

2020

Handbook for Sustainable Management of Afghanistan Civil Society Organizations

Afghanistan Civil Society Support Initiative

The Partnership between Afghanistan and Japanese CSOs

Preface

The Afghan Civil Society Support Initiative (ACSSI) project started in March 2013 in partnership with Japanese NGOs including, Peace Winds Japan, AAR Japan and Japan International Volunteer Centre, funded by Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. The project aims to strengthen the work of the civil society actors in order to expand services into provinces and districts through coordination, capacity development, learning and training to enhance their ability to efficiently and effectively address basic needs and protect the rights of Afghans. This guideline provides key information for training and development of civil society organisations.

04 February, 2020



Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief and Development



Afghan NGOs Coordination Bureau (ANCB)



Southern Western Afghanistan and Baluchistan Association
for Coordination (SWABAC)



Association for Aid and Relief, Japan



Japan International Volunteer Center



Peace Winds Japan



**From
the People of Japan**

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Introduction

ACBAR

Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief and Development (ACBAR) is a national, independent, non-government organization (NGO) that provides a platform for information-sharing and networking for national and international member NGOs in Afghanistan.

ANCB

Afghan NGOs Coordination Bureau has been established in 1991 as a network of national NGOs in Peshawar of Pakistan based on the needs of having a coordination mechanism to harmonize the activities and bring synergy activities of various actors, stakeholder and national NGOs in Afghanistan coordinating the activities among its members, with the Government, International organizations, UN and donor agencies.

SWABAC

Southern Western Afghanistan and Baluchistan Association for Coordination is an Afghan non-Governmental, non-political, and non for profit organization based in south west region of Afghanistan. SWABAC deals with coordination of activities, advocacy and building the capacity of the CSOs and NGOs in the region and reflected the view of its members at local, national and international level.

ACBAR, ANCB and SWABAC have jointly trained 7,869 NGO and CSO participants under ACCSI from 2013 to 2019 in the following subjects:

- 1- Proposal Writing
- 2- Project Cycle Management
- 3- Monitoring and Evaluation
- 4- Human Resource Management
- 5- Finance and Accounting
- 6- Procurement Management
- 7- Strategic Planning
- 8- Communication Skills

Module 1

Developing Project Ideas and SDGs

Developing Project Ideas and SDGs:

This section encourages the readers to come up with an original and innovative idea. Every project starts with an idea which is provoked by a need or a problem that has been insufficiently solved or not solved at all. The section identifies the ways and method how to develop/address your project idea and match with donor requirements, SDGs and National Priority Programs.

What is a project?

A project consists of a concrete and organized effort motivated by a perceived opportunity when facing a problem, a need, a desire or a source of discomfort (e.g., lack of proper ventilation in a building). It seeks the realization of a unique and innovative deliverable, such as a product, a service, a process, or in some cases, a scientific research. Each project has a beginning and an end, and as such is considered a closed dynamic system. It is developed along the 4 Ps of project management: Plan, Processes, People, and Power (e.g., line of authority). It is bound by the triple constraints that are calendar, costs and norms of quality, each of which can be determined and measured objectively along the project lifecycle. Each project produces some level of formal documentation, the deliverable(s), and some impacts, which can be positive and/or negative.

In project management a project is a planned set of interrelated and sometimes dependent tasks that must be executed over a certain period of time taking into consideration certain costs, resources and other limitations. The task must be completed in order to reach a specific goal. It can also be defined as a set of inputs and outputs needed to reach a specific outcome.

The Project objective defines target status at the end of the project, reaching of which is considered necessary for the achievement of planned benefits. They can be formulated as SMART criteria:

- Specific

- Measurable (or at least evaluable) achievement
- Achievable (recently Agreed to or Acceptable are used regularly as well)
- Realistic (given the current state of organizational resources)
- Time terminated (bounded)

Types of Project¹

All projects are not the same and vary on a number of different elements that make each project individual. These factors that differentiate projects among themselves must be taken into consideration so that projects can be managed efficiently and effectively regarding each project's type.

According to **complexity**:

- **Easy:** A project is classified as easy when the relationships between tasks are basic and detailed planning or organization is not required. A small work team and few external stakeholders and collaborators are common in this case.

Complicated: The project network is broad and complicated. There are many task interdependencies.

According to **source of capital**:

- **Public:** Financing comes from Governmental institutions.
- **Private:** Financing comes from businesses or private incentives.
- **Mixed:** Financing comes from a mixed source of both public and private funding.

According to **project content**:

- **Humanitarian:** Humanitarian action is intended to “save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain human dignity during and after man-made crises and disasters caused by natural hazards, as well as to prevent and strengthen preparedness for when such situations occur.

¹ <https://www.sinnaps.com/en/project-management-blog/types-of-project>

- **Development:** Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

According to **Duration:**

Duration of a project's terminal element is the number of calendar periods it takes from the time the execution of element starts to the moment it is completed.

- Short term
- Mid-term, and
- Long term

Selecting Best Project Ideas²

Every project starts with an idea which is provoked by a need or a problem that has been insufficiently solved or not solved at all.

A project idea begins when entities with specialized knowledge or experience or some other competence feels that he can provide a service to solve a problem or produce a product to fulfill the needs of the community.

Ideas for projects can come from different sides: from inside the cooperation agency, from current or future implementing partners, from the partner government, or from other donors. Sometimes communities turn to government agencies or non-governmental organizations with particular concerns. In other cases, NGOs identify problems and take the initiative in launching new project ideas.

Before taking a full-fledged of project analysis or development of project ideas; an organization has to identify the opportunities which are feasible and promising and to find out if other entities or organizations (stakeholders) have the same (or similar) ideas implementing. The organization should consider at least three factors which controls the developing of project ideas:

- Project ideas have to match the priorities of national development plan.

² <http://www.migration4development.org/en/content/project-idea-project-proposal>

- The project idea should be in line with beneficiaries, the country strategy and program of the donor organization.
- The ways an existing problem can be tackled and solved or an opportunity can be used, always depends on the available financial, human and organizational resources.

Methods for Identifying New Project Ideas

The two most important steps in the project identification are the analysis of the initial situation (problem and context analysis), and the elaborating and prioritizing of project ideas. As a rule, these steps are carried out in close cooperation with affected communities, their representatives or their institutions (CDCs, DDA). All information collected must be verified using appropriate methods (triangulation, crosschecking, comparison with written sources, etc.).

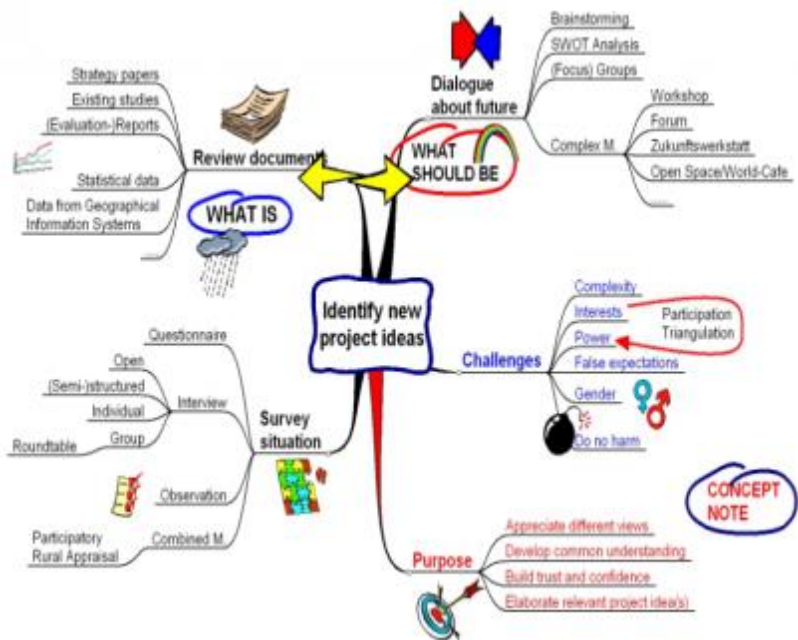


Figure 01: Identify new project ideas³

Developing Project Ideas⁴

The documents produced during project identification are the concept note (or planning platform) and the entry proposal. Project planning with the elaboration of a project document and a credit proposal can only be done after the approval of the entry proposal.

Key criteria for evaluating new project ideas are the relevance for the beneficiaries, local ownership and alignment with relevant national development goals, as well as coherence with strategic priorities of donors and implementing agencies.

To move from your project idea to project proposal; planning and analyzing tasks are described in this section lie ahead of you. It represents the steps from Identification to Proposal Preparation of the Project Cycle.

PCM is an overview of the project development process, starts with the problem analysis by reformulating the objective you are interested into a problem and identifying the problems related to it by asking why this problem exists, what are the causes? Do not forget to do context analysis and stakeholder analysis once you have a project idea in mind!

In any case, you need to be aware that the project idea is just the first stage in the project cycle. Be sure to take enough time for a thorough analysis and the planning phases in order to not only make your application a success but more important to implement project purpose..

Apart from proper planning, what makes a project idea implemented successfully is that it should:

- address real problems;
- have realistic objectives and activities;
- ensure that risks to the project outcome are properly evaluated and taken into account;

³ <http://deza-pcmlernbuch-3.prod2.lernetz.ch/module-2-en/2%20Identification%20of%20New%20Project%20Ideas>

⁴ <http://deza-pcmlernbuch-3.prod2.lernetz.ch/module-2-en/2%20Identification%20of%20New%20Project%20Ideas>

- ensure that the organization has sufficient capacity to implement and manage the project;
- Lead to a sustainable/long-term results.

Steps to success⁵

In order to arrive at a professional and successful project proposal it is important to do a **thorough analysis** first of the current situation, the problems and people/organizations touched by the problem and the proposed project, and of their needs. Based on this analysis you define your project: its objectives and methodology or strategy you propose in order to meet them, defining your activities.

In the **Planning Phase** the conclusions of the analysis phase are translated into a practical plan: activities are defined and planned and the budget structured. Throughout the analysis and planning phase, you should use a **participatory approach**, including important stakeholders at various levels.

I. Preparatory steps

1) Carefully study the guidelines

It is essential to study the guidelines carefully and discuss them with peers assisting in the project design, to more thoroughly understand donor guidelines and assure coverage of all the points. From a core group to work on the planning and design process

Work with a small dedicated team. At the same time it is important to keep people both within and outside of your organization who will be involved in implementation also involved in the analysis and planning process and value their opinions.

2) Organize an initial brainstorming session and formulate your project idea

⁵ <http://www.migration4development.org/en/content/project-idea-project-proposal>

A brain-storming session with the team and possibly other important stakeholders is important to collect initial thoughts and problems relevant to the call. In brainstorming, ask yourselves the following questions to clarify your project idea:

- **Why** is the project carried out (i.e. in answer to what *need/problem*)?
- **How** would the ideal situation look like and
- **What is** the project expected to achieve (i.e. what are its *objectives* and expected immaterial *results* and *outputs* in terms of services/goods)?
- **How is** the project going to be achieved (i.e. which *activities*, which *methodologies* to be used)?
- **Which external factors** are crucial for its success (i.e. which *assumptions* do we have, what are the *preconditions* for our activities?)?
- **Where to find** the information required assessing the success of the project (i.e. *ways to measure* the results)?
- **Which means** are required (in terms of *human and other resources*)?
- **How much** will be the project's cost (i.e. what is the *budget*)?

3) Identify possible partners and enter into negotiations with them

Once you have a clearer idea about your potential project, it is time to identify **other non-profit organizations** which might be interested in becoming your partners in this project.

II. Analysis steps

- **Carry out a stakeholder analysis**
As soon as you have a rough idea of the project design it is time to identify the important stakeholders: these include the beneficiaries of your project, your partners and donors, private and public sectors, which are potentially affected by your project and its outcome.
- **Conduct a needs assessment**

No matter how experienced an organization is, the starting point of each project should be based on a needs assessment and situation analysis. Many development projects fail to reach their objectives due to the lack of needs assessment conducted prior to project design.

Therefore, it is essential to have any project cycle begin with a well-timed assessment to understand:

- **The needs of your target group:** Analyzing needs of target group offers a good description of the tools you can use to collect the relevant information on problems that exist. There are many problems you will not be able to tackle all, so concentrate your limited time and resources on relevant information you can get in time.
- **Donor priorities in the target country:** carefully study the guidelines on how to apply and the thematic areas in the preparatory phase. Also find out about the development priorities of your country: they reflect a need identified on country level.
- **Your organizational interest and capacities and those of your partners:** Take into account your **mission statement, experience and resources**. The project you propose should also benefit your organization and be in line with its mission. Keep in mind that you cannot know it all and should use the knowledge of relevant stakeholders you identified, especially your target group, in order to meet a real need and not just a felt need you maybe only assume from your observations.
- **Conduct a situation analysis** - You should also analyze the current situation and development in the area where you want to implement the project. The following external influences will shape your project design: geography, infrastructure, economy, government policy, social life and cultural context, health, human and social capital, and the environment.
- **External Influences** - It is essential to analyze whether your project would have any negative effect in one of these aspects of the community life or one of these

elements would be affecting your project implementation and outcomes.

- **Identify the problem(s)**

The way you define your problem determines the dimensions of your solutions, so it is important that the problem definition is clearly stated.

You now need to identify the major need, the major problem faced by the beneficiaries whom you can realistically tackle within the time and budget frame and your organization's capacities: THIS is your starter problem. Now brainstorm other related problems. Again you can benefit from taking a participatory approach: your beneficiaries know their problems and answers to these questions best.

You can develop a **problem tree** which shows the causes and effects of problems and makes their hierarchy visible.

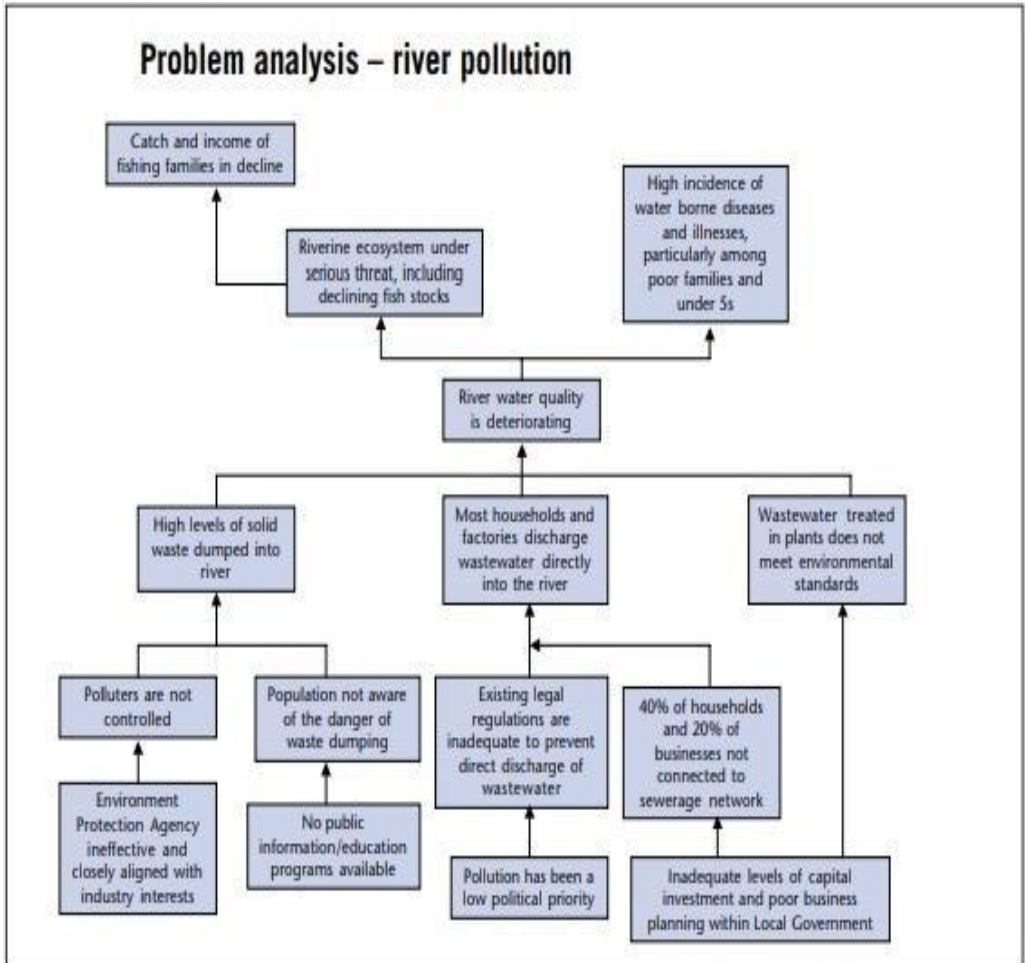
For further explanations and an example see below:

How to Establish a Problem Tree

Creating a problem tree should ideally be undertaken as a participatory group event. It requires the use of individual pieces of paper or cards on which to write individual problem statements, which can then be sorted into cause and effect relationships on a visual display.

- Step 1:** The aim of the first step is to openly brainstorm problems which stakeholders consider to be a priority. This first step can either be completely open (no pre-conceived notions as to what stakeholder's priority concerns/problems might be), or more directed, through specifying a 'known' high order problem or objective (e.g. improved river water quality) based on preliminary analysis of existing information and initial stakeholder consultations.
- Step 2:** From the problems identified through the brainstorming exercise, select an individual starter problem.
- Step 3:** Look for related problems to the starter problem
- Step 4:** Begin to establish a hierarchy of cause and effects:
- Problems which are directly causing the starter problem are put below
 - Problems which are direct effects of the starter problem are put above
- Step 5:** All other problems are then sorted in the same way – the guiding question being 'What causes that?' If there are two or more causes combining to produce an effect, place them at the same level in the diagram.
- Step 6:** Connect the problems with cause-effect arrows – clearly showing key links
- Step 7:** Review the diagram and verify its validity and completeness. Ask yourself/the group – 'are there important problems that have not been mentioned yet?' If so, specify the problems and include them at an appropriate place in the diagram.
- Step 8:** Copy the diagram onto a sheet of paper to keep as a record, and distribute (as appropriate) for further comment/information

Figure 03: An example of problem tree⁶

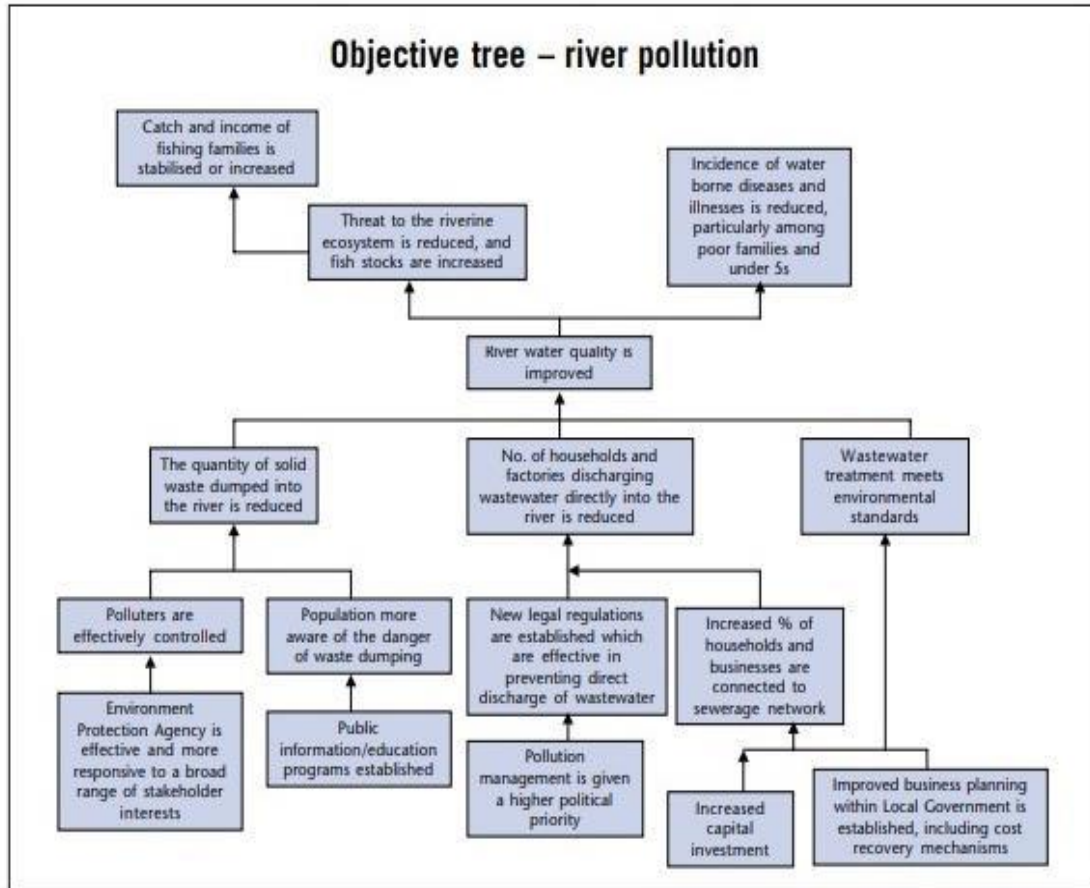


- **Set the objectives**

Following the identification of the problem(s), setting your overall and specific objectives is a crucial point in the design process which fundamentally affects the other phases.

⁶ [EuropeAid Project Cycle Management Guidelines](#) (p67f)

You can transform the problems you identified during the problem analysis into potential objectives of your project by rephrasing the negative statements into positive ones: e.g. the problem of migrants not having access to information can be transformed into the objective “provide migrants with information”. Your problem tree has now been transformed into an “**objectives tree**”. View an example of an Objective Tree.



- **Decide on the strategies**

Considering various strategies to reach the objectives you chose to tackle, and choosing the most appropriate and feasible strategy is essential for the success of a project. Ask yourselves the following questions about the strategy you choose:

- How is it innovative?
- What is the added value of the project to the current solutions on hand to address the problem?
- Is it feasible taking into account our consortium's expertise and resources?
- Is it feasible within the time frame given by the call?
- Is it desirable given the implications for our target group and society at large?
- Does it match our mission, the priorities of our most important stakeholders and the objectives of the call?
- Is it culturally sensitive and is the political environment suitable for such action?
- Is it gender sensitive?
- Which effects does it have on the environment?
- Is it sustainable?

More on sustainability:

Sustainability refers to the continuation of benefits from a project after the project is finalized.

As indicated at the beginning of this document, your project is a step in a series of actions toward a larger goal and, if granted, continuation of funding is not guaranteed by Funders. Therefore, sustainability of your action should carefully be thought through and reflected in your proposal as well. Some examples of how a project can become more sustainable:

- by follow-up projects based on best practices of this project,
- fitting it into national policy frameworks,
- a participatory design involving important stakeholders from the beginning (ensuring their ownership and thus making it more likely that they will continue the activities started under the project),

- integration into local structures and administrative systems, or
 - Skill development/training.
- **Analyze potential risks your project might be faced with**

In addition to your prior analyses you will now also have to think about possible risks: external factors that could potentially jeopardize your project and are beyond the control of the project management, or which may affect the projects' implementation and long-term sustainability.

It is not clear if the conditions will develop, but you need to make a thorough analysis of them in order to think about strategies of how to minimize the possibility of them occurring or to mitigate their effects: maybe another activity should be included to address them? Or another strategy has to be chosen.

Don't be shy about possible risks: it has to be a realistic project – even if you don't mention certain risks others might spot them and question your credibility OR, worse, the project will fail along the way with much time and money spent and damage your credibility even more. Ask yourselves the following questions:

- Which external factors are likely to influence your project's ability to achieve the expected outcomes within the expected timeframe?
- Which impact would they have on project progress and success?
- What is the likelihood that this risk will materialize? High, medium, low?
- Which risk management strategies do we have?
- Whose responsibility is it to address these risks?

If the risk is rather likely to occur, it will have a big impact and you do not find an appropriate risk management strategy, maybe you should not start the project and consider using another need as your starting point. For better overview you can also make a **table** with the risks you identified:

Risk	Potential Adverse impact	Risk Level	Risk Management Strategy	Responsibility
Change in Local Government	New Government might stop supporting any initiative started under the old government	Medium	Inclusion of Representatives of all political parties in preparation of the project	Project Team

Figure 05: A Matrix for Risk Analysis⁷

III. Planning steps

- **Plan the activities**

When planning, be sure to determine your activity and its implementation by answering the questions:

- What?
- Where?
- When?
- For whom?
- And by whom?

- **Develop a Logical Framework Matrix (Log frame)**

The prior analysis and planning steps form the basis for developing a Logical Framework Matrix (Log frame) for your project. The log frame condenses all project information into one document for effective planning, monitoring and evaluation.

⁷ <http://www.migration4development.org/en/content/project-idea-project-proposal>

The Logical Framework Approach is a set of tools used by many organizations and donors today to ensure that all of these factors are taken into account while designing a project. It is actually a set of different tools that help you to formulate your ideas in a clear and standardized way.

- **Complete your work plan**

The activity and resource planning is done through the tools of the work plan and budget, which you need to attach to your application as Annexes.

The work plan is a consistent framework for planning, scheduling, monitoring, and controlling the project. In an overview it shows the sequence and relation between activities, estimating their duration and assigning responsibility. Make sure that the work plan is realistic and based on the project design you entered into the log frame.

- **Preparing budget:**

Also the budget has to be consistent with the work plan and log frame. The Project Budget is a tool used by project managers to estimate the total cost of a project. A project budget template includes a detailed estimate of all costs that are likely to be incurred before the project is completed.

- **Revisit the review criteria**

Finally, before submitting your proposal, look at the Checklist and revisit the Review Criteria stated in the guidelines on how to apply for this call. These are the criteria the evaluation committee will take into account when deciding which projects to support and which ones are not funded under this call.

Matching project Ideas with funding opportunities

Writing a project proposal to be submitted to potential funders requires a detailed analysis. This is a core stage of the project lifecycle, which is informed by the previous identification and design phases. Most funding organizations take into account the following elements when evaluating a proposal:

- Eligibility (Does the project meet the funder's eligibility criteria?)
- Compatibility with funder's sponsorship policies (Does the project meet the funder's priority lines and funding policies?)
- Quality and Sustainability (Is the project relevant, efficient and sustainable in terms of scope, impact, expected outcomes and suitability of the institutions which support it?)

Ideas for new projects can come from different sides: from inside the cooperation agency, from current or future implementing partners, from the partner government, or from other donors. Sometimes communities turn to government agencies or non-governmental organizations with particular concerns. In other cases, NGOs identify problems and take the initiative in launching new project ideas. It is not unusual for donor agencies or implementing organizations to field specific missions for project identification.

Matching Project Ideas with A-SDGs

For Afghanistan to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda, the effort requires a dedicated partnership of Government, civil society and private sector, youth societies, academia with the United Nations and the international partners.

This includes the meaningful and active participation of stakeholders and NGOs at all stages of the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

What are the Sustainable Development Goals?⁸

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), otherwise known as the Global Goals, are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity.

These 17 Goals build on the successes of the Millennium Development Goals, while including new areas such as climate change, economic inequality, innovation, sustainable

⁸ <https://sdgs.gov.af/>

consumption, peace and justice, among other priorities. The goals are interconnected – often the key to success on one will involve tackling issues more commonly associated with another.

On September 25, 2015 world leaders from 193 nations including Afghanistan endorsed an ambitious agenda for global change called the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs represent a fifteen-year agenda (2015-2030) to guide the international community in our shared efforts to achieve three objectives: end extreme poverty; fight inequality and injustice; and protect our planet. Afghanistan continues to face major challenges in its pursuit of a better life for its people. Yet despite everything, over the past fifteen years, with the Millennium Development Goals as the backdrop, Afghanistan has witnessed some encouraging and noteworthy successes. For instance, there are more than 8 million children—boys and girls— in school today compared to a mere 70,000 in 2001. Life expectancy has increased from 45 to 62 years during this period. In 2001, one in four Afghan children would die before the age of five; today, it is one in ten – still an extremely high number when compared to other parts of the world, but a marked improvement from 15 years ago.

What are the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?



Figure 06: Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

There are 169 targets for the 17 goals. Each target has 1 to 3 indicators used to measure progress toward reaching the targets. In total, there are 304 indicators that will measure compliance. The United Nations Development Program has been asked to provide easy to understand lists of targets and facts and figures for each of the 17 SDGs.

Afghanistan Sustainable Development Goals (A-SDGs)

The Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GoIRA) is deeply committed to attaining the SDGs. With the council of minister's decision of 7th October 2015, the Ministry of Economy (MoEc) has been designated as the lead ministry and focal point for SDGs and assigned to take lead in coordinating, planning, monitoring and reporting on SDGs for the GOIRA. Besides that, Ministry of economy had the lead on the MDGs implementation in Afghanistan as well.

A-SDGs in National Framework

The Government policy is to align the A-SDGs' targets and indicators with national policies, strategies and development plans including the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework (ANPDF) presents as government's five-year strategic framework for achieving its overarching goal of self-reliance and National Priority Program. There are 10 National Priority Programs including;

- Private Sector Development Program
- The Citizen's Charter
- Effective Governance Program
- Justice Sector Reform Program;
- Comprehensive Agricultural Development Program;
- Infrastructure and Connectivity Program;
- Urban Development Program; Energy;
- National Mineral and Resources Development Program;
- Human Capital Development; and
- Women's Economic Empowerment Program.

For more information on the A-SDGs, please see <https://sdgs.gov.af/>

Module 2

Funding Eligibility

Funding Eligibility

Most NGOs are dependent on donor funds and they often experience fluctuations in funding because of the constantly shifting priorities of the donors or not meeting the requirements needed from a donor. This section allows NGOs to determine all the stages how to be eligible and meet and fulfil donor requirements to apply for fund.

What is a fund?

Funding is the act of providing financial resources to a team to implement a project, usually in the form of money, or other values such as effort or time, to finance a need, program, and project, usually by an organization or company. Unfortunately, getting fund for a project does not happen overnight, but requires planning, preparation, resources, and a strategic and tactical approach.

Sources of Funding

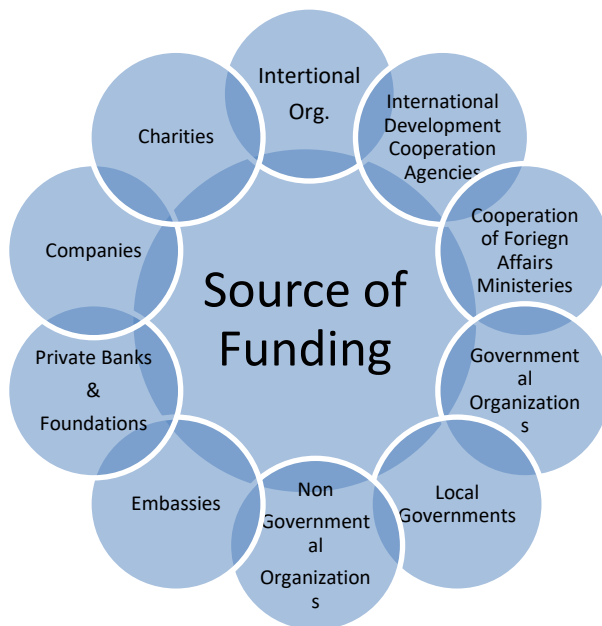
Major Sources of Funding for NGOs

Let us examine the various sources of funding available for NGOs both at the conventional as well as non-conventional level.

- ❖ Conventional sources are those that are mostly existing and donor –based.
- ❖ Non-conventional sources of funding are those that also include alternative fundraising for organizations.

The bilateral and multilateral aid is one of the biggest sources of funding which have been seen over the past fifty and more years. These originate either from the foreign offices of the developed countries or from the multilateral organizations set up by different countries such as the United Nations, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank. These organizations have been created to extend international support for alleviating poverty and reducing the socio-economic gap between the developed and the developing countries. But their agendas are far more complex and they are not necessarily focused upon injecting funds into NGOs, but definitely a small part of their massive programs does

include funding support for NGOs in developing countries. The second important source of funding is the private charities/foundations/international organizations that are more privately handled and have a better focus on equipping local NGOs not just financially but also technically. In countries where there is some economic growth recorded with a presence of a wealthy private sector, NGOs can also look upon the corporate agencies as another major source of funding for them. There are also international corporate groups that have Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) agenda for enhancing equity, social justice and development. Besides, in the present times, the corporate agencies are also partnering with NGOs for joint profit-oriented projects. In some countries, the local governments are also a major source of funding as they have different community welfare and development schemes which NGOs can apply and raise resources and implement projects. Donations and gifts, mostly from individuals or informal groups are also sources of funding for NGOs. Finally, the non-conventional resources include the micro-enterprises, microfinance and micro-insurance.



Funding for NGOs

NGOs rely on money from a variety of sources, including individual donors, foundations, corporations, and governments. Often what an NGO can and cannot do is tied to where the money comes from, dramatically affecting the effectiveness and neutrality of NGOs. Many NGOs need depend on these funding sources in order to operate. Funding Issues have become particularly challenging, following the economic crisis. This section examines how NGOs are funded, and how funding sources affect NGO operations.

I. Individual donors:

Individuals can be a major source of support for NGOs — not just in countries with strong economies or among people with high incomes. Individual donors account for much of the private money. Individual donors can be anybody — people from your own geographic, ethnic or faith community, and those outside it. They might be friends, neighbors or co-workers of the board members, volunteers or staff.

Tips for Approaching Individuals

- The first step towards soliciting individual donors is to reach out to your own personal networks – family, friends, local community, previous beneficiaries, etc. While the amounts may or may not be significant, these groups are typically the easiest to convert into long-time donors.
- Use your organization's website, newsletter, and social media to gain a following and keep in touch with people interested in what you do. These people are more likely to donate if asked.
- Develop marketing plans to strategically target groups of individuals.

Foundations:

A foundation is an entity that is established for the purpose of giving money to promote a social good. Foundations make grants to support scientific, educational, cultural, religious, or other charitable causes. Not all foundations have the term “foundation” in their name, and not all organizations that have the word “foundation” in their name give grants.

Corporations:

The private sector, local businesses, and national and international corporations can provide support and resources to NGOs.

Government:

Government could allocate funds itself or through government agencies and fund non-governmental organizations to projects that benefits the public through selection process.

National and International Sources of Funding in Afghanistan

The main sources funding for NGOs in Afghanistan is donor funding. These donors can be from an individual donor country or be multilateral agencies like the UN and World Bank. Different providers of funding are:

- Foreign Governments: (e.g. USAID, JICA, ECHO, EC, DFID,)
- Institutional donors : (e.g. World Bank)
- Government of Afghanistan programs with NGO implementing partners like Citizen’s Charter, Sehat Mandi Health programs, agriculture programmes)
- Private foundations: (e.g. Bayat Foundation)
- NGOs’ private funds: (from individual citizens)
- UN agencies: (e.g. UNICEF, WFP, UNHCR)

How to find the donors?

This is one of the most common questions. An NGO through funding needs to further its mission and values, to run and implement the programs and projects, to plan for future programs, ensure to hire and retain its qualified staff, and to spread the word about its work. The following components are a practical and highly effective collection of recommendations to help you research and identify donors for your NGO.

Donor Mapping

- Ask your colleagues; talk to your peers at other NGOs and other partners
- Ask your current funder for suggestions/recommendation
- Use the internet
- Check the websites (ie. ACBAR, various donors)

a) Terms of Reference

If you as a program manager want to raise funds, you have to identify the potential donors for your program in-country and internationally. In order to identify potential donors, it is important that you meet various agencies, institutions, embassies, multi-lateral agencies, present your program to them and analyse those donors who have a common mandate with you and are willing to fund your program. This activity is called donor mapping.

Once we develop the new program, we can send a concept note to donors who have shown interest in our donor mapping exercise.

b) Ask your colleagues; talk to your peers at other NGOs and other partners

Ask your colleagues. Talk to your peers at other NGOs and other partners. People who work in government or universities, for example, might be familiar with different donors to address.

c) Ask your current donor for suggestions

If your NGO already has funding, ask your current donor for suggestions. Many will be more than happy to give advice.

d) Use the internet

Use the Internet. You can look for foundations online. In addition to the Foundation Center, try this website: www.fundsforngos.org. You can also do a search on “foundations that support x in x country.”

e) Check the websites (ACBAR, Donor websites)

Check the websites, annual reports and other publications of NGOs similar to yours for listings of their funders. Once you have identified the donor website, review its website to determine the following:

- ✓ Does the available fund is in your geographic area? Some funders focus on a whole country, some on small regions or even specific cities.
- ✓ Do the donors’ priorities align with your work? Some funders have broad interests that span a variety of issues, while others have a narrow focus. In addition to looking at a funder’s stated priorities, look at the NGOs and projects it has funded. This information should be on the donors’ website and will help you determine if your NGO is a good fit.
- ✓ find out the application procedures, requirements and deadlines for fund
- ✓ Does the donor want a brief letter of introduction first or should you send a full proposal?
- ✓ Does the donor have deadlines or does it review letters and proposals at any time?
- ✓ Finally, find out the names of staff in charge of your activity or geographic area.

If the following information is not available on the website, you can call or email the donor to ask.

Tips for Donor Communication

To truly connect with donors and inspire them to become a part of the work that you do, you need to communicate with them. This means making a clear message of what you are trying to do so that they become interested in your work. A strong donor communications program is important. Think of your relationship with the donor as a “conversation”. Your goal

is to keep the conversation going through a variety of mediums. You can make calls, send handwritten notes, or send emails. This is why the key to more effective communication is specificity.

Donors are more likely to stay engaged with your organisation you show them how much they mean to you. Make them feel important—because they are—and you're on your way from turning one-time donors into lifetime supporters.

First Thing: Know Your Donors

The first step to effective communication is to know your audience. Of course, knowing each and every donor personally might not be feasible. That's why organized and easily accessible donor data is crucial.

A functional, easy-to-use Donor Management System (DMS) is going to be your best friend here. You'll want a system that lets you easily track giving history, personal details, and your previous conversations with particular donors. This information makes it easier to build and maintain donor relationships and easily segment donors into groups based on shared characteristics, like giving levels. Tracking and analyzing your donors also optimizes donor stewardship. With accurate information, you can better personalize messages, communication channels, and cultivation strategies based on each donor's unique needs and preferences.

Five Principles of Focused Communications with Donors

Every communication between you and your donors should be focused on retention. As you plan your communication strategy, keep these tips in mind to turn one-time donors into lifetime supporters:

1. Connect early and often

After a donor makes that first donation, welcome them! Say thank you, share your gratitude, and tell them what you plan to accomplish with their funds. You can also ask first-time donors how they would like you to communicate with them and how often.

2. Be personal

Personalize your correspondence to your donors so that a first-time donor receives a different thank you letter than a repeat donor or VIP donor. That simple separation will show your donors that you understand their unique relationship with your organization.

3. Rally supporters to send your message

All of the messages you send to your donors don't have to come from you. If someone benefits from the funds raised at your event, ask them to write a letter about why that was meaningful to them, or let a sponsor write about why they chose to be involved. There are many different messengers you can call on to sing your organization's praises.

4. Show how you're achieving your mission

Are the donations being put to good use? Let your donors know all the good work they're helping you do whenever you contact them.

5. Have an attitude of gratitude

Your donors make your mission possible. Your goal should be to show them just how important they are, and how their contributions are making a difference and do not forget to thank your donor.

How to become eligible for funds?

There are some key requirements which help NGOs to become eligible for funds:

- 1) **Documents**
- 2) **Declarations**
- 3) **Policies/Manuals**

1. Documents

Generally donors will ask the following documents:

a) Statutes of Operation:

The **Statutes of operation** of an organization is the foundation for building an organization. It should contain all

the key agreements made by members on how the organization will work. It should tell you the following:

- Why the organization exists, its purpose and objectives;
- Who the organization's key constituency and stakeholders are, who should benefit from its work; and
- How the organization intends to work, its broad principles and the basic structures for decision making and getting the work done as well dealing with the finances and assets of the organization.

b) Registration Certificate:

Registration Certificate is a document issued to an NGO which shows that you have the right to work and reside in the country or region – for example Ministry of Economy registration for NGOs and Ministry of Justice registration for Associations.

c) Membership certificates of coordination bodies in Afghanistan:

Membership Certificate documents are issued by coordination platforms for NGOs and associations in order to provide evidence of member's cooperation. For further information see: <http://www.acbar.org/page/10.jsp?title=How-to-become-a-member>

d) Annual reports

An annual report can be an in-depth and comprehensive report on the activities carried out by the NGO during the previous year. It basically outlines the accomplishments made by the organization. An annual report has to be published every year.

e) Annual work plan⁹

The Work plan is a tool to help you plan, manage implementation of, report on, and evaluate your project. It is a set of different activities over a period of one year that has aims to contribute and achieve the objectives of a project/program or organization. What should be included in a work plan?

- Activity
- Input (human and non-human resources)
- Responsible person for carrying activities
- Time frame (start and end)
- Anticipated output/result/achievement
- Budget
- Challenges
- Remarks (optional)

f) Audit report

Audit report is the one of most important documents, which is required for fundraising. It states the financial health of your NGO, which is taken seriously by any donors, grant making departments and agencies.

g) M&E reports

Reporting is an important part of most monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems. Reports should present information to different stakeholders and line management in ways that make it easy for them to use. Within NGOs, internal M&E reports are usually designed to support project or program management. External reports, on the other hand, are largely designed to demonstrate accountability, raise funds, transparency or promote learning.

M&E reports can be produced at any stage of a project or program cycle from baselines through to impact assessment.

⁹ <https://proposalsforngos.com/what-is-a-work-plan/>

h) Letter of recommendations (Donors, Partners, Government)

A letter of recommendation, also known as a reference letter is a document which describes the qualities, characteristics, and capabilities of the person/organizations being recommended in terms of the ability performed a particular task or function or cooperation.

i) The projects implemented list

The Project Implementation list is a chart that clearly lists all the necessary projects completed or not completed with related deadlines. The list includes the projects implemented by organization:

- Project name
- Stakeholder/ development partners
- Place of implementation (Country, city....)
- Name of Donor
- Duration and
- Budget

j) Bank statement

A printed record of the balance in a bank account and the amounts that have been paid into it and withdrawn from it, issued periodically to the holder of the account.

2. Declarations

Letter of Declaration is a formal statement or announcement about something or describes legal matters which ensure organizations transparency and accountability. All NGOs who are interested in applying for funding under the CHF Afghanistan should have the following declaration statements:

- ✓ Declaration of conflict of interest (Signed copy)
- ✓ Declaration of non-support for UN designated entity (signed copy)
- ✓ Declaration of any previous or pending legal process or investigation (Signed copy)
- ✓ Declaration of recognition and support of / for any UN compliance activity (Signed copy)

- ✓ Declaration of recognition that provisions of false and information or statement

3. Policy/Manuals

A policy/manual is a collection of documents that define an organization's rules, policies and procedures, and helps staff and management run the organization. The following policies are not limited to these requested by donors.

- Governance policy
- Procurement and logistics
- HR
- Finance and administration
- M&E
- Security, safety and access
- Gender, HIV/AIDS and environment
- Child protection
- Code of Conduct

Other Donor requirements

This is a very important question because a project proposal is a lengthy document comprising of several different components. There is an introduction part, a background story, an explanation to justify the project; there are of course goals, objectives and strategies. But what is that single page in the proposal to which every donor would turn and look into before giving a final decision.

- **Organization Background & Experience**
- **Financial health of organization**
- **Program Partners**
- **Program Description**
- **Program Timeline**
- **Measurement Plan:** (Has an appropriate plan been laid out to monitor and measure the program outcomes?)
- **Sustainability Plan:** (Has the organization specified a plan to obtain continued funding and/or an ability to

self-sustain the program after the grant period has ended?)

- **Communications Plan** : (Does the proposal outline an appropriate communications plan as part of the overall program, to promote awareness and gain buy-in from the target population?)
- **Detailed Budget**: (Does the proposal include a detailed line-item budget?)

Donors' evaluation of project proposals for funding

Donors have a marking grid or table in order to rank project proposals submitted by applicants in competitive bids. Usually the marking table is available to show the weighting of each section of the proposal. The table may include:

- ❖ Quality of the project concept and relevance to the donor's priorities
- ❖ Evidence of technical, scientific or professional knowledge
- ❖ Quality of project structure and management
- ❖ Potential impact of the project
- ❖ Overall cost – value for money.

Module 3

Building Sustainability into your NGO

Building Sustainability into your NGO

A sustainable NGO is one that can continue to fulfil its mission over time and in so doing, meets the needs of its key stakeholders – particularly its beneficiaries and supporters. As such, sustainability should be seen as an ongoing process rather than an end in itself. It is a process that involves the interaction between different strategic, organizational, programmatic, social, and financial elements.

However, experience describes that financial sustainability is crucial for the long-term survival and effectiveness of all types of NGOs and civil society organizations. The challenge is how to achieve such levels of financial sustainability. The financial sustainability of an NGO depends on its ability to diversify income and access new funds.

Looking at the perspective of donors and NGOs, sustainability of a project simply implies the continuation of project activities and sustenance of project outcomes after the initial/primary funding expires. Most donors are concerned about sustainability aspect of a project and often fund projects which have a well-defined sustainability plan in place. It is a challenge for NGOs to ensure a steady flow of funds for executing their projects and programs. Integrating sustainability principles in their ongoing projects can be an effective way to ensure long term impact.

What is Sustainability?¹⁰

The sustainability concept has gained a significant popularity in management, economy business development and social sector over the last few decades. For the first time, the term and concept of sustainability were used by a group of

¹⁰ <https://motamem.org/پایداری-در-استراتژی/>

environmental scientists and then it gradually become common and useful in in other areas of management as well. Looking at sustainability from a NGO point of view, it means maintaining your efforts after the funding is over. In other words, it means continuing the project benefits for the target groups after the funding from donors terminates.

Sustainability is the ability of an organization to continue its mission or program far into the future. All projects have to end eventually, but the project impact should continue. Donors want to see how the project and its impact will outlive their direct involvement in the project.

A project or organization can be sustainable in three main categories: organizational, financial, and community sustainability.¹¹

People/Community

Community sustainability is how the community carries out the project activities even after the NGO leaves.

Example: The project trains 50 new mothers on infant nutrition. After the training, these mothers will then share their knowledge with other mothers, children and neighbors in their communities. In this way, the project will continue to reach an additional 200-500 indirect beneficiaries one year after official project activities are completed.

Financial

Financial sustainability is how the financial support required for the project or the organization will continue after the grant has ended.

Example: As part of the advocacy initiative, the Communications Team will organize an online newsletter and crowd-sourcing campaign. This campaign will also include an annual appeal to further support the project.

It refers to ensuring a steady flow of funds and generating revenue for maintaining and continuing the organization.

Your funding can come from:

¹¹ *What is Project Sustainability by Alta Alonzi*

- Carry on a brief evaluation of your last projects funding
- Plan your funding needs
- Develop of fund raising strategy
- How to target donors and match their requirements
- How to write a proposal for project funding
- An outline for financial reporting...

Organizational

Organizational sustainability is how the NGO itself continues to function after the project. An organization is like a plant. There is a part of it that is above ground – stem, leaves, and fruit. These are the organizational aspects that an outsider can see – the projects, the administration, the capacity building. But there is also the part below the ground – the roots, or institutional aspects of the organization. This part is strong if the NGO is serious about its purpose, has strong objectives and convictions. If the boss and staff have lost their vision, the roots are weak but may still be rescue-able and a guarantee that the NGO can survive. If the roots have been eaten by pests, no matter how well the office is run, the NGO will die.

Example: The programs will use social media to publicize its research findings, and also helps attract new volunteers to the organization.

An NGO which is concerned about long life might choose to do the following:

1. Carry out a SWOT analysis (see Strategic Planning section)
2. Make a strategic plan (see Strategic Planning section)
3. Implement, monitoring and evaluate the plan.

Project Sustainability¹²

¹² <https://www2.fundsforngos.org/featured/how-to-ensure-sustainability/>

It means to continue (the benefit of) the projects or program in the absence of donor support.

How to ensure Project sustainability?

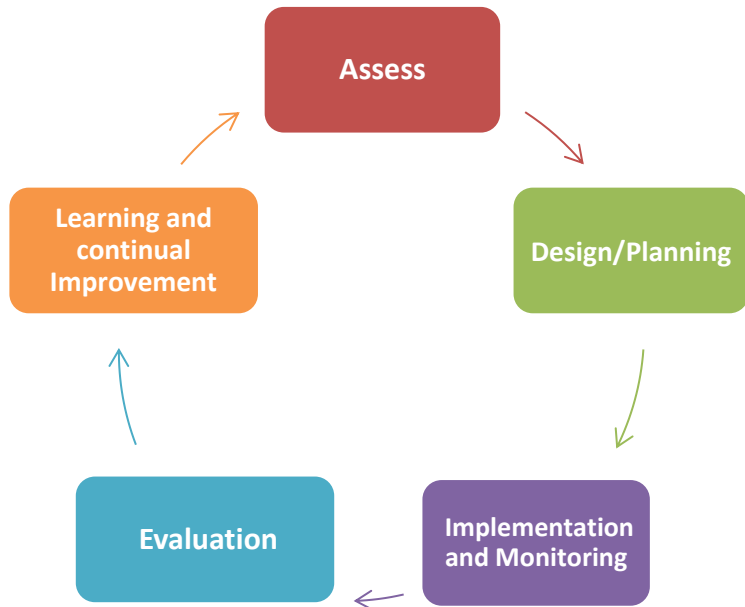
- ❖ **Community involvement:** involving the community is the key to have long term impacts from any projects. Make sure that your project involves the community at various stages, this will give them ownership of the project and there are high chances that they may continue with some project aspects even after the project duration. As the entire process will be participatory the skills and knowledge gained by the present group of people, will be transferable and also replicable.
 - ❖ **Institutionalize local groups:** Local groups play a very important role in maintaining your project objectives. You can strengthen local institutions like, Community Development Councils, Shuras, community associations, and disability and youth groups through involving them in the planning and implementation phases of your project as well as monitoring.
 - ❖ **Community advocacy:** Sensitizing the community about the benefits of a particular project and then initiating an advocacy policy can also ensure sustainability in the long run.
 - ❖ **Involving local government and departments:** Involvement of local agencies and government will ensure improved access to the government initiatives in this direction. As these agencies are permanent, they will help in sustaining the project activities beyond the project duration.
- The points mentioned above can be used by NGOs while drafting your sustainability plan for your organization or while writing the sustainability section of a project proposal.

Project Cycle Management and Sustainability¹³

Project cycle management (PCM) is the term given to the process of planning and managing projects, programs and organizations. In order to make development projects

¹³ <https://networklearning.org/index.php/ngo-skills/organizational-management/133-project-cycle-management>

successful, good planning is needed. Some important factors need to be taken into account, in particular the needs and views of stakeholders. “Stakeholders” is the word currently used for everybody with an interest in the project. Stakeholders may include clients, target groups, beneficiaries – the people who, it is hoped, will be helped by the project, but may also include local leaders, the community, NGO workers, and donors. So to focus on the group helped, the phrase “Primary Stakeholders” is used in this document. PCM ensures that all aspects of projects are considered. Each part of the project cycle is considered in the management process and changes in all parts are noticed and taken into account for future project planning and design. This way of working could contribute to the success and sustainability of the project.



The project cycle consists of five stages: 1) Assessment, 2) Design/Planning, 3) Implementation and Monitoring, 4)

Evaluation, 5) Learning and Continual improvement. Each stage has its own characteristics and requires specific knowledge and skills.

Planning for sustainability: How NGOs prepare for their future

The sustainability of NGOs has become challenging to achieve lately, because the majority of them rely on a single and a few donors for funding. Unfortunately, donor funding is never easy to secure, particularly for smaller or local NGOs. Globally, donor funding for development has been significantly decreasing over the last decades. In light of this, NGOs need to plan for their sustainability if they want to continue to bring benefits to their target group and to fulfil their mission for a long term future. Sustainability Plan is an initial roadmap to help guide your program which should include developing your future funding plan or an organization plan.

The donor also wants to know how the organization will sustain after the funding. Here you can mention that the organization has its own sustainability plan which will be applied as a continuous process to sustain its projects, organization and receive support of funding agencies.

1. **History/Background** (Draw from your work in the Getting Ready section.)
 - Describe the community needs that led to the initiation of this organization/program.
 - Provide a brief summary of your program and the outcomes you have achieved.
 - Discuss the sustained impacts of your project/program.
2. **Moving Forward**
 - Describe program activities you will implement
 - Provide justification for their continuation
3. **Program Structure**
 - Describe the stakeholders, staffing and oversight that will be needed to support the continuation of the identified activities.

4. **Continuation Budget:**

- Develop a sustained budget for your organization (Core fund)

5. **Funding Strategies :**

- Describe the strategies you will use to sustain your project/program
- Identify potential sources of support

How to Write the Sustainability in your Proposal

A core question that every donor agency seeks in a proposal is: 'What is the Sustainability Plan for the project?' This is a very usual because all projects have limited time durations and donor agencies want to know what will happen to the all the efforts made by the project staff once the project ends. This can be very challenging but it is one of the most common questions donors want to ask whether the grant is for one year or for several years.

There can also be different kinds of sustainability: organizational sustainability, financial sustainability, community sustainability and project sustainability. Organizational sustainability is how the organization will continue to sustain in absence of the donor support. Financial sustainability is about the financial support required for the project or the organization after the grant has ended. Similarly, community sustainability is how the community will continue to carry out the project activities when there is no grant available. First of all, while developing the sustainability plan, you need to mention how the community or the primary beneficiaries of the project will be participating in the implementation process. A community is an important project stakeholder and its involvement is ensured from day one of the project. When you explain this in the plan, you are able to convince the donor that sustainability is built into the core of the project. The organization will give the impression to the community that it is the owner of the project and it has to continue implementing it even after the support has been withdrawn.

The next part of the plan is to guarantee financial sustainability. In simple terms, where will the money for

activities come from when the grant support has ended? For this, you can refer back to your project strategy where you have specifically mentioned about building community-based mechanisms such as a cooperative or a community association and the project costs would be covered from member contributions. This is an important element of project sustainability in proposal.

Module 4

Introduction to Strategic Planning

What is planning?

Planning is one of the four management functions: namely Planning, Organizing, Leading, and Controlling. It is the process of setting goals and defining a strategy to achieve the goals.

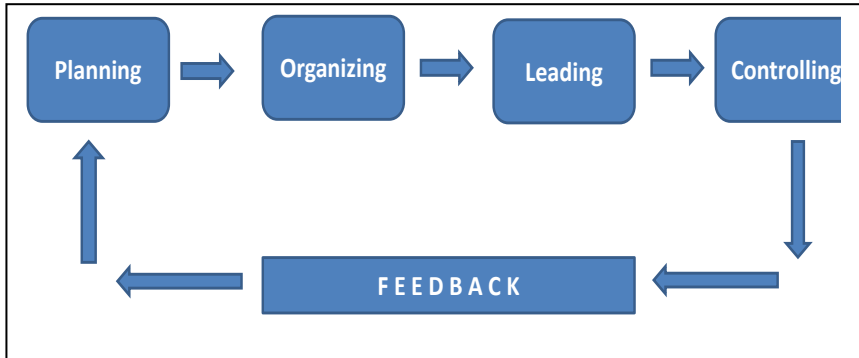


Fig 1: Planning Cycle

What is a strategy?

Strategy is a type of plan that is aimed at achieving the set goals effectively and efficiently.

Strategy is a means of expressing the organization's determination in the form of purposeful, longer-term plans, and resource allocation priorities. This definition is one of the oldest and most classic views of the concept of strategy. It is through the explicit formation of the organization's goals and the explanation of the essential implementation plans required. From the content of this definition, it can be deduced that:

- First, it must define the long-term goals of the organization. These goals should be fairly permanent, stable unless environmental changes require revision.
- Secondly, the stability of the goals does not necessarily mean that programs are irrevocable. For this purpose of strategic executive plans, which are

certainly short-term, can be aligned with long-term goals.

- Thirdly, resource allocation; it is also referred to as the most important step in strategic implementation. Creating a balance between goals and strategic plans on the one hand, and the allocation of human, technological, physical, and financial resources on the other hand, to ensure the continuity of strategic journey.

What is strategic planning?

Strategic planning is a managerial activity in organizations that is used to determine different things. These include: prioritizing, focusing resources and energy, ensuring that employees and stakeholders are moving towards common and agreed goals, setting out a mix of outputs and outcomes, and evaluating and adjusting the organization's move in the most appropriate way, to adapt and respond to environmental changes.

From another perspective, strategic planning is a regular and continuous effort that shapes the infrastructure of decision making and implementation in the organization. This effort makes it clear what the organization is, what it offers, why it does so, and who it serves.

As mentioned above, strategic planning focuses on the long-term success of the organization. Therefore, its focus is on the future, in other words, at this stage, it attempts to chart the future of the organization.

Components of a strategic plan

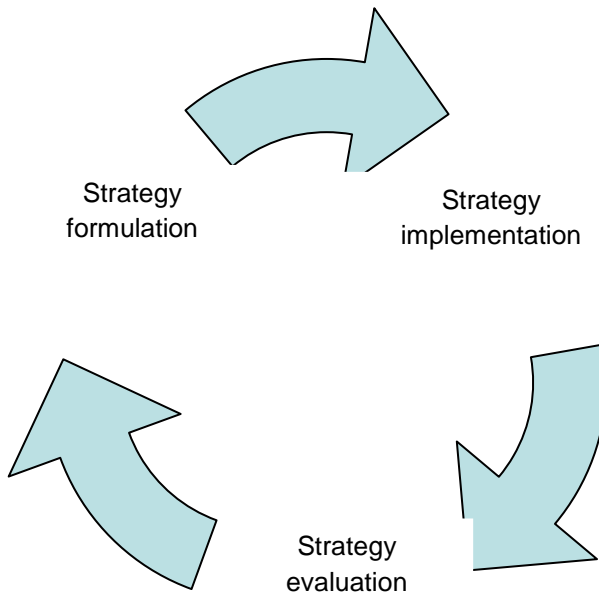
A well-developed strategic plan serves as a road map for making these changes because it describes the following:

- A vision for the future
- Strengths and weaknesses of the organization
- The nature of the changes required for future sustainable growth and development along with the sequence of these changes

- The resources required and whether the required resources currently exist within the organization or must be generated from external sources.

The Strategic Planning Process

The application of strategic planning in operations is a result of difficult managerial decisions that comprises good but sometimes less desirable courses of action. The development and execution of strategic plans is a well-thought-out process performed in three critical steps:



1. Strategy Formulation

In the formulation of strategies, the organization assesses its current situation by performing an internal and external audit. Strategy formulation also involves identifying the organization's strengths and weaknesses, as well as opportunities and threats (SWOT Analysis). As a result, managers get to decide which new segment they can venture or abandon, how to allocate the required resources, and whether to expand its operations through a joint venture, partnering and networking. Strategic plans result in long-term effects on organizational success; only top managers understand their impact and are authorized to assign the resources necessary for their implementation.

2. Strategy Implementation

After the strategy formulation, the organization needs to establish short-term goals (usually one-year long in duration), design policies, and allocate resources for their execution. It is also referred to as the action stage and is the most important phase of strategic management. The success of the implementation stage is determined by the organization's ability to nurture an environment and a culture that motivate its members to work in the most efficient and effective way possible. A manager's interpersonal skills are critical during this stage. Effective strategy implementation also involves developing a functional organizational structure, optimum utilization of available resources, and redirecting operational efforts.

3. Strategy Evaluation

Any skilled development person knows that success today does not guarantee success tomorrow. As such, it is important for managers to evaluate the performance of various strategies after the implementation phase. Strategy evaluation involves three crucial activities: reviewing the internal and external factors affecting the

implementation of the strategies, measuring performance, and taking corrective actions. All the three steps in strategic planning occur in three hierarchical levels: the organizational, middle, and operational levels. Thus, it is imperative to foster communication and interaction among the managers and other members in all the levels so as to help the firm to operate as a functional team.

Benefits of strategic planning

Rapid changes in the environment cause most organizations to adapt reactive approaches rather than proactive ones. However, reactive strategies are short-term, causing organizations to spend a significant amount of resources and time. Strategic planning helps organizations prepare beforehand; it lets the organization initiate influence instead of just responding to situations. Strategic planning may offer the following benefits to any organization:

- It helps formulate better strategies using a logical, systematic approach. It is alone the most important benefit. Some studies show the strategic planning process makes a significant contribution more than the decision itself.
- Communication is crucial to the success of the strategic planning process. It is initiated through participation and dialogue among the managers and other members, which shows their commitment to achieving organizational goals. It is because the strategic planning makes organizational goals and objectives real as the members can understand the relationship between their performance and compensation. As a result, both the managers and other members become innovative and creative, which fosters the growth of the organization further.
- It empowers the individuals working in the organization. The increased dialogue and communication across all the stages of the process

strengthens the members' sense of effectiveness, initiative-taking, and imagination. It explains the need for organizations to decentralize the strategic planning process by involving lower-level managers.

Benefits of Strategic Plan for NGOs

A strategic plan can be a very useful promotional material for an NGO, but more than that it is a very important tool for organizational development. As experience suggests, it is not enough for NGOs to just develop mission and objectives. A clear strategic plan strengthens the idea behind the organization and how it can move forward. In proposal formats, you may have noticed how each donor agency wants to make sure that the project being implemented is in line with the organization's strategy. This is where the strategic plan can be very useful.

A strategic plan helps NGOs understand their capacities, problems and resources. An understanding of these areas help organizations analyze their strengths and build upon opportunities. One of the frequently used tools for developing the strategy plan is SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats).

Why Strategic Planning?

"If you fail to plan, you plan to fail"

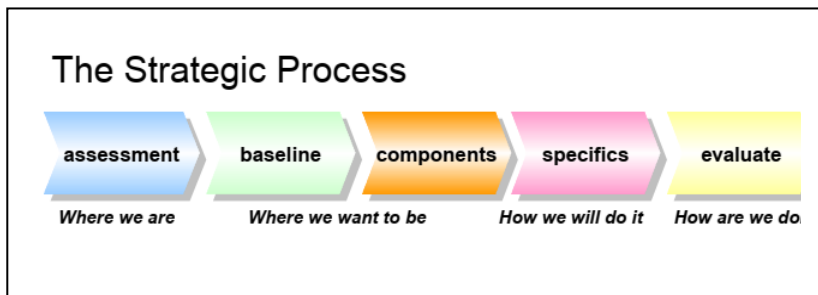
Effective strategic planning can bring many benefits to any organization – here are just a few examples:

- It outlines a clear path for your organization. No organization can hope to succeed by not having a strategic plan and simply hoping to stumble across success.
- A strategic plan works like a roadmap, clearly defining the best route for your organization to take in the years

to come. Whether it covers one, three or five years into the future, a strategic plan can help guide your organization to meet the challenges that lie in wait.

- It brings a sense of focus. Because a strategic plan establishes a direction for your organization to take, it will help it sharpen its focus in order to get there. Strategic planning can therefore help your organization develop the right goals and targets and help everyone focus their efforts into meeting them.
- It improves your organization's self-awareness. Taking the time to establish a comprehensive strategic plan means your organization has a better awareness of its strengths and weaknesses and where it stands in the society, both individually and in relation to other organizations working in the same environment.
- It gives your members something to work towards. Strategic planning isn't just beneficial for those highest up in the management hierarchy, it gives everyone in the organization a sense of purpose.

The Strategic Process and Practical Tools



Components of strategic planning:

The core of strategic planning is to set Vision, Mission, Values, Goals and Objectives. In the lines below, we will discuss these components one by one in detail.

Vision: where we want to be in future

Different definitions of the organization's perspective are present. Here are two of the most applicable definitions:

- The vision is a picture of the future that the organization intends to achieve at a specific time.
- The prospects of the future wishes of the organization in the current situation. The outlook of the organization has certain characteristics. The organization deserves to derive its perspective by considering such specifications. These specifications are presented below:

-

Preparing a strategic plan will create other opportunities for the organization such as: Encouraging greater inclusion of the staff and advisory board in preparing the plan for the organization, increasing commitment in the organization by the staff and advisory board, defining the organization's operational path clearly, encouraging learning.

- it is compact so it can be used to guide decision-making.

-Attracts people's attention.

-Describes a preferred and meaningful future state.

-Inspires those who must work to achieve it and provides a motivating force even in hard times.

-Indicates how individual goals or purposes can be combined with other's goals or the organization's overall vision to contribute to, or result in, the greater good.

-Is perceived as achievable.

-Is challenging, compelling, and expands beyond the status-quo or what is comfortable. 'Developing a vision of success for the organization is recognized as a useful step in strategic planning. After all, if you don't have a dream or vision of

success, any plan may seem appropriate or feasible. A vision of success clarifies which tactics, activities or programs should be of priority, and helps identify which are not particularly appropriate or useful. A vision of success also helps you to establish benchmarks or milestones to indicate whether or not you are meeting your goals and strategic objectives.

Formulating the vision:

1. Answer the following questions and list down your answers:
 - What kind of World (community, country) do you dream for you and your loved ones to live in?
 - What kind of people do you dream to live in that ideal society?
2. Make a social photography of your present society from the social, political, economic, cultural, and environmental milieu. List down what you like in your current society which you can reinforce, legitimize, and/or rationalize. List down what you dislike in your current society which you can change
3. Using adjectives, convert your answers in numbers 1 and 2 in a vision statement.
4. Polish the output in no.3 to ensure that it communicates hope and inspiration for all (like the North Star)
5. Check the criteria for determining a good vision statement.

Vision Statement Checklist

1. It is society-driven and end-oriented rather than activity-based
2. It is outward-looking.
3. It is concise but comprehensive.
4. It communicates hope for all to share.
5. It must describe the ideal characteristics of a community and its people at some point in the future.
6. Means of attaining it are excluded in the vision statement itself.
7. It is full of adjectives.

8. It considers in advance the contribution of an agency in its realization.

Mission: why we do what we do

The mission of an organization will be the organization's existential philosophy. The mission of the organization is to determine how the organization will compete and create value for its beneficiaries.

In compiling the mission statement, the following five basic questions should be answered:

1. **What's that?** (goods and services that the organization offers and, indeed, what needs of the community are met by these products or services).
2. **Who is it?** (Who will benefit from operations of the organization?)
3. **Where?** (Where is the working environment?)
4. **Why?** (What is the ultimate goal of the organization?)
- 5 **How?** (What are the unique characteristics and competitive advantages of the organization in reaching these goals?)

It has been suggested in various papers that the organization's mission statement is about: members as a valuable asset item, the response to the issues (social, community and environmental), the type of technology and, ultimately, the commitment that the organization will have against financial health and growth.

In terms of the direction and movement, the mission of the organization will unify all the managers. Organizational missions let all managers and other members at different levels of the organization have common expectations. The mission of the organization lets the individuals and groups of interest, over time, have a common value and this value is strengthened day by day. Organizational missions will create a kind of value and purpose through which individuals outside the organization will recognize that value as its introduction. Eventually, the mission of the organization will be to strengthen obligations such as:

to take on operational responsibility, as well as to ensure the survival, growth and profitability of the organization.

Sample vision: *Effective NGOs, Stronger Communities*¹⁴

Sample mission statements:

*To Provide an Efficient Platform for Members to Carry Out Effective Humanitarian & Development Activities in Afghanistan*¹⁵

The mission statement expresses an organization's reason for being, its vision, and its purpose. It includes and embodies the values or principles that the organization stands for. It guides organizational decision-making and choices, and defines the organization's public profile or image. In short, a Mission Statement answers three questions:

- What we are committed to? (**Vision**)
- What do we believe in or stand for? (**Values**)
- What is our business or outputs? (**Mission or functions**)

Difference between Vision and Mission (example):

Vision (Ideal, Futuristic, Long-term)	Mission (What we do, Reason for existence)
<i>"Effective NGOs, Stronger Communities."</i>	<i>"To Provide an Efficient Platform for Member NGO to Carry Out Effective Humanitarian & Development Activities in Afghanistan".</i>

What are Values?

What do we believe in or stand for?

- The principles that are individual and social in the organization

¹⁴ . ACBAR Vision

¹⁵ . ACBAR Mission

- They are considered to be a good behavior and, in any case, are firm criteria for decision making, e.g. “Satisfaction Everywhere”
- Integrity, Privacy, Service, Standards, and actions considered worthwhile in the organization. It includes how people behave with each other, how groups conduct business and what is most important to the organization.

What are Goals?

Goals are broad statements that are directly related to your organization’s mission and describe, in general terms, the benefits that will result from your organization’s operations. Goals are the end results of your activities. Goals should be realistic and achievable even by organizations that are still emerging or consolidating their structures, resources, and activities. In strategic planning terms there are two kinds of goals: Programmatic and Organizational.

Programmatic goals define in general terms the impact your program hopes to have on a specific area, trend or target group by the end of the plan period. Organizational goals define the internal changes, restructuring, and improvements your organization should make to achieve its goals effectively.

Following factors should be considered while setting goals for your organization:

- Attention to environmental conditions, internal resources and future
- Pay attention to the facts (determining the achievable goals)
- Quantization of goals (including quantitative verbs, standards and criteria)
- Time constraint
- Determining goals with employee participation (participative management)
- Considering destination and outlook (Health of the organization)

- Prioritizing goals – what to do first and what next.
- Pay attention to the fact that the goals do not neutralize each other's results

Importance of program goals:

- Program goals specifies the direction of movement of a unit (a department within an organization) or the organization as a whole
- It focuses on efforts and coordination of activities
- It helps in and leads to decisions
- It creates a motive for the operation (program)
- It enables a program's evaluation

Analysis, Cognition, and Goals:

A thorough analysis of the status quo should lead to the following:

- Understanding of the issues that may be hampering performance
- Understanding of the environmental factors affecting results
- Identifying opportunities and threats that exist in the external environment
- Identification of strengths and weaknesses internal to the organization
- A good analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT analysis) should enable managers to re-assess the mission and goals and objectives of the organization as well as to set different strategy options

Types of program goals:

1- Goals or main objectives/ General objectives

Given the priorities of the region and the mission of the organization, these are expressed in general, non-quantitative and directional terms.

2- Objectives or Specific goals

They are the constituent parts of the overall objectives or goals. They are clearly stated in measurable terms. In this way, the program can be evaluated.

How to set goals

The goals of a project are based on the following three indicators:

- Performance / Work – in terms of deliverables promised by a program or a project.
- Key indicators of success or Key Performance Indicators (time, quality, cost)
- Satisfaction – the extent to which beneficiaries are satisfied with the deliverables

What are objectives?

Strategic objectives describe the tactics you will use and the work you will do to achieve the desired results. This often involves selecting an alternative that is the most cost- effective and feasible given the organization's SWOT analysis, and that is likely to advance the goals of the organization, making it simultaneously more competitive and sustainable.

Operational or strategic plan objectives should be SMART:

S = Specific – to avoid differing interpretations

M= Measurable – to allow monitoring and evaluation

A = Attainable/Appropriate – to the problems, goals, and strategic objectives and intended results

R = Realistic – achievable, challenging, and meaningful

T = Time bound – with specific time frames for completion

Module 5

Strategic Planning Process

Strategic Planning Process

Good strategic planning is both a time and labor intensive process.

Strategic thinking

Purpose – The purpose of strategic thinking is to envision or develop a solution. It is also to enable brainstorming of approaches that can help to meet the strategic intent and goals of a specific project or initiative. The purpose of strategic planning, on the other hand, is to conceptualize and create the actual steps or actions that will result in the project or the goals to get delivered.

Definition – **Strategic thinking** is defined as a mental or thinking process applied by an individual in the context of achieving a goal or set of goals in a game or other endeavor. Strategic thinking helps managers review policy issues, perform long term planning, set goals and determine priorities, and identify potential risks and opportunities.

Accountability –While both can be done by individuals or in groups, usually strategic thinking is more of a personal or individual competency and attribute. Strategic planning involves multiple people or a team to come together. A leader or manager can do both – think and plan strategically. But the former has better results when done alone and the latter yields greater results when done in a group.

Before you begin, it is important to ask some key questions:

- Have you consulted at all levels and fully explained the purposes and levels of involvement required for strategic planning?
- Have you assembled important background data and information about your organization and the

environment in which you work, or created a team or teams to collect and review it?

- Have you determined whether an external facilitator is advisable given the size or nature of your planning group or organization?
- Have you included representatives of all levels of your organization in the planning process?

Strategic process

Where are we now?

Where do we need to be?

How will we close the gap?

How will we monitor our progress?

The Strategic Process and Practical Tools for Assessment

SWOT Analysis

The objective of SWOT analysis is to discover new opportunities and manage and eliminate threats. It is a useful technique for understanding your strength and weaknesses, and for identifying both the opportunities open to you and the threats you may face.

What are Strengths?

Strengths are characteristics or features of an organization that are internal to it and may give it a competitive advantage over other organizations of the same kind or operating in the same field. You may have one or more strengths pertaining to your organization e.g. value system, culture, a skilled and seasoned staff, organizational capital (lessons learned from previous assignments), networking and partnering with other organizations, or support system in the operating environment. To explore what your key strengths are, you may ask the following questions:

- What advantages does your organization have?
- What do you do better than anyone else?

- What unique or lowest-cost resources can you draw upon that others can't?
- What do people in your society see as your strengths?
- What factors mean that you "get the project"?
- What is your organization's

Consider your strengths from both an internal perspective, and from the point of view of your customers and people in your society.

Also, if you're having any difficulty identifying strengths, try writing down a list of your organization's characteristics. Some of these will hopefully be strengths!

When looking at your strengths, think about them in relation to your competitors. For example, if all of other organizations provide high quality services, then a high quality service is not strength in your organization's target area, it's a necessity.

What are weaknesses?

Weaknesses, like strengths, are also internal to an organization. They point towards an area of improvement or refer to a skill or lack of a necessary characteristic that you must have but don't have it right now. To find out what could be your weaknesses, you may ask the following questions:

- What should you avoid?
- What could you improve?
- What were the factors last time you lost a project?
- What people in your society are likely to see as weaknesses?

Again, consider this from an internal and external perspective: do other people seem to perceive weaknesses that you don't see? Are other organizations doing any better than yours?

It's best to be realistic now, and face any unpleasant truths as soon as possible

What are opportunities?

Opportunities are trends and changes in the outer environment that may positively affect your organization's business or operations. To be able to identify any upcoming opportunities, you may ask yourself:

- What new trends do you see in the society?
- How these new trends can affect your organization's mission and vision?
- What new opportunities can these trends bring for your organization?

Useful opportunities can come from such things as:

- Changes in technology and markets on both a broad and narrow scale.
- Changes in government policies related to your field or operations.
- Changes in social patterns, population profiles, lifestyle changes, and so on.

Tip:

A useful approach when looking at opportunities is to look at your strengths and ask yourself whether these open up any opportunities by matching your strengths with the external changes and new trends. Alternatively, look at your weaknesses and ask yourself whether you could open up new opportunities by eliminating them.

What are Threats?

Threats, like opportunities, are also external. It is something that exists in the market or society and can affect your organization's mission, vision, or operations negatively if not tackled appropriately. Examples include but may not be limited to the changing environment, demand for new services, economic environment, changing demographics, scarcity of resources, culture of the target population, change in government policies, etc. etc.

In order to determine if there are any potential threats to your organization, you may ask the following questions:

- What obstacles do you face?
- What are your competitors doing?
- Are quality standards or specifications for your job, products or services changing?
- Is changing technology threatening your position?
- Do you have bad debt or cash-flow problems?
- Could any of your weaknesses seriously threaten your organization?

SWOT Example

A small community based organization or a new NGO might draw up the following SWOT:

<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Less hierarchal in nature and flexible so able to respond quickly.• Has a good image in the local area and is well accepted by its people• Small size with low overheads, so can offer good value to its beneficiaries at low operational cost.	<p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has little presence or reputation in the society on national level.• Has a small staff, with a shallow skills base in many areas.• Little funds available for fixed expenses and salaries of permanent staff.
<p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Our services sector is expanding, with many future opportunities for success.• Local government wants to encourage local community participation.• Technology has made it easier to work across the country through virtual teams.	<p>Threats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developments in technology may change this segment beyond our ability to adapt.• A shift in focus of international donors may reduce availability of funds for development projects.

As a result of their analysis, the NGO may decide to specialize in rapid response, good value services to local community and local government.

Communication would be in selected local publications to get the greatest possible societal presence for a set publicity budget, and the NGO should keep up-to-date with changes in technology where possible.

Key Points:

SWOT Analysis is a simple but useful framework for analyzing your organization's strengths and weaknesses, and the opportunities and threats that you face. It helps you focus on your strengths, minimize threats, and take the greatest possible advantage of opportunities available to you.

It can be used just to start strategy formulation, or in a more sophisticated way as a serious strategy tool. You can also use it to get an understanding of your competitors, which can give you the insights you need to craft a coherent and successful competitive position.

When carrying out your analysis, be realistic and rigorous. Apply it at the right level, and supplement it with other option-generation tools where appropriate.

What is a Gap analysis?

Gap analysis is an effective way to identify what needs to be done and the steps necessary to fill that gap between the reality and the ideal in a project.

Gap analysis is a tool that helps you achieve this goal. This simple tool will help you identify the distance between the current conditions and the ideal conditions you want to reach and identify the steps needed to fill this gap.

Gap analysis is useful to advance the work at the start of the project and is vital to identifying the steps required to complete and implement the project.

How to analyze the Gap?

To use the Gap Analysis tool in your project, go through three steps:

- Turn on the desired condition and goal of your activity. Identify your goal. This will inform you about the status of the future - the optimal point you need to reach when you complete the project.
- Identify the method of filling this gap (between available and desirable status).
- Analyze your current situation for each of your goals. To do this, answer the following questions:
 - Who knows about your work?
 - Who can give you a better idea about your current situation?
 - Is this information in the minds of people or somewhere recorded?
 - What is the best way to access this information; holding brainstorm workshops? Individual interviews? Browse documents? View project activities including design workshops? etc.

When you know the status of the future and your current situation, you know the distance between the two, and you can fill in the gap with the goals of your project by choosing the right solutions.

In the process of analyzing the gap, provide a fair amount of information. If you go too far in detail, the issue will be confusing for decision making, but if you do not get enough information, the decision will be incomplete. Although this was a simple example, this method can be used for more complex decisions.

When analyzing your future status and current status, use quantitative criteria for measuring information (for example, at the moment 120 new members are currently recruited by the Institute). If you check information that is not measurable with quantitative criteria, use generic terms in

explaining them (for example, the sense of co-operation among volunteers is not strong enough).

Also, keep in mind that your assessment of the current situation and the desired situation can be quantitative and qualitative.

As you can see, the gap analysis compares your existing status with the future you want to reach in your project (favorable situation). By doing this analysis, you can identify how to fill these spaces and ensure the success of your project. It should be noted that although you can use this method at every step of the project to analyze the progress of a project, but you will get the best result when you use it at the start of the project.

To do this analysis, first identify the objectives of the project; this will actually be your "future position". Analyze your current position and make sure you have collected the information you have used from the correct sources.

Finally, identify how to fill the gap between your current position and your expected future position.

Operational Planning

After conducting a thorough gap analysis, you will be required to come up with an operational plan.

What is an Operational plan?

An Operational Plan is a highly detailed plan that provides a clear picture of how a team, section or department will contribute to the achievement of organizational goals. The operational plan maps out the day-to-day tasks required to run an organization. The plan addresses and tries to answer questions like what, who, when, and how much; e.g.

- What - the strategies and tasks to be achieved / completed
- Who - the individuals who have responsibility for each task strategy / task
- When - the timeline for which the strategies/tasks must be completed

- How much – the financial resources available to complete a strategy/task

Purpose of an Operational Plan

It is important to understand the difference between an "operational plan" and a "strategic plan". The strategic plan is about setting a direction for the organization, devising goals and objectives and identifying a range of strategies to pursue so that the organization might achieve its goals. The strategic plan is a general guide for the management of the organization according to the priorities and goals of stakeholders. The strategic plan DOES NOT stipulate the day-to-day tasks and activities involved in running the organization.

On the other hand, the operational plan DOES present highly detailed information specifically to direct people to perform the day-to-day tasks required in the running the organization.

Organization management and staff should frequently refer to the operational plan in carrying out their everyday work. The operational plan provides the what, who, when and how much.

The difference between operational and strategic:

Strategic Plan	Operational Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A general guide for the management of the organization• Suggests strategies to be employed in pursuit of the organization's goals• A plan for the pursuit of the organization's mission in the longer term (3 – 5 years)• A strategic plan enables management to formulate an operational plan.• The strategic plan, once formulated, tends not to be significantly changed every year• The development of the strategic plan is a shared responsibility and involves different categories of stakeholders.• The purpose of the operational plan is to provide organization personnel with a clear picture of their tasks and responsibilities in line with the goals and objectives contained within the Strategic Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A specific plan for the use of the organization's resources in pursuit of the strategic plan.• Details specific activities and events to be undertaken to implement strategies• A plan for the day-to-day management of the organization (one-year time frame)• An operational plan should not be formulated without reference to a strategic plan• Operational plans may differ from year to year significantly• The operational plan is produced by the chief executive and staff of the organization.• Operational Plan is a plan for the implementation of strategies contained within the strategic plan. It is a management tool that facilitates the co-ordination of the organization's resources (human, financial and physical) so that goals and objectives in the strategic plan can be achieved.

Types of Operational Plans:

Single-Use Plan:

Project: A one-time activity with specific objectives, time frame, budget, and quality constraints.

Program: A combination of more than one related projects aiming to achieve similar goals.

Standing plans:

Policies: A set of rules to regulate organizational activities. They are required to support each of the organizational objectives.

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP):

It defines an action plan as a sequence of steps that must be taken, or activities that must be performed well, for a strategy to succeed. They point toward operations, procedures, and processes. They describe who does what, when it will be completed, and how the organization knows when steps are completed. They are also required for the monitoring of the progress during each phase of any project.

Rules: Simple statement that allows or forbids actions in an organizational context.

Contingency Plans: Alternative courses of action to cope with uncertainty and change

Action Plans: An action plan is a detailed plan outlining actions needed to reach one or more goals. They identify the specific steps that will be taken to achieve the initiatives and strategic objectives – where the rubber meets the road or when the project is initiated practically.

Evaluation

Both monitoring and evaluation are part of the management process and refer to the controlling function of management.

A strategic control mechanism may include the following:

- Information Management Mechanisms
- Managing management mechanisms
- Conflict Resolution Mechanisms
- The control relied upon your decision management
- Control through the management of the Coalition
- Control through decision field management

An organization will also need to define its strategic control hierarchy. Controlling can be done on several organizational levels including:

- **Functional or Operational level:** Relatively operational control is of great importance; usually the primary strategy for this level is to maximize resource efficiency. In most organizations, it is performed by front line managers.
- **Departmental Level:** The role of operational control decreases while the role of strategic control increases. Middle order managers work like a bridge between the top management and operational level managers. They need to direct and redirect departmental activities and operational plans so as to get them aligned with the long-term strategy of the organization
- **Organizational Level:** At this level, strategic control is supposed to be more important. Because the decision made at this level not only determine the direction of organizational activities, but also affect the long term growth and survival of an organization. A small mistake or tiny diversion made at this level can throw the organization miles apart from its intended goals or original path described for it in its strategic plan.

What Is Strategic control?

Strategic control is choosing an organization's strategy and structure that suites best for the achievement of its overall objectives and vision in the long run. It requires establishing a control system for evaluating the organization's strategic performance.

The importance of strategic control

A strategic control is important to achieve operational efficiency in the implementation of projects and programs in any organization. It also helps provide quality support in delivering services to the targeted community. It may help foster creativity, breed innovation, and enhance coordination and cooperation among different units and departments within the organization. This is highly likely to bring more satisfaction and value to the beneficiaries.

Monitoring

Monitoring is the systematic and routine collection of data and information from the operations of any project. It normally serves the following purposes:

- To keep an organization or project on the defined and agreed path
- To get insights on variations and deviations, if any, and take corrective action
- To ensure internal and external accountability of the resources used and the results obtained
- To learn from experiences to improve practices and activities in the future
- To take informed decisions on the future of the initiative
- To promote empowerment of beneficiaries of the initiative.

Monitoring is a periodically recurring task already beginning in the planning stage of a project or program. Monitoring allows results, processes and experiences to be documented and

used as a basis to steer decision-making and learning processes. Monitoring is checking progress against plans. The data acquired through monitoring is used for evaluation.

Monitoring & Evaluation

M&E is an embedded concept and constitutive part of every project or program design. M&E is not an imposed control instrument by the donor or an optional accessory of any project or program. M&E is ideally understood as dialogue on development and its progress between all stakeholders. In general, monitoring is integral to evaluation. During an evaluation, information from previous monitoring processes is used to understand the ways in which the project or program developed and stimulated change. Monitoring focuses on the measurement of the following aspects of an intervention:

- Quantity and quality of the implemented activities (outputs: What do we do? How do we manage our activities?)
- Processes inherent to a project or program (outcomes: What were the effects /changes that occurred as a result of your intervention?)
- Processes external to an intervention (impact: Which broader, long-term effects were triggered by the implemented activities in combination with other environmental factors?)

The evaluation process is an analysis or interpretation of the collected data which delves deeper into the relationships between the results of the project/program, the effects produced by the project/program and the overall impact of the intervention.

Defining supervisory in management

Supervision is the act or function of overseeing the activities of others in the context of organizational goals and policies. A person who performs this activity is called a supervisor, either with or without a formal title. A supervisor must have the

power and authority to give instructions and/or orders to subordinates and is always held responsible for the work and actions of other employees. This is one of the main principles of management and one of the five main tasks is management i.e. Planning, Organizing, Staffing, Leading, and Controlling. All planning, organizing and other efforts of an organization and manager must ultimately be evaluated at the control stage. If the supervisor does not have the correct control and does not function properly here, he or she will actually lose all efforts he or she has put in place and the organization. Therefore, familiarity with the principles of control in management and the principles of supervision in organizations is one of the most important areas that you need to understand and practice.

The importance of monitoring and control in management

Accurate and timely monitoring and controlling is important for any manager. Ask any manager: Is control and monitoring really important in management? And they will definitely say, yes.

But if you look deeper into the subject, you see the reality is something else. In most control systems, managers do not have the proper control mechanisms. Some of them are controlling momentarily and breathtakingly, and all the time over their employees. When you ask how much care and attention are given to employees, you hear the answer because you have to work over them to work.

Some other managers are afraid to monitor and control everything and leave everything to the workers, whatever may come. Others control but do not know where to control and where they should not be controlled. And at all, what is the appropriate control period? Do they do the right thing at the right time? Or randomly control and supervise.

Even though all managers know that proper monitoring and control is essential for employee growth, positive performance management, productivity enhancement, and corrective actions, most of them do not perform monitoring and evaluations properly.

Control is the core of management work and having a control system is a necessity in good management.

What should the managers control?

How many times, over the past weeks or months, you've been summoned or sent to your room without directions?

How many times have you just decided to rely on others' words and oral information about your members?

Do not assume that control of commuting, monitoring employee with a closed circuit TV camera, recurrent staffing, meetings, and so on can be called control.

In management, always keep in mind that people do not control your hands. This is one of the deadly mistakes that many executives make; they control people instead of controlling processes which means they do not want to say what they want. They control them momentarily. As if you were standing on top of a building and telling them what to do and what not to do, what would you think of it?

What a manager controls is not individuals, but projects, resources, events, and activities that people are involved with. What you need to control depends on your expectations from your group. If the program is clearly defined, you should be in a position to identify the key factors that you should pay attention to.

Too much supervision can be harmful

Sometimes it is said that the more closely supervised and controlled, the better employees work, but this is an ineffective and destructive way. If you closely monitor your staff and have a lot of control over them, you will be faced with a lot of problems. Employees and workers need more control at the time they are employed until they become familiar with their work, but after this period, you have to believe that they are mature in their work and accept that adults do not need much supervision and control.

A manager who does not have a control system, instead of creating employees in a sense of responsibility and duty, is in vain trying to control and manage the situation with fear and

suspicion. Close monitoring and control may be necessary in some cases, but if they go down and go through successive cycles and repeat over short periods of time, it is a sign of the lack of a control system in the management.

Do not control the details

Managers involved in managing minor affairs also hurt their organization, their employees and even themselves. And worse, they will keep their organization from growing. If the growth of your organization is important to you, one of the clever things you can do is take momentary and breathtaking controls. The concept of monitoring and control is not really about management.

Leave the decision down to low levels because the decision made by you will stop the group. Leave the decision to the lowest possible level. Accept mistakes that happen, sharing responsibilities with others means that things do not always go according to the plan. Get workers out of the mistakes by clarifying your expectations and assigning the tools they need to do the right thing to do it. Then get rid of these harmful controls by designing a "monitoring and control system in the management."

Have a measurement

You cannot control and manage what you have been doing right, so you need to measure the criteria for proper measurement, because what you measure is determining your future, and if you do not check the right things, you are blind to the opportunities that appear to you. Imagine calculating the amount of pencils and paper clips you've used to measure your progress in the small project you are implementing. Is this reasonable? No!

Because pencils and paper clips are not a good benchmark for a business. Pencils and paper clips do not have any effect on revenue, beneficiaries' satisfaction, and so on. You need to measure things that are directly related to your primary goal.

Control methods in management

An approach to control in management is to first understand what your main goal is. It is recommended to set time for your primary goal. Then expand this goal and determine the purpose of the units and processes of your organization and team. Then check and identify things that are directly involved in achieving that goal. Then, make all your efforts to monitor these processes and monitor the extent of each diversion continuously.

Periodically monitor processes and use their information to create a weekly or monthly growth trend graph, and so on to evaluate your progress. Further develop your performance in further development and give the system proper feedback to your receipts.

Summing Up

Strategic planning is a useful, revealing exercise that requires all stakeholders to look inward and outward, backwards and forward, and to think tactically and comprehensively. At the same time, no strategic plan can help an organization to make and sustain forward momentum if it is “shelved,” not updated or revised in light of subsequent events or new realities, or perceived as a document with limited relevance to ongoing organizational growth, development, and priorities. Strategic planning can only be successful if the organization – at all levels – is committed to using the plan as a tool for organizing annual or operating, sustainability or resource mobilization, and unit or departmental planning.

A strategic plan should be used to measure performance and determine organizational needs. A well thought out plan should also provide an underpinning for diversification and sustainability initiatives since it represents an organization’s vision and hopes for the future, and embodies where an organization seeks to be in several years. A strategic plan provides a covenant between an organization and its primary stakeholders – beneficiaries, communities, staff, volunteers, directors, NGO partners, and collaborating public or private sector agencies – which, if upheld, will result in better policies,

services, or quality of life. In general, a strategic planning exercise triggers a four-cycle process to ensure use, review, and revision of the plan for continuing efficacy. These four cycles are:

1. Dissemination, finalization, and ratification
2. Implementation, review, revision, and utilization
3. Resource identification, mobilization, and advocacy for the plan
4. Monitoring, evaluation, and reporting

The core of strategic planning is to set Vision, Mission, Values, Goals and Objectives by answering the following question:

- Where are we now?
- Where do we need to be?
- How will we close the gap?
- How will we monitor our progress?

Feedbacks from training participants on ACCSI courses

**Ms. Elaha Banayee, Director,
Organization for Sustainable Aid in Afghanistan (OSAA),
Herat Province**

"The training subjects were very relevant and targeting the key problems the Afghan NGOs are facing currently in Afghanistan. Besides, based on the recent decision of the Ministry of Economy, All NGOs have to align their projects and activities with A-SDGs, fortunately, ACSSI training will help a lot the NGOs to understand this new concept and apply its goals and targets in their programs. The training agenda was explained to participants in a manner that even newly recruited staff could also take part and learn easily. I will surely use the knowledge and skills for developing project ideas, developing proposals and demonstrating work relationships with donors and etc. This could help me find out about the challenges of previous proposals and solving these problems."



**Handicraft training for woman in Esteqlal vocational
training center**

**Ms. Fatima Farid, Women Rights Activist,
Afghan Women Network (AWN),
Kabul Province**

“During the program I figure out that the program was able to bring about a change in skill level of those who work in the areas of programing, Policy Making, advocacy, monitoring and evaluation. The training gave the beneficiaries the opportunity to enhance professional skills about management, leadership and commutations. The training helps me to draft a plan for the “Youth Committee for Peace” in our organization by consideration of SWOT analysis of youth participation in peace talks/process of Afghanistan After taking this training this capacity has been created for me to cooperate the Program Department of our organization in the field of donor mapping, writing a standard proposal, getting fund and focusing on the project sustainability. I experienced the donor mapping and now I know how to fund our project through increasing the followers of our page in social media.”



Youth committee discussing the strategy for “youth as peace makers” program

**Mr. Ahmad Kamran Hekmati, Program Director,
Hand in Hand Afghanistan (HHA),
Balkh Province**

"The training has been very effective in improving my capacity. It covered very important topics such as developing a project idea, Funding Eligibility, Strategic Planning and Sustainability which are very relevant to my current position and useful for my organization capacity development. The training particularly helped me to enhance my capacity in mapping funding sources/donors, plan well a project based on components of project cycle management, ensure sustainability of our projects and revise the strategic plan of our organization in close future. Currently we work on a proposal and I am happy that I can use my knowledge and skills in improvement of the proposal."



Poultry toolkit and chicken distribution under the empowering woman for Afghanistan project in Khulm District

**Ms. Khadija Mohammadi, Director,
Organization for Better Tomorrow in Afghanistan (OBTA),
Bamyan Province**

“The training helped me to develop a sustainability plan for my organization. Now I know how to map donors in Afghanistan and how to establish an effective donor communication mechanism. After the training we revised the strategic plan of OBTA. Recently, we submitted two proposals and I could use a lot of my skills that I learned from this training. Besides, I had meeting with two INGO as donors. Usually, donors were requesting for our strategic plan which was not available in our organization, the training could help us to solve this problem as well. To be mentioned, we were not considering the SDGs in our proposals because we didn’t know, but now we became familiar with SDGs and we know how to apply it in all our projects.”



**Leadership and decision making seminar for woman
employees in Bamyan province**

**Ms. Rahima, Monitoring Officer,
Community Centre for Disabled (CCD),
Kabul Province**

“CCD is mandated to contribute to respectful living conditions for persons with disabilities free from discrimination and poverty based on equality, equity and human rights in the rural and urban areas of Afghanistan. I learned new lessons from this training such as A-SDGs, Financial Sustainability, Strategic Planning process, Source of funding and so many more. After I shared the training to my colleagues, HRM department decided to conduct SWOT analysis. After conducting SWOT, CCD is able to line up its activities and objectives with A-DGs. CCD has realized that its activities are aligned with Goals number 4 Quality Education, Goal number 3 Good Health and well-being for people to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages and Goal number 10 Reducing Inequalities. Currently, CCD conducts survey for peace and conflict resolution in Kabul province and will submit the proposal of project aligned with A-SDG goal No.16 to DFID. It was easier to write the Sustainability topic in its best and proper way than before, owing to the training “Sustainable Management for Afghan CSOs”.



CCD conduct awareness program, role of disabled in the society

**Ms. Basmina, Monitoring Officer,
Green Land Development Organization (GLDO),
Paktia Province**

"The Green Land Development Organization (GLDO) is non-governmental organization to work with the poor and marginalized community to reduce poverty and inequality through an innovative approach and rights based perspective. I learned many topics in this training like Sources of funding for NGOs such as International Organization, Charities, Embassies, Companies, Foundations, Banks, Government Organization, individuals and etc. I got how to make GLDO eligible for the fund and how to convert my organization weaknesses to the strengths. After training, Green Land Development Organization (GLDO) could focus on how to be eligible for the fund and review its all documents, policies and TORs. Now, GLDO is able to use effectively Financial Strategies that was learned in the training of Sustainable Management of Afghan Civil Society such as relation with private sector (Rahim Gardezi) and implementation of Income Generation projects."



GLDO conduct awareness session about Walwar

**Ms. Nadia, Operational Manager,
Afghan General Help Coordination Office (AGHCO),
Nangarhar Province**

“AGHCO is local Afghan NGO, established in 1991, to assist and secure the emergency, relief, rehabilitation operations and development activities in Afghanistan. The strategic planning module really helped us. We learned how to analyze the current situation in the area, determination of goals of the planning, the strategy, the activities and Monitoring & Evaluation items and detailed description of the activity. After the training, we can organize our organizational structure and activities very well, like what kind of activity we will do, for what purpose, when and where, what are the supportive measures, how to monitor, and how much does it cost. Now AGHCO is able to make different action plans for its project implementation. In addition, I plan to conduct this important training to my colleagues to apply these skills in their daily activities within the organization.”



**Opening Ceremony of School, giving the message to
community elders about the importance of education**

**Mr. Hekmatullah, Project Manager,
Development Education Learning and Training Association
(DELTA),
Kandahar Province**

"DELTA has been implementing projects in the sectors of Construction and Reconstruction of Schools, Clinics, Bridges, Rehabilitation of Roads, and Irrigation cleaning of canals, drainage's, Karizes, water supply digging of water wells. As a project supervisor I participated in ACSSI training. With the help of this training, we can consider our sustainability. Strategic planning, A-SDGs, donors' standards, identifying gaps, representing ideas, being eligible for fund and other all topics were much fruitful. After training, our team worked on SWOT analysis of organization. We identified some weakness like, our monitoring process was not good and that was the reason that some of our projects didn't get quality outcomes. We realized we had somehow lost our quality and trust with donor and society. Now we have one independent team of monitoring for our projects and this team will be responsible for controlling and evaluating the daily, weekly, quarterly and annually activities of the projects. In future, our plan is to have a e-system for monitoring of activities. This will save time consuming and will have high accountability and transparency in projects."



Construction of sluice gate in canal in Kandahar Province

**Mr. Karimullah Mubariz, Project Manager,
Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum (MBR),
Kandahar Province**

MBR is mandated to set up camp for war-torn refugees, Emergency Assistance, Assistance in agriculture, Seasonal and winter assistance, Build Mosques, Disposal of clean and healthy water wells, and training and education. For 5 years I have worked in MBR. Through the training, A-SDGs and sustainability was much useful and helpful for me. In addition, I was interested in how to find the donor and what are the standards for donor. I can analyze and understand the situation, the gap and what is important for a project and I am able to align our activity with A-SDG goals. I am trying to propose a project to UNICEF to “Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all based on SDGs 6. In the future, we will be having all our activities aligned with A-SDGs.



Solar system fitted to get water, Kandahar Province

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THE END

The Afghan Civil Society Support Initiative (ACSSI) project started in March 2013 in partnership with Japanese NGOs including, Peace Winds Japan, AAR Japan and Japan International Volunteer Centre, funded by Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. The project aims to strengthen the work of the civil society actors in order to expand services into provinces and districts through coordination, capacity development, learning and training to enhance their ability to efficiently and effectively address basic needs and protect the rights of Afghans. This guideline provides key information for training and development of civil society organisations.



ACSSI