge that hands need to be washed with soap after critical events
What is measured	Water quality	Knowledge that hands need to be washed with soap after critical events
Target population	Water points managed by community water boards	IDPs
Unit of measurement	Percentage	Percentage
Direction, size or magnitude of the change	100 percent	80 percent
Time frame	Annually	By Year 3 of the project

Means of Verification

- **Means of Verification** (MoV) are the documents (narrative, table, sheets, photos, etc.) **we collect over the implementation period up to the last day to measure the indicators** to prove that all activities were completed, **objectives and outputs were achieved** and **the project outcome has been reached**.

- Indicate **how regular (frequency) the data will be collected.**

- **Regular** vs. **Specific survey**

Means of Verification

- Make use of **existing information** wherever possible; new or additional research can be costly and time consuming.

- Keep your information requirements **simple and relevant. Extensive data collection can also be costly and time consuming**, and the data is less likely to be used if there is too much to manage;

- When determining what **information to collect**, consider how it will be **analyzed** and **what resources will be required** to process it.

- Consider also how the information will be **presented and used.**

Assumptions

- "**A factor** in the planning process that is **considered** to be **True, Real, or Certain,** without proof or demonstration." (PMBOK, 6th edition)

- The assumptions describe the **EXTERNAL** situations, events, conditions or decisions which are **necessary for the success** of the project, but are largely or completely beyond the control of the project's management.

- Beware of the **KILLER Assumptions,** choose only Important and true ones.

- Assumptions should be **Analyzed and Tested,** and **Monitored** during implementation.

Assumptions

❖**Assumptions are External Factors, assumed POSITIVE, yet out of control!**

•**IF** we undertake the **Activity X (internal)** and the **Assumption Y (External)** is true, **THEN**, the **Output Z** will be delivered.

 EXAMEPLS:

▪Government meets its water system obligations.

▪IDPs do not obtain water from sources other than the designated water points.

▪Water points are established in locations that are safe and secure for women and children.

Risks

- **Risk** is any **uncertain event**, **internal or external**, that can affect your project for worse, when something goes wrong, or, in some cases, for better.

- Risk **can affect anything**: people, processes, technology, and resources.

- Risk is the "**effect of uncertainty on objectives**".

RISK **=** Source ➡ Probability ➡ Event ➡ Impact

RISK ➡ **Issue** ➡ **Change** ➡ **Response**

❑ **Risk Assessment:** Identify, Analyze, Monitor, Plan

❑ **Risk Response:** Avoidance, Transference, Mitigation, Acceptance
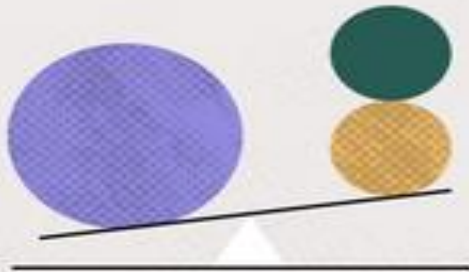
7 common project risks
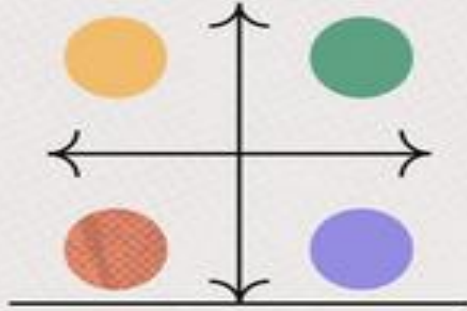
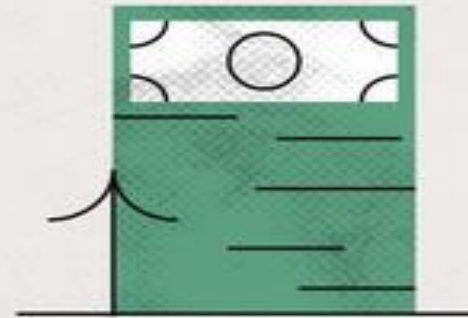**Stretched resources**

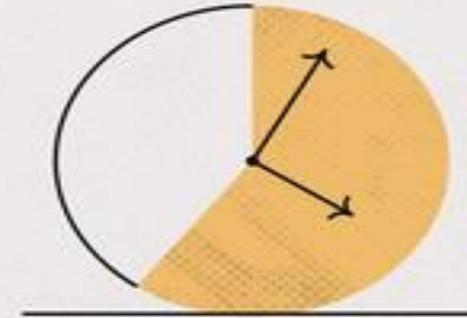**Operational mishaps**
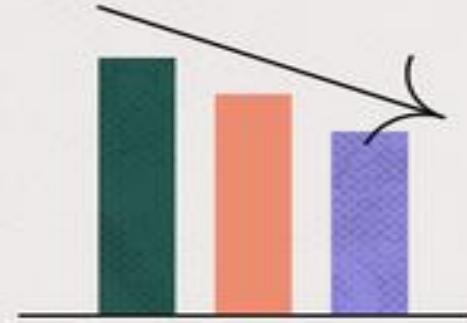
Low perfomance

Lack of clarity

Scope creep

High costs

Time crunch

12. Monitoring & Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation are often discussed together as if they were a single, inseparable concept. **They are not.** They each have distinct purposes and processes:

- **Monitoring** The **continual and systematic collection of data** to provide **information about project progress** – *Quantity and Quality.*

- **Evaluation** The user-focused, **systematic assessment** of the **design, implementation and results** of an ongoing or completed project.

- **Accountability** A **commitment** to balance and **respond to the needs of all stakeholders** (including project participants, donors, partners and the organization itself) in the activities of the project.

- **Learning** Having a culture and processes in place that enable **intentional reflection**. The aim of learning is to make smarter decisions **now or in the future**.

Monitoring & Evaluation

M&E's Main Purpose:

➢To **measure and review progress of the project** in achieving the expected outcomes, including achievements and limitations

➢To document that project activities unfolded **according to plans.**

➢To contribute to **provide any course of corrections** or re-strategizing the project, if required

✓**What:** A **continuous review** of project progress at the activity and outputs levels and to identify necessary corrective action

✓**Why:** Analyze **current situation;** Identify **issues and find solutions**; Discover **trends and patterns**; Keep activities **on schedule**; Measure progress against outputs; Make **decisions** about human, financial and material resources; and use it as a **systematic learning** process.

✓**When:** Continuous

✓**How:** Field Visits; Records; Reports

13. Sustainability

- The main question about sustainability of projects results is how the outcomes of the project will be **long-term sustained and their effects continue** when the project ends and there **will be no funding anymore!**

- Consider sustainably of project **results right from the beginning** of designing and planning the project.

- How do you **anticipate the project will affect the beneficiaries in six months**, three years?

- Will the knowledge and skills given to beneficiaries be **used, sustained and transferred in future?**

- Is there local – government, NGO, people, etc. – capacity, capability and willingness to **take over and continue**?

- In case of development projects: which entity, institution, or organization will **take over and run the project afterwards**?

14. Lessons Learned – Previous Projects

- What did we set out to do?
- What did we achieve? Focus more on facts than opinions;
- What went really well? Again, look at the facts.
- Why did it go well? Compare the plan to reality?
- What could have gone better? Compare the plan to reality.
- What prevented us from doing more?
- What can we learn from this?
- How to record and reuse what learned in the future?

Winning Proposals

✓ It is **matched** with the **donor's priorities, guidelines, requirements and evaluation criteria.**

✓ It is **convincing and coherent** on the **problem**, the **solution**, and why **your organization is best positioned** to solve the problem.

✓ The information you provide in your proposal **should be in line with your organization's mission, activities, and experience.**

✓ Proposals that **stand out** are written in **simple, accessible, concise language, and appealing**; that is not tiresome or confusing to read.

✓ A winning proposal is often the result of a **solid relationship with the donor** or **with donors/organizations connected to the donor**.

Winning Proposals

✓Identify funding **opportunities** aligned with your organization's work.

✓Devise a plan for the proposal development and decide on **roles** and **responsibilities** within your team for the whole process.

✓Draft **a robust logframe**, a coherent concept note and a fully-fledged first version of the proposal.

✓Develop **the budget** so that it is **coherent** with your logframe and proposal.

✓**Review** and **edit** the final proposal so that it is readable, jargon-free and compelling.

✓Do a quality review to ensure that you have met all **donor requirements.**

General Tips!

✓ Use **short sentences and paragraphs**.

✓ **Edit, edit, edit.** Get rid of excess words.

✓ Write so that **anyone can understand** what you mean.

✓ Have someone who is not familiar with your organization or the proposed project read the grant proposal. Can they understand what you are saying?

✓ **Use simple language.** A grant proposal is not the place to dazzle others with your vast vocabulary.

✓ **Avoid acronyms or jargon.** In fact, don't use them.

✓ **Ensure narrative report also reflects the budget** – the narrative report and finance statement for the project should be synchronized.

✓ **Make your point at the beginning of each section and at the beginning of each paragraph.** This prepares the proposal for skimmers. Remember, reviewers usually have many proposals to read. They appreciate you are getting to the point.

✓ Include **"the human face"** — quotes, brief anecdotes and examples can make your proposal more readable and understandable.

✓ **Include annexes as necessary:** maps, designs, letters, photos, etc.

Final Words!

→ If your proposal is approved, congratulations

Keep in mind the **quality of your implementation**, management and reporting of this grant is crucial. It will **help you to get further funding** in the future, to open **doors to other opportunities**, to increase your track record of achievements, and to encourage the donor to introduce you to other donors.

→ If your proposal is rejected, use it as an opportunity for learning

Review the donor's feedback and make sure to identify each comment by re-reading your proposal. Make notes about it in the submission template so that you can **refer to it in future occasions**.

Thank You!

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https://youtube.com/@himdadchannel4632

فەرهەنگی زار
بۆ ئایفۆن:

https://apps.apple.com/us/app/zar-dictionary/id1525554201

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