PROJECT DEVELOPMENT MANUAL

FOR MIGRANTS' ASSOCIATIONS

Global development agents

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AGENZIA ITALIANA
PER LA COOPERAZIONE
ALLO SVILUPPO

Cooperazione Italiana
allo Sviluppo
Ministero degli Affari Esteri
e della Cooperazione Internazionale

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT MANUAL FOR MIGRANTS' ASSOCIATIONS

IOM
UN MIGRATION

Partecipanti ad un corso di collocamento lavorativo. Sri Lanka.
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Preface

In a world as interconnected as ours, it is increasingly common for people to maintain family links, social networks, career paths and political involvement in multiple countries. These migrants, members of the diasporas or new generations of Italians with a migration background, can actually play a bridging role and become change agents in the different societies they belong to.

The 2030 Agenda, adopted in 2015, mentions the value of the migrant's associations as a key stakeholder in partnerships aimed at achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Becoming social change agents, however, is not an innate ability; instead, it is facilitated by the structural conditions favouring the transnational effort of these actors.

Being well aware of the link between migration, inclusion and development, since 2011 IOM has been working in Italy to favour the collective empowerment of migrants and help them to play an active role in a multicultural and cohesive Italian society, while supporting their participation in local change initiatives in Italy and in the countries of affiliation.

IOM HAS BEEN WORKING IN ITALY TO FAVOUR THE COLLECTIVE EMPOWERMENT OF MIGRANTS AND HELP THEM TO PLAY AN ACTIVE ROLE IN A MULTICULTURAL AND COHESIVE ITALIAN SOCIETY

Through the training course A.MI.CO (associazioni migranti per il co-sviluppo - migrant associations for co-development), and thanks to the constant efforts which the Italian Government has been making for years in this field, IOM has contributed to support the co-development processes, empowering and including the diaspora members who wish to act as transnational development agents.

This manual, in fact, systematizes almost 10 years of experience that IOM has gained in the organization of training courses designed for migrant's associations in Italy, developing a specific model explicitly tailored on the needs and specificities of the associations in question. Over the years, in particular, the work of IOM Italia has focused on two main aspects: on one hand, building the organizational capacity of the migrant associations

and their project development and management skills; on the other hand, consolidating conditions capable of favouring and supporting the effort of the diaspora actors and allowing to leverage their transnational contribution to the development of an increasingly intercultural Italian society.

We hope a concrete tool like this can contribute to increase the social, cultural, civic, political and economic participation of the migrant's associations, and allow them to more effectively and dynamically play their community bridging role.

We also hope that this model can inspire capacity-building initiatives for migrant's associations all over the Mediterranean, and that it can kickstart and support important transnational social change processes.

Federico Soda
Director, Coordination Office for the Mediterranean
Chief of Mission for Italy and Malta
Representative to the Holy See

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Introduction

Migration and development, an approach aimed at enhancing the value of migrant's associations.

The link between migration and development is based on the strong belief that the resources and skills associated with migrations allow to kickstart and promote individual and collective social change processes in all the societies affected by them.

In a world characterized by unprecedented global mobility and interconnection, the international debate acknowledges the role of migrant's associations as a natural transnational stakeholder, capable of contributing to the welfare and interculturalism of the countries between which it acts as a bridging agent.

Their nature as a bridge between cultures emphasizes the importance of the associations in connecting countries and communities: they can tap into multiple networks, build relationships with different identities and share a sense of belonging to multiple communities. The associations of migrants or of people identifying themselves as 'diaspora' members, which are the target users of this manual, are extremely heterogenous[1] and also include people who do not have a migration background. These entities enhance the skills and capacities of their members, bringing together their individual specificities, and can be crucial in kickstarting sustainable development processes, as co-development actors. From this point of view, they have always been playing an essential role, both in encouraging the active participation of their compatriots

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[1] This manual acknowledges the heterogeneity in question, which increasingly often transpires from the geographical focus of the transnational initiatives carried out by the associations, as well as from the reference background of their members, by using the term "migrant association" rather than "diaspora associations".

in the society of residence and in promoting international solidarity and development cooperation initiatives.

The resources these association mobilize through borders can be extremely varied: the skills, the knowledge and the ideas can represent the human and social capital; the identities and the exposure to different cultures represent the cultural capital; the financial transfers, the trading, the investments and the remittances can generate financial capital.

In the last few years, consistently with these beliefs, IOM has consolidated a strategy aimed at maximizing the existing synergy between migration and development and at strengthening the positive contribution migrant's associations can make to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) laid down by the 2030 Agenda.

The approach it adopts is based first of all on diaspora inclusion, and stems from a sound knowledge of the associations, of their motivations, needs and capacities, as well as of their desire to remain in touch with the countries of affiliation and to contribute to their development. Understanding these factors is critical to be able to adopt appropriate inclusion strategies and to build a relationship of mutual trust.

THE POLICIES PROMOTING THE INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS IN THEIR RESIDENCE COUNTRIES ARE A PREREQUISITE FOR DEVELOPMENT

In addition, creating a favourable environment is essential to allow these transnational communities to become effective development agents; we must acknowledge the value of ensuring their participation in the social, cultural and economic life both in the country of residence and in the different reference countries. The policies promoting the integration of migrants in their residence countries are a prerequisite for the development of their full potential, to limit their vulnerabilities and thus to facilitate the mobilization of their resources for development initiatives.

The co-development approach focuses on the migrants, especially if they identify themselves as a diaspora members, as potential development actors: their full participation and

acknowledgement to take an active part in the societies they bridge is a condicio sine qua non of co-development programmes.

It is absolutely essential that we help building the capacities of the associations and support them in the process of becoming transnational development agents, if they so wish.

A TRAINING COURSE AND PARTICIPATION PROCESS, AIMED AT STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITY OF THE DIASPORAS TO PLAN, DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT TRANSNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

As part of this vision, IOM Italy has been organizing since 2011 the **"Training Course A.MI.CO. – associazioni di migranti per il co-sviluppo (migrant associations for co-development)"**, specifically intended for local migrant's associations. The training course aims at building the capacities of migrant's associations and providing them with tools allowing them to develop initiatives that can have a positive social, cultural and economic impact in the countries of affiliation and in Italy. It is a training course and participation process, aimed at strengthening the capacity of the diasporas to plan, develop and implement transnational development projects, as key actors potentially capable of kickstarting growth processes.

Our intent in writing this manual has been consolidating the professional contribution provided by the teachers who took care of the modules of the 2018 A.MI.CO. course edition. The volume is a collection of theoretical knowledge and practical tools for the design and implementation of co-development projects.

The manual consists of several independent modules, accompanying the associations along the path starting with the definition of a project idea and ending with its implementation. The first module provides some tools and techniques to turn the idea for change into a development project. The second one, instead, explains how to obtain the resources required for the project and manage all the related financial issues throughout its duration, providing tips and examples. The purpose of the third module is explaining how to choose the right partners, and how to build and manage the partnership supporting the

project. The project implementation is dealt with in the fourth module, sharing suggestions and good practices, with a particular focus on monitoring. The fifth module, instead, deals with communication, analysing in particular the most appropriate communication channels and the most effective strategies. The sixth module, finally, discusses the project evaluation, aimed not only at assessing the results that were achieved, but also at better planning the future initiatives, in order to ensure that the change settles in and remains sustainable over time.

The manual is a concrete tool the associations can directly use to access the empowerment opportunities and capitalize their commitment, to ensure that they can create strong networks between the different worlds they connect through their migration experience, thus managing to play a bridging role between multiple countries and cultures.

In the next page:
Migrant children learn about safe migration through interactive games at a Migrant Learning Centre in Ranong, Thailand
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Alessandra Merlo

HOW TO DEVELOP A PROJECT

**PROJECT
DEVELOPMENT**
MANUAL
**FOR MIGRANTS'
ASSOCIATIONS**

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How to develop a project

Alessandra Merlo

For the past twenty years I have been dealing with the formulation, management, monitoring and evaluation of cooperation projects financed by the European Union (EU) in developing and transitioning countries, in the following fields: capacity-building for central and local governments and government agencies (South Africa, Lao People's Democratic Republic, China), development of small and medium-sized businesses (Romania, North Macedonia), alignment with EU regulations by pre-accession countries (Romania, Estonia, Croatia), political and technological cooperation on clean energy and sustainable urban development (China and India). Currently I cooperate with the International Labour Organization (ILO) as an advisor for the design of initiatives in the field of migration governance. I have multiple years of experience as a trainer of "Project cycle management" and "Monitoring and Evaluation" for public and private operators and as a facilitator for workshops aimed at the definition of urban development strategies. Since 2017 I have been a professor of European Project Design and "Project Management" at the Aosta Valley University.

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What is a development project?

I started working on development projects by chance. Today, after many years of work in this field, I have realized that I was driven by an urge to combine structure and chaos, logic and intuition, formality and play, control and empowerment. Project design is a magical mixture of rigour and creativity. We need to use tools that are both solid and flexible enough to adapt to the turbulence of reality, and to accompany our desire for change.

▶ The starting point of the development project is a desire for change

A development project aims at improving the life/work/social conditions of a group of people. It is part of a context which includes needs, problems to be solved and opportunities to seize. Improving the reference context is also among the development priorities of actors like national and local governmental institutions, international organizations and donors. The project is thus both a tool to resolve the problems of a community (microdimension) and a contribution to the achievement of development goals laid down by national global programmes like the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda (macrodimension).

Students trained in the culinary arts, hotel management and catering in a hospitality school in Cambodia.
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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is an action programme for people, the planet and prosperity signed in September 2015 by the governments of the 193 UN member States. It combines 17 Sustainable Development Goals, SDGs into a broad action programme, laying down a total of 169 'targets'. The Sustainable Development Goals were officially enforced at the beginning of 2016, laying down the route the world countries shall have to follow in the next 15 years: in fact, they committed to achieve the goals by 2030.

Source: https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/

The project has a lifecycle
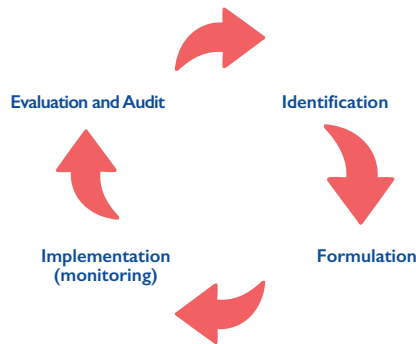
Figure 1- Project lifecycle

Projects are designed and implemented by following a process which starts with an agreed series of strategic actions aimed at achieving a set of goals and ends with the evaluation of their success. The evaluation phase allows to draw the lessons required to design the future projects and programmes.

The *Project Cycle Management* (PCM) is an approach to project management which lays down the relevant steps and outlines the specific actions and methods to be used at each step. The project cycle also provides a structure ensuring that the parties concerned are consulted and that the relevant information is available throughout the cycle duration. Steps are progressive, and each of them must be completed before the next one can start.

IDENTIFICATION

The Identification phase is the starting point of the project conception; your association shall identify the needs of the target communities and discuss the operating strategy, which shall be consistent with the policies of the government or of the local administrations and meet the requirements laid down by the financing programmes you previously identified.

FORMULATION

During the Formulation phase, preferably jointly with the community of beneficiaries, your association shall devise and draw up the operating project, including the budget, that shall be submitted to the donor.

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation consists of actually carrying out the activities aimed at achieving the expected results and goals through the use of resources. During implementation the staff your association has selected shall take care of project monitoring.

EVALUATION AND AUDIT

Evaluation consists of verifying the project's success, and is required to account for the use of public resources and to draw lessons for the improvement of both the project performance (in case of intermediate evaluation) and future initiatives.

The Audit consists of verifying that the financial resources have been used in compliance with the applicable provisions (grant agreement, regulations). Once the project implementation is completed, your association could undergo a final evaluation and an Audit by the donor.

The following diagram summarizes the tasks that shall be completed during each project step, but only for the steps discussed in this module: Identification, Formulation and, partially, Implementation. The module shall provide the information required to carry out each of the steps specified in the diagram.

IDENTIFICATION

- Stakeholder identification
- Problem analysis
- Strategy selection

FORMULATION

- Filling in of the logical framework and of its 4 columns
- Identification of work packages (WPs) or project components or outputs
- Identification of the funding scheme

IMPLEMENTATION

- Drawing up of the workplan, specifying the responsibilities
- Project implementation

EVALUATION AND AUDIT

- Evaluating and verifying the project's success
- Verifying that the financial resources have been used in compliance with the applicable provisions

2 What is the starting point of a development project? Identifying goals

If, as mentioned, the project is aimed at improving the initial situation which in your opinion is problematic, **the project identification must start from the analysis of the issue**. You need to know the context in order to improve it!

Projects promoted by migrants associations in third countries have an advantage over the ones promoted by other organizations, as they presumably have an in-depth knowledge of the local context. Migrants associations, therefore, shall obtain information about the priorities of national and local development plans, and analyse the political and planning framework into which their project shall be implemented, and which shall grant the financing line they wish to obtain.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRIORITIES OF NATIONAL AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS

They also shall **identify the stakeholders** associated with the targeted context, involve them and analyse the problems the project aims at resolving or mitigating, as well as the needs it aims at fulfilling and the opportunities it aims at seizing.

The analysis and involvement of stakeholders are based on the premise that different groups and institutions have different interests, drives and capabilities, that must be understood during the project design in order to maximize the benefits and minimize the negative impacts. The analysis consists of identifying the stakeholders and of understanding their mutual relations. It shall then be decided how to involve them in the design,

STAKEHOLDERS - WHO ARE THEY?

They are all those that are concerned with the project, both directly and indirectly. They are called stakeholders because they relate to the projects, either positively, for example by collaborating to it, or negatively, for example by hindering the activities.

implementation, monitoring and evaluation phases of the project. Involvement ranges from the mere exchange of information to active participation, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2 - Identifying the stakeholders

After identifying an intervention area, like public health or gender equality, in order to identify the stakeholders you shall ask yourself: who can have an interest in the project being implemented? Who, instead, has no interest in the problem being resolved and could hinder us?

After thoroughly answering this question, you shall specifically identify the direct, indirect or final beneficiaries. **Direct beneficiaries** are those whose life, work or sociality shall improve as a direct consequence of the project, by the end of its implementation. **Indirect or final beneficiaries**, instead, are those who shall obtain a medium-to long-term benefit, indirectly generated by the project. Sometimes the two categories may coincide. Figure 3 shows some examples of direct and final beneficiaries sorted by project type.

PROJECT	DIRECT BENEFICIARIES	END BENEFICIARIES
Support for women victims of violence	Women victims of violence	The same women/their families/their community
Access to drinkable water	Families accessing the network	The same families/their community
Training/awareness-raising for hospital staff	Hospital staff	Hospital users
Development of public administrator skills with reference to labour law	The public administrators	Workers
Support to entrepreneurship	Prospective and existing entrepreneurs	People living in the reference social and economic area
Development of the tourist sector	Tour operators	The economic operators whose income increases thanks to the development of tourism/people living in the reference social and economic area
Rural development of a community	Agricultural operators	Their community

Figure 3 - Direct and end beneficiaries

As migrants' associations ideally represent a bridge between countries and communities, the projects they promote are aimed at benefiting the communities of the targeted country, but often those of the country of residence too (for example, Italy). This is another added value of projects promoted by migrants associations, which can potentially provide benefits in multiple contexts. In order to maximize the benefit in question and broaden its impact both within the diaspora and among the related interlocutors, a good communication strategy is essential.

Designing means turning the negative aspects into positive aspects

The project is a means to innovate, an effort to turn a negative situation into a positive one. To ensure that this change can actually happen, it is critical that you have a clear overview of the initial situation, as well as an understanding of the issues to be tackled through the project and of the factors to be leveraged. As a consequence, you need to build a picture of the existing issues, then turn it into a positive scenario and identify the actions and means required to turn it into reality, and to start the change process.

TO ENSURE THAT THIS CHANGE CAN ACTUALLY HAPPEN, IT IS CRITICAL THAT YOU HAVE A CLEAR OVERVIEW OF THE INITIAL SITUATION

Problem analysis is supported by a tree diagram (the problem tree). Figure 4, for example, shows the problem tree of the "Sahel Women" project. The tree trunk is the core problem, the roots are its causes and the branches are its effects. The most exhaustive the problem analysis, and the more deeply it reflects the views of stakeholders, the wider the range of potential solutions to be pursued through the project. As a consequence, the links between the diaspora and its community of origin become very important to understand the development context and to effectively implement the changes.
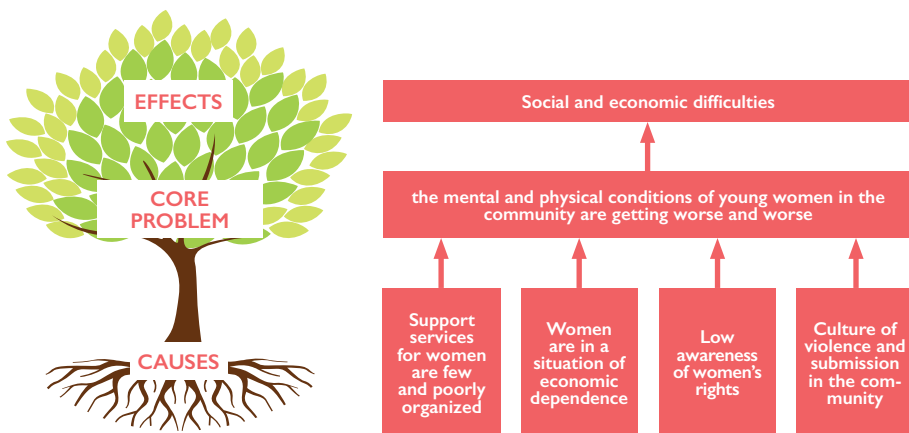
Figure 4 - Sample problem tree

After identifying the causes and effects of a problem affecting your targeted community and representing it in the tree diagram, you shall turn the negative situation into a positive scenario, transforming the problem tree into a solution (or goal) tree. The cause-effect relation shall thus turn into a means-purpose relation. The solution tree shows the ideal situation that would be achieved if all the problems previously identified in the reference context were resolved (Figure 5).

GOALS

MEANS

Social and economic difficulties in the community have decreased

The mental and physical conditions of young women in the community have improved

Support services to women are expanded

The economic dependance of women has reduced

Awareness of women's rights has increased

The culture of violence and submission in the community has decreased
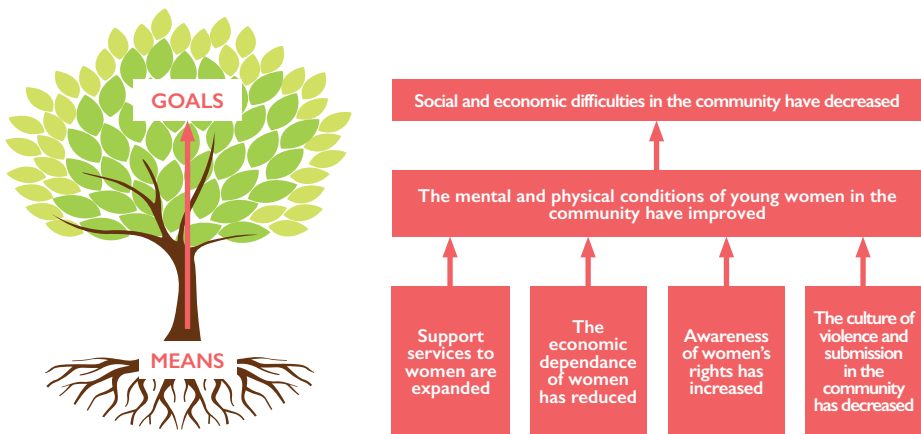
Figure 5 - Solution tree

After identifying the purposes, that is the goals, and the means, that is the methods to be used to achieve the goals in question, you shall now make a **choice**, regarding **your deployment strategy**.

Your association, in fact, cannot conceivably deal with all the aspects identified during the problem analysis. You need to decide which area your association can be most effective at tackling.

For example, you could only focus on the services providing support to women and on the economic dependence of the latter, without dealing with the issues related to awareness and

culture, or only proceed with support services and awareness campaigns, without aiming at reducing their economic dependence. The choice of the strategy is influenced by many factors, including: the mission and capabilities of your association and of the possible partners, the priorities of the financing programme, the available funds, the likelihood of succeeding, the schedule and so on. In any case, the project strategy shall seldom be able to resolve all the causes of the identified core problem. For example, the "Sahel women" project could rely on different strategies:

1. Initiatives providing support to women, through the creation and management of dedicated services, like a female employment centre;

2. Initiatives dealing with the economic dependence of women, for example through a professional training programme;

3. Initiatives aimed at increasing the awareness of women rights, through awareness-raising and training programmes;

4. Initiatives aimed at eradicating the culture of violence and female submission, through awareness-raising and opportunities to get in touch with different cultures.

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▶ ## The desire for change is expressed by the goals

According to the Project Cycle Management, a project normally has two types of Goals: the Specific Goal and the Global Goal[1].

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1 In some cases, however, there may be an intermediate layer between the Specific Goal and the Global Goal (*intermediate outcome*).

The Specific Goal is the core purpose of the project and expresses the improvement the project shall generate for direct beneficiaries. You should set a single Specific Goal for each project, except in case of a complex intervention aimed at multiple groups of beneficiaries. The Specific Goal can be expressed in terms of: improvement of living conditions (participation, self-expression, integration, care); strengthening of capabilities (entrepreneurship, management of illegal immigration cases, management of social conflicts); better access to services (drinkable water, health care, education); greater awareness (regarding: children rights, reproductive health, environment); exploitation of resources (local crops, craftsmanship, wine and food). For example, the Specific Goal of the "Sahel Women" project is *improving the mental and physical conditions of the Community's young women.*

THE GLOBAL GOAL IS HIGH-LEVEL AND CANNOT BE ACHIEVED BY A SINGLE DEVELOPMENT ACTOR

The Specific Goal helps achieving one or more **Global Goals.** They express the medium-to long-term impact of the project on the relevant social and economic context.

The Global Goals normally coincide with the priorities laid down by the programmes and policies of the reference sectors (like health care, education, agriculture) and their achievement is not a responsibility of the project promoter: the global goal is high-level and cannot be achieved by a single development actor. For example, the Global Goal of the "Sahel Women" project is increasing the social and economic well-being in the community.

You can include multiple Global Goals; in that case, you can define a hierarchy for them. It is also a good practice to include the Global Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda, which are at the top of this hierarchy. The "Sahel Women" project, for example, helps to achieve Goal 5: *Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.*

The road to change passes through actions

In order to achieve the Specific Goal you need to generate a series of **expected results** (**Outputs**),[2] like training programmes, development of capabilities, technical support, awareness-raising, activation of services, building of facilities. The Outputs in question are the result of the strategy "trimming" based on the Solution Tree we described above. For example, the Outputs of the "Sahel Women" project shall be:

- **Output 1** - *Establishment and implementation of a support centre for young women*

- **Output 2** - *Starting of a professional training programme for women*

- **Output 3** - *Launch of an awareness-raising campaign in the community*

Outputs are achieved through the execution of activities, which are organized into **work packages**. The "Sahel Women" project includes four work packages. In addition to the work packages of the three above-mentioned outputs, there is a cross-package encompassing Management, Monitoring and Evaluation.

OUTPUT	1. A support centre for young women established	2. A Professional training programme started	3. Awareness-raising campaign in the community launched	Management, monitoring and evaluation
ACTIVITY	1.1 Establishing the centre 1.2 Managing the centre 1.3 Providing support to women	2.1 Selecting trainers 2.2 Preparing the material 2.3 Organizing the course	3.1 Preparing materials and messages 3.2 Launching a campaign on media 3.3 Creating and managing the web-radio	Kick-off and partner meetings Project Management Monitoring Evaluation Exit Strategy

Figure 6 - Work packages

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2 In this manual the expected results shall be referred to as outputs.

▶ ## The project shall be adapted to the requirements laid down by the financing programme

As mentioned above, the project is both an answer to the problems of the targeted community and a contribution to the achievement of local, national and global development goals. These are the programmes you shall refer to for project funding. How shall you proceed?

CHECK LIST

Operating steps to: Participate in a Call for Proposals

1. Identify a financing programme promoting development goals that are in line with your project vision;

2. Monitor the issuing of the Calls for Proposals , which are calls for project proposals aimed at obtaining a grant co-financing the project;

3. Analyse the reference documents, which normally include: the document establishing the programme (for example, European programmes are established by regulations or decisions), the guidelines for the party issuing the proposal and the application form with the annexes;

4. Identify and test the eligibility conditions for the project and the partnership, with reference to the following aspects:

    a. The proposing parties (profit/nonprofit; public/private; natural/legal person; minimum or maximum number of partners);

    b. The geographic area (project implementation site; origin of the proposing parties);

    d. The type of actions (training; research and development; pilot project; building of infrastructures);

    e. Financial conditions (required percentage of co-financing; minimum and maximum amount of the grant);

    f. Formal aspects (documents to be submitted, compliance with formats, deadlines and so on);

    g. Absence of factors of exclusion (conflict of interest, offences, bankruptcy and so on).

5. Identify the criteria according to which your proposal shall be assessed and selected. The most common selection criterion is the technical and financial capability of the partnership to implement the proposed project. Proof of these capabilities shall be provided by annexing the curricula of the project team key members, references to similar project, the financial statements of the proposing parties and other documents specified by the programme;

6. Identify the awarding criteria, on the basis of which the quality of the proposed project is assessed (relevance, efficiency and good cost-to-benefit ratio, quality of the partnership, sustainability, value added, innovative aspects, technical and scientific excellence, dissemination strategy and so on). The criteria in question are normally specified in the call for proposal and in the guidelines for the proposing party.

3 **How do you measure the success of a development process? Identifying indicators**

The progress of the activities of a project is measured through the indicators. Indicators guide our actions.

Indicators are variables which express the (desired) degree of achievement of the project outputs and goals and measure them. They are required to define the aim of the project, assess its performance and set up the monitoring and evaluation system. For example, the indicator measuring the goal of improving the safety of women in a given community is: *By the end of 2019 the number of cases of violence on women in the Ulongo community shall be reduced by 70 per cent.*

BUILDING THE INDICATOR

The indicator consists of: a subject (reduction in the number of cases of violence on women); a reference group (the women of the community); a reference value (-70%); a time (by the end of 2019) and a place (Ulongo).

TYPES OF INDICATORS

The indicators measuring the Global Goal are called *Impact Indicators*. The indicators measuring the Specific Goal are called *Result Indicators*. The indicators measuring the outputs are called *Implementation Indicators*.

A young Nigerian who returned home from Libya participated in a three-day training as part of IOM's Migrants as Messengers project.
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Example of impact - result - implementation indicators

Global Goal	**Impact indicator**
Increase the social and economic well-being in the community	The Human Development Index has increased by x points
	The women unemployment rate in the community has decreased by x per cent points with respect to year x
Specific Goal	**Result indicator**
Improve the mental and physical conditions of young women in the Community	At least 70 per cent of the women supported by the project found that their mental and physical conditions have improved at the conclusion of the project.
Output	**Implementation indicators**
Output 1 - *Establishment and implementation of a support centre for young women.*	200 young women have been provided with support by the centre
	At least 80 per cent of the users were satisfied with the support they received
Output 2 - *Starting of a professional training programme for women*	60 women have taken part in the training programme
	At least 80 per cent of the attendees has successfully passed the final examination with a medium to high score
Output 3 - *Launch of an awareness-raising campaign in the community.*	3 events organized with the local community, each attended by at least 200 participants
	Web-radio activated
	At least 1,000 followers of the Instagram account
	At least 10 articles on local and national newspapers mention the project

▶ ## Characteristics of the indicators

Indicators are quantitative or qualitative.

Quantitative indicators can be expressed with: an absolute value (for example the **number** of attendees for an event aimed at raising the awareness of the community as to *women rights*); **a percentage value** (*for example the youth unemployment rate*);

a rate of change (*for example the increase in school attendance by girls in a community*); a **ratio** (*for example the women to men ratio among people who carry out any informal economic activities*). **Qualitative** indicators are expressed in terms of: **establishment** of the existence of something (*like the canteen service for poor people is active*); **opinion** as to quality (like the canteen service is regarded as medium- to high-quality); **compliance** with regulations or standards (like: the building whose energy efficiency has been increased has achieved class A). Indicators are often a combination of quantitative and qualitative aspects (for example, *At least 80% of the sewing workshop attendees has expressed a medium to high degree of satisfaction*).

In addition, a good indicator must be **SMART**:

Specific: capable of measuring the result or the goal at the proper level of the intervention logic (for example, we must not use Implementation Indicators to measure the Specific Goal).

Measurable: if possible, expressed as a definite quantity.

Accessible: with the possibility to be verified at an acceptable cost, preferably from existing sources.

Relevant: useful for the project monitoring and evaluation requirements.

Time-bound: with the indication of the verification time.

Warning! the most common error in the definition of indicators is the failure to comply with the "S" requirement: non-specific indicators. For example, if we wish to measure the acquisition of language skills by a group of beneficiaries, the indicator shall not be "*20 people have attended the training course", but "at least 80 per cent of the attendees have passed the final test*".

4 Paying attention to everything: Identifying external factors and risks

External factors

EXTERNAL FACTORS ARE ELEMENTS THAT ARE BEYOND THE PROJECT MANAGER'S CONTROL

The success of the process also depends on external factors. External factors are elements that are beyond the project manager's control, but that are necessary for the implementation of the activities and for the achievement of the outcomes and goals. They are an integral part of the design, as they help to assess the project feasibility. If, for example, an external factor is very important, but it is unlikely to occur, the project might be infeasible. Proceeding with the same intervention without changing its original structure would be inappropriate (the relevant assumption is called "killer assumption").

In addition to the chain of activities, outputs and goals, therefore, you also need to lay down assumptions as to the occurrence of external factors. For example, in the "Sahel Women" project, is it assumed that an adequate number of young women retain the interest and motivation to be involved in the project initiatives.

The project is subject to several risks

The identification of the external factors is the starting point for the risk analysis. Risks are the "flip side" of assumptions and are expressed in negative terms. The risk is an event that may occur and that, if it occurs, shall negatively affect the project. Risks can be social, political, economic/financial or environmental; they can be associated with the implementation of accessory components, and they can be related to the issuing of authorizations or licences, to the degree of participation of the beneficiaries in the project activities or to the support by important stakeholders. One of the risks of the "Sahel Women" projects is that participation by

the target women may be discontinuous due to their interest fading or due to family or social pressure. After identifying the risks which may prejudice the project implementation, you need to measure their level and to plan a risk management strategy. The risk level depends on the likelihood of its occurrence and on the impact it shall have on the project. The risk level can be measured using the following matrix.

Risk impact

	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH

Probability — LOW MEDIUM HIGH

Legend:
- Low risk (green)
- medium risk (yellow)
- high risk (red)
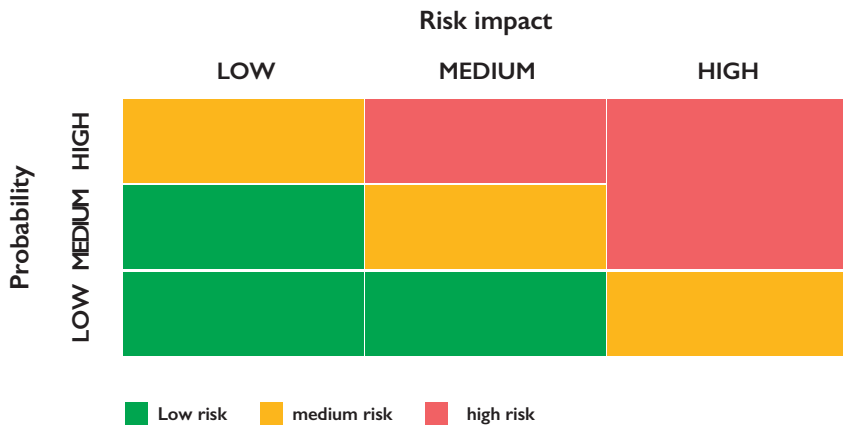
Figure 7 - Risk level matrix

Shelter construction underway at Bakasi IDP Camp, Nigeria.
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If the risk is low, no additional action is required and it shall not be included in the project document.

If the risk is medium, you need to plan a management strategy, which shall be properly described in the project document and kept under control during its implementation, through proper monitoring.

If the risk is high, you need to revise the project and modify the outputs, and possibly its specific goal too.

THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE RISK MANAGEMENT MEASURES COULD REQUIRE A PROJECT REVISION

In our example, the likelihood of a progressive reduction in the participation of the target women is low. Impact, however, would be strong, as the actions would lose their strength and you might fail to reach the critical mass required for an improvement to occur. As a consequence, we are in the yellow area.

The most common risk management strategies are of three types:

1. **acceptance** - when it cannot be managed otherwise;

2. **elimination** - by deciding not to proceed with the project; by reformulating it to isolate the risk factor; by including the risk factor in the project, to be able to control it;

3. **likelihood** - or impact mitigation.

The planning of the risk management and monitoring strategy can be helped by the Risk Matrix shown in Figure 8. The identification of the risk management measures can require the project to be reformulated (for example in case of inclusion of a risk factor if you should choose to eliminate it) or the activities to be revised (for example by adding awareness-raising initiatives to minimize the risk of the project not being supported by key actors).

COL. 1	COL. 2	COL. 3	COL. 4	COL. 5	COL. 6	COL. 7	COL. 8	COL. 9	COL. 10
RISK	PROBABILITY (1–3)	IMPACT (1–3)	LEVEL (colour)	STRATEGY (acceptance/elimination/ mitigation)	ACCEPTANCE	ELIMINATION	PROBABILITY MITIGATION	IMPACT MITIGATION	PERSON IN CHARGE

Column **1** describes the risk;

Columns **2**, **3** and **4** are reserved for the assessment of the risk level, using the traffic light diagram (Figure 7);

Column **5** indicates the chosen risk management method (acceptance, elimination, mitigation);

Columns **6–9** refer to the risk management strategy: if you accept the risk without any further actions, enter a check mark in column **6**; if you choose to eliminate the risk, describe how you intend to proceed in column **7** in case of mitigation, you need to describe in columns **8** and **9** the actions aimed at mitigating the probability and the impact respectively;

Column **10** finally, specify the person in charge of managing each risk.

Figure 8 - Risk matrix

In our example, the strategy for the management of the above-mentioned risk consists of scaling up the awareness-raising actions and the incentives for the participation of the target women. All the project elements analyzed so far are logically linked to each other and included in the Logical Framework (Figure 9).

	Intervention logic/ outcome chain	Objectively verifiable indicators	Sources of verification	Assumptions
Global goals	Medium- to long-term impact/strategic goals	How to measure the global goals	Where and how to verify the indicators	
Specific goal	Direct benefits for the reference group	How to measure the specific goal	Where and how to verify the indicators	In addition to the achievement of the specific goal, which external factors must occur for the global goals to be achieved?
Output	Concrete results	How to measure the outputs	Where and how to verify the indicators	In addition to the achievement of the outcomes, which external factors must occur for the specific goals to be achieved?
Activities	Actions to achieve outputs	Means (input)	Costs (budget)	In addition to the completion of the activities, which external factors must occur for the outputs to be achieved?
				Conditions to be met for the project to start

Figure 9 - Logical framework

– The first column shows the intervention logic: global goals, specific goal, outputs and for each output a series of Activities,

– The second column lists the indicators;

– The third column lists the sources of verification, specifying where and how indicators shall be verified;

– The fourth column lists the assumptions as to the occurrence of the external factors;

– To complete the table, you may also include the means and costs next to the activities, but that is not mandatory.

The following is a filled-in logical framework of the sample strategy marked with a circle in Figure 5.

Filled-in Logical framework (sample)

Intervention Logic	Indicators	Sources of Verification	External conditions or assumptions
Global Goals			
Achieve gender equality (SDG 5); End poverty (SDG 1).			
Specific goal			
Improve the conditions of young women in the community.	At least 70 per cent of the women supported by the project found that their mental and physical conditions have improved at the conclusion of the project.	Survey among the women benefiting from the project.	Wish of young women to improve their condition.
Output or Result 1			
Support Centre for young women established and implemented.	200 young women have been provided with support by the centre. At least 80 per cent of the users were satisfied with the support they received.	Centre support register. Survey among the women benefiting from the project.	
Activities of Result 1			
Establishing the centre.			
Managing the Centre.			
Providing support to women.			

Intervention Logic	Indicators	Sources of Verification	External conditions or assumptions
Output or Result 2			
Professional training programme for women started.	60 women have taken part in the training programme. At least 80 per cent of the attendees has successfully passed the final examination with a medium to high score.	Training course attendance sheet; Report by the trainer on the course results.	Teaching material available in the local language.
Activities of Result 2			
Selecting trainers.			
Preparing the teaching material.			
Delivering the course.			
Output or Result 3			
Awareness-raising campaign launched.	3 events organized with the local community, each attended by at least 200 participants. Web-radio activated: At least 1,000 followers of the Instagram account. Media coverage: At least 10 articles on local and national newspapers mention the project.	Photos and event attendance sheet. Instagram Account. Press review of national and local newspapers.	Willingness of government authorities to launch awareness-raising campaigns on gender equality.
Activities of Result 3			
Setting up the campaign message and the relevant material.			
Launching the campaign on the media.			
Creating and managing the web-radio.			

5   Preparing to implement the project: planning activities

After identifying the activities required for each output, proceed with their planning. This allows to obtain a master work plan, which shall be further detailed at the beginning of the project implementation phase.

THE WORK TABLE PROVIDES A CLEAR PICTURE OF THE ACTIVITY BREAKDOWN BY OUTPUT

Figure 10 shows the Work Breakdown Structure – WBS, also known as Work Table. The work table provides a clear picture of the activity breakdown by output. In addition, by using a colour code, the work table allows to display the subdivision of the activities between the partners.
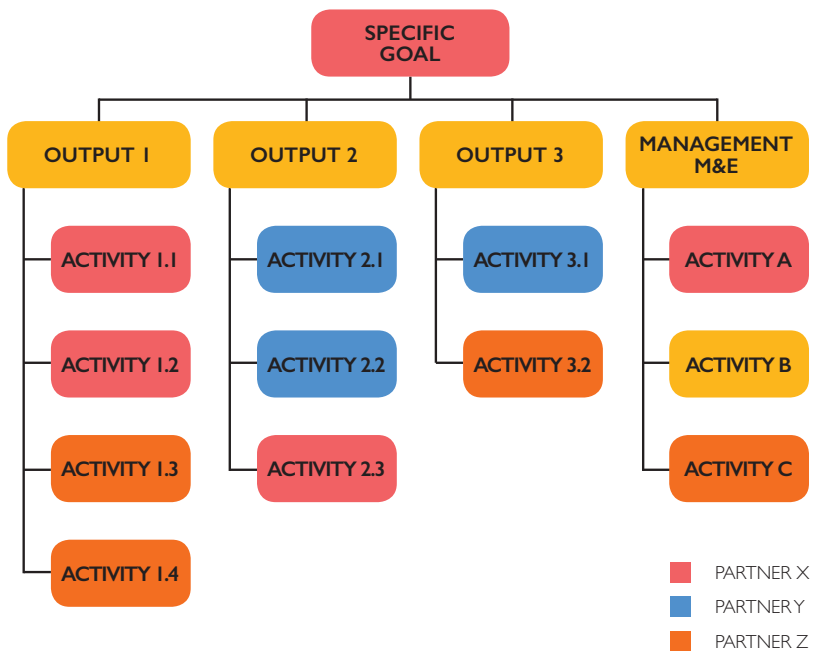
Figure 10 - Work breakdown structure (wbs or work table)

The work table is the starting point for the implementation of a Work Plan.

5 steps are required to prepare a work plan:

1. Listing the activities for each output;

2. Specifying their sequence and the dependency constraints;

3. Estimating the beginning and the end of each activity and recording their duration on the calendar;

4. Defining any *milestones* or targets (key events marked with a red dot on the calendar);

5. Assigning the relevant responsibilities to the work team and to the partners.

Figure 11 shows the work plan. Responsibilities can be listed in additional columns in the same table or in a new table, called Responsibility Matrix (figure 12).

A participant of a knitting and tailoring training held Ngororero district, in Rwanda
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2019

OUTPUTS/ACTIVITIES	MILESTONES
OUTPUT 1 - Support centre	
1.1 - Establishing the centre	Centre operational (15.2)
1.2 - Managing the centre	
1.3 - Providing support to women	
OUTPUT 2 - Professional training programme	
2.1 - Selecting trainers	Trainers selected (7.3)
2.2 - Preparing the material	Material ready and approved (31.3)
2.3 - Delivering the training	
OUTPUT 3 - Awareness-raising campaign	
3.1 - Preparing materials and messages	
3.2 - Launching a campaign on media	
3.3 - Creating and managing the web-radio	Web-radio activated (31.3)
Management, monitoring and evaluation	
Kick-off and partner meetings	
Project management	
Monitoring	
Evaluation	
Exit strategy	Exit strategy approved (30.11)

Figure 11 - Work plan

OUTPUTS/ACTIVITIES	TEAM				PARTNER
	PRON MAN	ADM OFFICER	TRAINING MANAGER	EXPERTS	
Output 1- Support centre					
Activity 1.1 - Establishing the centre	X				A
Activity 1.2 - Managing the centre		X			A
Activity 1.3 - Providing support to women				X	A
Output 2 - Professional training programme					
2.1 - Selecting trainers			X		B
2.2 - Preparing the material			X	X	B
2.3 - Delivering the training			X	X	B
Output 3 - Awareness-raising campaign					
Activity 3.1 - Preparing materials and messages	X			X	C
Activity 3.2 - Launching a campaign on media		X		X	C
Activity 3.3 - Creating and managing the web-radio		X		X	C
Management, monitoring and evaluation					
Kick-off and partner meetings	X	X			ABC
Project management	X	X			ABC
Monitoring	X	X			ABC
Evaluation	X		X	X	A
Exit strategy	X			X	ABC

Figure 12 - Responsibility matrix

To complete the project planning you shall just have to identify the resources required to perform each activity and the relevant costs, as we shall see in the module devoted to budget development.

CHECK LIST

Operating steps to: draw up the project

1. In collaboration with your reference community, identify the problem to be resolved, its causes sorted by priority and its effects;

2. Identify all those who may have an interest in the project, both positive and negative, and try to understand their stance regarding the identified problem: this is the first step to establish the partnership;

3. Choose the strategy of intervention, that is the set of solutions offered to resolve the identified problem;

4. Fill in a logical framework, starting from the goals-outputs-activities column, then filling in the last column, then the external factors/assumptions column and finally the column listing the indicators and the sources of verification;

5. Quantify the cost of the activities and of the staff required to implement the project; proceed by drawing up the budget;

6. Identify the financing scheme for your project and analyse it; then follow the relevant provisions, including the application form for the project, that shall be filled in by including a description of the logical framework in the relevant sections;

7. If you have not identified a tendering procedure but you wish to propose a free project, follow the outline below when drawing up the budget:

- Description of the context and of the identified problem

- Strategy of intervention: goals, outputs and activities

- External factors and risks related to project implementation

- Budget, table with explanation

- Proposing organization: description, mission, organizational chart, prior activities (successful), skills, resources. Description of the possible partnership

- Annex to the project the logical framework, the by-laws of the proposing association and a letter inviting the local community to execute the project

NOTES

Alberto Contarini

THE BUDGET: QUANTIFYING THE PROJECT COST AND MANAGING THE FINANCIAL RESOURCES

**PROJECT
DEVELOPMENT**
MANUAL
**FOR MIGRANTS'
ASSOCIATIONS**

IOM
UN MIGRATION

The budget: quantifying the project cost and managing the financial resources

Alberto Contarini

My name is Alberto Contarini; I have been dealing with administration, finance and management control in the field of microcredit and microfinance for almost twenty years. I first became aware of microcredit thanks to the studies and research I conducted when drawing up my dissertation, and this immediately led to a work experience in Zambia, where for three years I managed a microfinance initiative aimed at providing support to small local businesses. Since then, the passion and the desire for professional growth have led me to become a financial analyst and to deal with funds awarded by microfinance institutions, and then with the administrative management and the management control. My professional experience has allowed me to manage many financial projects, without losing sight of the human value generated by work with people, and the enrichment provided by the relationships with the people I have been fortunate enough to work with. In this spirit of sharing and cross-fertilization I propose you my considerations and the following guidelines on budget.

Contents

The budget: how do I start?

In any project, activity, initiative or intervention, irrespective of their size and duration, after completing the project vision, you also need to answer a few simple economic questions: "how much is it going to cost us?", "how many resources do we need, and which?". You shall also have to answer similar questions during the project implementation and closure: "How much am I spending?", "Will resources be enough?"; once the project is completed, the donor will ask us the same question "How much did you spend to carry out the activity I funded?"

I often say that there is no poetry in budget building; it is not an exercise in imagination (it should not be, although I have seen some quite imaginative budgets), there is no room for creativity. However, it is a critical step for the whole process, which can make the difference between a successful project and one that has failed to achieve the set goals.

We all like carrying out activities, above all when they have a positive impact on our communities, when we see the improvements experienced by the beneficiaries of our projects, when after a hard work we can enjoy our well-deserved success.

We feel a sense of fulfilment when our activities harmoniously follow one another, when all resources are available at the right time. On the other hand, how demotivating and disheartening can it get when you cannot complete an activity because resources are not enough, or because you don't have the appropriate tools, or still because you had failed to properly evaluate the actual cost?

Let's also jump forward in future – at this stage a bit of imagination is allowed. Imagine returning to the project site sometime after its conclusion; what would you like to find? Certainly, you don't want to find the same problem that spurred you into action! Imagine how satisfied you would feel seeing that you set the foundation for a self-sustaining development process. For this

AFTER COMPLETING THE PROJECT VISION, YOU ALSO NEED TO ANSWER A FEW SIMPLE ECONOMIC QUESTIONS

to happen, you need **resources**. During the drawing-up of the project, therefore, when the team has to decide which type of equipment should be purchased, you must strive to think of the project follow-up. Personally, when the items of expenditure for a project include the purchase of a machine or of specific equipment, I ask myself the following questions: are the spare parts available in the country? Which is the physical duration of the machine? Which are the relevant operating costs? Does the project include any sources of income (any cash flows) allowing to cover these costs? When it needs to be replaced, shall the gathered resources be enough to repurchase it?

YOU NEED TO MAXIMIZE THE USE OF RESOURCES

I like thinking of the budget not as the mere translation of the activities into financial and economic resources, but as the detailed definition of the resources required for the project to succeed, which is very different from the sheer definition of the cost of each activity.

> **Let's remember that** *without resources* **the activities are not carried out, but with the** *wrong resources* **the goals are not achieved**

There is a further aspect that needs to be taken into account when dealing with economic and financial resources. You need to maximize the use of the resources and manage to obtain the maximum impact with the minimum expenditure, which absolutely does not mean drawing up a low-key budget, purchasing poor-quality goods or seeking savings no matter what, as this type of approach can undermine the success of the intervention.

Maximizing means organizing the activities in such a way as to avoid wasting resources. In the case of a training activity, for example, the classroom size must be suitable for the target, and the room itself must be easily accessible; you could also have one

of the project partners offer the spaces as a contribution. The training materials may be designed to be reusable for subsequent interventions, the purchased equipment shall be suitable for its actual use, and so on. The donor also evaluates whether resources are used carefully and how they are managed by the partners.

The budget is built at the beginning of the project, but work does not finish then; you need to monitor and manage the expenses throughout the process and finally report them to the donor. That's why it is critical that you properly set up the work from the start and avoid the common error of letting the expenses accumulate, and then, occasionally and belatedly, calculate the total amount. This type of organizational process (often imposed by practical needs) prevents all control, and thus must be avoided.

IT IS CRITICAL THAT YOU PROPERLY SET UP THE WORK FROM THE BEGINNING

This module will help you to understand the budget definition steps, the cost distinction and classification, the questions you should ask yourself and the organizational process you should implement and set up in order to be ready for the final reporting.

As in the end the accounts must balance, we shall see how Excel can help us and make things easier; initially everything is new and looks complex, but once you familiarize with it, you shall reap the benefits, believe me

2   How do I quantify and break down the costs and expenses?

The budget you build must be:

CONSISTENT: it must comply with the planned activities and with the operating context;

DETAILED: usually there is a standard format for the project, but if it is too generic you need to build and develop a more detailed template, which can also serve as a reference point for the execution of the activities;

CORRECT: it may sound banal, but the sums must be correct, the tables must specify the totals, the diagrams must be tidy. An error in the sums is a sign of poor attention to the use of resources, and thus cast doubts on the capability of the organization to manage the project and then to properly report the expenses it incurred.

> **AN ERROR IN THE SUMS IS A SIGN OF POOR ATTENTION TO THE USE OF RESOURCES**

When you start building the budget, most of the work has already been completed by your team.

You have already identified the activities you wish to carry out to achieve the goals you set for yourself. Let's start from the activities, then, and let's start listing the resources we need.

First of all, draw up a list of resources and equipment required to implement the project, starting from the project document you already wrote. The more detailed and accurate the project, the easier it shall be to properly identify all the resources to be gathered. You need to go through the various steps in your mind and focus on everything you need, verifying whether the resources are available (are they contributed by a partner?) or whether they must be purchased.

The steps are the following:

1. Go through the activities to be carried out;

2. List the required resources;

3. Define the person in charge of procuring the resources in question (a resource required for the activities, for example, could be contributed by a project partner);

4. For each required resource verify:

    a. the availability;
    b. the possibility to acquire it;
    c. the procurement and acquisition times;
    d. the payment terms (for example: is an advance payment required before the delivery? Do we have the financial resources required for the advance payment, knowing that the donor often transfers the funds after the first reports? Or should we request a discount from the bank?).

5. Verify whether any authorizations are required for the purchase of certain goods (for example in case of goods imported from other countries);

6. Collect the quotes;

7. Enter the costs in the budget sheet.

Before starting this practical exercise, however, you should also read and carefully analyse the documents drawn up by the donor, to verify whether you need to submit the budget in any specific format, as well as to identify any budget items or cost categories specified/defined by the donor, and to verify whether there are any constraints or limits to the expenses the project shall fund.

Let's proceed in an orderly fashion. **What are the cost categories?**

They are macroitems combining more detailed individual items. They can vary according to the project; knowing them is important in order to properly classify the costs of your specific project into the proper category.

You can find an example below:

Staff costs: they refer to the staff regularly and habitually employed by the association, receiving a monthly salary (the employees). Remember that for employees there is a difference between the gross cost of employees, the net sum they receive and the actual cost to the association. You need to consider the gross cost to the association (this information can be obtained from your accountant or wage office).

Travel costs: they refer to the transport costs required to carry out a specific activity in a given place. Verify whether the financing scheme for the project includes the coverage of these costs.

Costs of accommodation and board: they are the hotel costs and those included in the daily allowance.

Costs for equipment: they refer to the purchase of durable goods, that can be used for multiple years. They include computers, printers, chairs, tables, cabinets, but also machinery for production activities.

Costs for consumer goods: they are the goods that can only be used once, like stationery.

Costs for services/subcontracts: this category includes all the services that are required by the project and that result in the issuing of an invoice following the performance of a specific

activity. For example, this category may include the catering service, or the translation of a manual into different languages, or the professional teaching services.

Some projects (usually large-sized) may also require the audit and certification of expenditures by an external organization (cost certification or audit). This audit activity results in further costs, which may be high, and you need to verify whether they are permitted and can be reported to the donor.

After identifying the cost categories, it is important that you also verify whether they are provided for by the tendering procedure and whether there are any percentages to be met for the individual categories. For example: the staff costs could be constrained not to exceed a given percentage of the overall costs. If there are any such constraints it is important that during budget building you identify other financing sources, allowing to fully cover all the items, or otherwise reduce the scope of the intervention, paying attention not to prejudice the achievement of the project goals.

SOME PROJECTS MAY ALSO REQUIRE THE AUDIT AND CERTIFICATION OF EXPENDITURES BY AN EXTERNAL ORGANIZATION

Therefore, you must read the call for proposal in order to:

1. Identify the cost categories (items of expenditure);

2. Verify whether any predefined format is required;

3. Identify the costs that are permitted and can be financed;

4. Check for the presence of any percentage limits in the cost categories.

Thoroughly reading the call for tenders allows to group and classify all the items of expenditure of the project into the categories defined in advance by the donor.

....

▶ ## Cost quantification

Quantifying and defining the cost is simple if you have a thorough and in-depth knowledge of the activity to be performed, of its progress and of the proper organizational measures.

> **Budget building is an interactive process involving the different project actors (partners, professionals, work team members). Data are preliminarily processed, then they are analysed, adjusted and edited until they are consistent with the activities to be performed.**

BUDGET DEVELOPMENT CANNOT BE THE SOLE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER OR OF THE PROJECT ACCOUNTANT

This also highlights the importance of the exchange of information and of the constant interaction between the different team members during budget building, which cannot and must not be the sole responsibility of the administrative manager or of the project accountant.

In order to quantify the costs, you need to ask yourself a few questions:

1. Have the expenditure forecasts be obtained?

2. Have you involved the local partners or the people who shall carry out the activities?

3. If purchasing any goods or equipment, have you obtained the technical data sheet of the machinery with the operating specifications? Have you assessed whether the purchase is consistent with the activities you are carrying out?

4. If purchasing any goods that need to be registered in the name of any organizations, have you verified whether your local partner is suitable?

5. Have you verified whether you require any specific permits or authorizations in order to be able to carry out the activities? For example, if building any facilities or in case of healthcare-related projects?

6. Are there any permits you need to obtain? At which cost? By which time?

7. In which country shall be project be implemented? Which currency shall be used to purchase the goods and pay for the services? Is there any foreign exchange risk? Has it been taken into account? Which are the exchange rate fluctuations?

WHEN REQUESTING ANY QUOTATIONS, YOU SHOULD MAKE SURE THAT THE SPECIFIED PRICES ARE VAT-INCLUSIVE

8. Pay attention to the V.A.T. (Value Added Tax). VAT is a tax calculated as a percentage of the value of a good or service, which causes the price of the good or service in question to rise. For associations VAT is usually a cost to be paid, while for companies VAT is not a cost. When requesting any quotations, you should make sure that the specified prices are VAT-inclusive, to avoid any payment and reporting problems. You need to analyse the project document and ask the donor elucidations about the VAT treatment.

The following is a practical example of cost quantification:

WHICH ACTIVITY SHALL BE CARRIED OUT?	COORDINA-TION	WHICH PROFILE IS REQUIRED?	PROJECT MANAGER
10	HOW MANY MAN/DAYS?	210 € PER DAY	WHICH IS THE COST?

TOTAL FOR CO-ORDINATION: 210€X10DAYS = € 2,100

3 Cost classification

The following is a cost classification you should know. There are many cost classifications, but in this context, we shall focus on two specific types; the first one makes a distinction between direct and indirect costs:

– **DIRECT COSTS:** they are the costs directly incurred for the project implementation. For example: cost of the staff directly engaged in the activities, mission expenditures, cost of direct services obtained for the intervention and much more. All these costs must be directly reported, and you need a supporting document.

– **INDIRECT COSTS:** they are not directly attributable to the project and are usually recognized among the general costs of the organization. For example: the power supply for the main headquarters, the facility insurance costs, the depreciations of goods that are not univocally attributable to the project (computers, printers, miscellaneous equipment and so on). In some tendering procedures, the costs in question are covered on a flat-rate basis by a pre-defined percentage calculated over the total amount of the project. These costs do not need to be individually reported with supporting documents; the indirect costs, however, are calculated as a percentage of the general costs (varying according to the donor). You cannot claim a sum exceeding the general costs recognized in the financial statements of your organization as a reimbursement of the indirect costs!

IN SOME CALLS FOR PROJECTS, THE COSTS IN QUESTION ARE COVERED ON A FLAT-RATE BASIS BY A PRE-DEFINED PERCENTAGE

The second classification, instead, makes a distinction between fixed and variable costs.

– **FIXED COSTS:** they are the costs whose amount is independent of the product quantity. For example:

- The cost for the rent of the premises
- Costs for teachers
- Costs of machinery
- Study, development and drawing up of a manual

As a consequence, you need to maximize the use of these resources. How many people can the classroom accommodate? How many students can a teacher effectively manage? Is the purchase of a given printer consistent with the project activities or is it excessive or not enough?

– **VARIABLE COSTS:** they are the costs whose amount depends on the quantity of goods and services that was produced. For example:

VARIABLE COSTS WHOSE AMOUNT DEPENDS ON THE QUANTITY OF GOODS AND SERVICES THAT WAS PRODUCED

- Teaching material
- Transport for beneficiaries, if travels are paid on an individual basis;
- Payment of accommodation and board.

This classification clearly becomes important when drawing up the budget template, as variable costs shall depend upon the project size and the number of beneficiaries, and you shall need to verify that the sums are consistent with the project documents.

▶ Let's focus on machinery and equipment

I now wish to bring to your attention the issue of the purchase of equipment and machinery, which have a considerable importance in many projects and a substantial impact on the budget total. The purchase of machinery and durable goods sometimes requires a substantial financial commitment; for these reasons, there are a few questions you should ask yourself, and also explicitly include (if possible) in the project document. For example:

– Where are they purchased? Are they imported goods or goods that can be easily found in the country/city where the project shall be implemented?

– In the name of whom are they registered? Who shall be their owner? The local organization? The lead organization? An association of beneficiaries which is a third party to the project?

– Do you have the technical skills required to use the machinery?

– Are any spare parts available in the country?

– Which are the variable costs (see above) for their operation and maintenance?

– How shall the variable costs in question be covered at the conclusion of the project?

– Which are the technical specifications? Are they excessive for the intervention provided for by the project or not?

Let's resume for a moment our discussion of **variable costs**. If, thanks to the project, your association has purchased a machine powered by electrical current or by diesel oil, and for each hour of use you shall have to spend € 2.5 (variable cost), you shall need to ask yourself: who shall pay these costs once the project is completed? Can the variable costs in question be requested from the people benefiting from the machinery? If the answer is yes then we are taking care of the future **sustainability** of the intervention; should that not be the case, once the project is completed, the intervention is bound to end.

The second question, instead, concerns the duration of the machinery:

– How durable is the machinery? Which is its useful life?

This question refers to the **good's depreciation period.**

The depreciation is the cost to be recognized every year for the use of a good/machine which has a multi-year useful life. For example: if the machine costs € 1,500 and lasts for 10 years, every year you shall need to recognize a cost of € 150, and to accumulate € 150 worth of resources to be able to repurchase the good once its useful life expires. These are important reflections that organizations must consider in a long-term perspective.

4 **Building a practical budget tool using Excel**

You may have a clear grasp of the theoretical concepts, but then you'll find yourself before a blank sheet, in which you shall need to record activities, responsibilities, quantities and prices, and ensure that in the end the sums are correct. In addition, in the end you shall also have to compare, for each item of expenditure, the budgeted sum with the sum you actually spent, and calculate the difference.

A readily available tool you can use is the Excel spreadsheet: a very common tool allowing to successfully manage the budget building, the monitoring and the final reporting.

EXCEL ALLOWS US TO SUCCESSFULLY MANAGE THE BUDGET DEVELOPMENT, THE MONITORING AND THE FINAL REPORTING

In the following paragraph we shall see the procedures and guidelines to be followed for the creation of a budget template in Excel; I'll provide practical indications on the everyday use of Excel, the cost management and the budget building, as well as some starting points for future studies and experiments you shall be able to conduct in person using the resources already available on the Internet.

Base rules for template creation:

1. **Create simple templates for easy reference.**
   Limit the use of colours. We all often use the Excel sheet as if it was a canvas to be painted. If you examine the templates already created in Excel and analyse their colours and formats, you shall notice that they were created using a small palette of colours, and that they are clearly readable. Try to be tidy as well when creating the tables.

2. **Create input sheets and output sheets.**
   The spreadsheet is a program allowing to perform calculations, create graphical diagrams and process data, even large. The input sheet is the one into which you shall enter the project-related data (staff, equipment, travels, etc.). The output sheet, instead,

is a report, the result of processing the data you manually entered into the input sheet. The input sheet, therefore, gathers the information and data, and you do not need to make it graphically attractive, contrary to the output sheet, which being a report shall be submitted to the project leader or to third parties. The output sheet, therefore, shall be graphically formatted.

When you work in Excel try to always be tidy.

Use a sheet into which you shall enter your input data, without bothering about the formatting, the colours and the overall appearance.

Then create other report sheets (output sheets), that shall be colourful and visually attractive and that shall draw the data from the input sheet thanks to the Excel **functions**. People often create input sheets that are also intended to be used as reports to be printed. This is wrong and results in inefficiencies. Create a set of data tables, then use all the Excel formulas and functions to sum, filter and group the data in order to create your reports!

3. **Differentiate the cells containing input data from the cells containing formulas.**
   The budget template must be usable by everybody, and not just by the person who created it. As a consequence, the template should be built in accordance with a set of common rules.

   An input table can contain formulas, like: quantity x price. The colour of these cells should be different from that of the cell containing the input data.

   For example, the cells with a yellow background and a blue text contain input data. The cells with a black text contain formulas, and thus are automatically updated.

Item of expenditure	Measuring unit	Num. of units	Unit cost	TOTAL
Stationery	PER ITEM	1	100	100
Staff	MONTH	2	75	150

4. **The cells containing formulas must contain no manually entered data.**

   Sometimes you create a formula and then have to add a sum to "round" the result; the automatic formula is then "spoiled" by a manually entered number. This is an error in the design of the template and prevents all future reuse.

IOM Transit Centres, the Niger. © IOM 2017 / Amanda NERO

5   The data flow

EXAMPLE OF OUTPUT SHEET

The diagram below shows the budget **report** (output sheet), with specific items of expenditure: staff costs – operating costs – equipment. Each item of expenditure includes detail sub-items referring to your project. The amounts in the columns (number of units – unit costs – budget total), instead, are calculated automatically by the formulas that draw the data directly from the input table.

Example of budget report

Code	Budget Costs	Unit	N° of Unit / Duration	Unit Cost (Euro)	Total BDG	% on total	Spent Sum	Balance
	1 Staff Cost							
1.1	Local Coordinator	MONTH	7	593	4,151		0	4,151.00
1.2	Local operator	MONTH	0	-			0	0.00
1.3	Senior computer trainer	DAY	19	88	1,672		0	1,672.00
1.4	Coordinator for Italy	MONTH	5	1,000	5,000		0	5,000.00
1.5	Junior computer trainer	DAY	0	-			0	0.00
	TOTAL STAFF COSTS				10,823	56,17%	0	€ 10,823.00
	2 Operational Costs							
2.1	Office venue costs	MONTH	4	200	800		0	800.00
2.2	Stationery	PER ITEM	1	120	120		10	110.00
2.3	Publications	PER ITEM	27	5	135		750	-615.00
2.4	Trainings	UNIT	52	2	104		0	104.00
2.5	Transport	UNIT	4	1	4		0	4.00
2.6	Training class rent	DAY	2	140	280		0	280.00
2.7	Internet connection	MONTH	0	-	-		0	0.00
	TOTAL OPERATIONAL COSTS				1,443.0	7,49%	760	€ 683.00
	3 Equipment							
3.1	Computers		20	350	7,000		1,950	5,050.00
3.2	Printers		0	-	-		-	0.00
3.3	Tables and chairs		0	-	-		-	0.00
3.4	Router fot IT network		0	-	-		-	0.00
	TOTAL EQUIPMENT COSTS				7,000	36,32%	1,950	€ 5,050.00
	TOTAL BUDGET				19,266	100%	2,710	16,556

These cells contain formulas that sum the data entered into the INPUT table.

EXAMPLE OF INPUT TABLE – BUDGET DATA

The table below is a sample input table.

These tables are divided into columns, and each column shall then be used to group and sum each individual item as needed, again through specific functions.

Main activity	Sub-activity	Partner in charge	BDG item of expenditure	Item of expenditure	Unit	N° of Unit	Unit Cost (Euro)	Total BDG
Training computer maintenance skill	Preparing the training material	Partner 1	Publications	One manual for each attendee	PER ITEM	25	5	125
Training computer maintenance skill	Training management	Partner 2	Trainings	2 coffee breaks per person	UNIT	50	2	100
Training computer maintenance skill	Training management	Partner 1	Transport	2 return tickets	UNIT	2	1	2
Training computer maintenance skill	Trainer teaching	Partner 2	Senior computer trainer	Senior trainer	DAY	15	80	1,200
Training computer maintenance skill	Training management	Partner 1	Training class rent	Training classroom rent	DAY	1	140	140
Training computer maintenance skill	Purchasing of equipment	Lead association	Computers	Computer	ITEM	20	350	7,000
Training for smart phone maintenance skill	Preparing the training material	Partner 2	Publications	2 manuals for each attendee	FIXED	2	5	10
Training for smart phone maintenance skill	Training management	Lead association	Trainings	2 coffee breaks per person	UNIT	2	2	4
Training for smart phone maintenance skill	Training management	Lead association	Transport	2 return tickets	UNIT	2	1	2
Training for smart phone maintenance skill	Trainer teaching	Lead association	Senior computer trainer	Senior trainer	DAY	1	120	120
Training for smart phone maintenance skill	Training management	Partner 1	Training class rent	Training classroom rent	DAY	1	140	140
Training for smart phone maintenance skill	Trainer teaching	Lead association	Senior computer trainer	Senior trainer	DAY	3	120	360

Which functions shall you use to link the input table data to the report? A frequently used function is the "sumif" function.

This function allows for example to search the input table column "budget item of expenditure" for all the rows containing the words "senior computer trainer", and to sum the relevant amounts in the column reporting the total. In the above example the formula shall sum the three values found (1,200 + 120 + 360), inserting in the budget report the overall amount of € 1,680.

This operating mode allows to focus on the individual activities, list all the individual necessary expenses, group them by item of expenditure and then automatically sum them in order to obtain the report to be submitted to the donor.

The input table also includes the column "partner in charge". This table allows to automatically calculate the budget that was allocated to a given partner. In this case you need to use a more advanced function, called "**sumifs**".

This function allows to sum the items when there are multiple criteria. For example, it sums the items of expenditure "senior

computer trainer" that refer to "partner 2"; in this case it shall only sum the item amounting to € 1,200.

Therefore, there are many functions that allow to link our INPUT table to the reports. A list of base formulas you need to know can be found below; for further information about their use you can directly use the Microsoft support service:
https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/search?query=functions

HOW CAN I DEFINE THE INPUT TABLE COLUMNS?

It depends on how you wish to group the individual expenses, and thus on the type of end report you wish to obtain.

When developing a template, it is important that you define from the beginning what you wish to obtain. Too many times, instead, once the project is completed, people are requested to submit reports whose data have not been collected.

For example: if you wish to obtain a report breaking down the beneficiaries into men and women, or according to their level of education or to the language they speak, it is critical that this information is gathered from the beginning in a given column.

If you need a report breaking down the activities by category you first need to define the categories to be used and then record the data in question in a specific column.

In the above example, items had to be broken down by "project partner", therefore we created a column for this purpose.

CHECK LIST

Operating steps to: build the budget

1. Involve the project partners

2. Go through the activities provided for by the project

3. Request multiple quotes

4. Check that prices include any accessory services (warranties, transports, insurances and so on)

5. For the purchase of equipment, request the price inclusive of installations, testing and transport

6. Ask detailed information about the VAT treatment

7. Enter the costs into the budget sheet

8. Ask yourself whether prices are subject to significant fluctuations

9. Tidily store all the quotations and documents you gathered

10. Share the budget with all the staff members concerned

Knitting and tailoring trainees in Rwanda. © IOM 2017 / Amanda NERO

NOTES

Alessandro Valera

WITH WHOM SHOULD I JOIN FORCES TO ACHIEVE CHANGE? BUILDING THE PARTNERSHIP

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT MANUAL **FOR MIGRANTS' ASSOCIATIONS**

IOM
UN MIGRATION

With whom should I join forces to achieve change? Building the partnership

Alessandro Valera
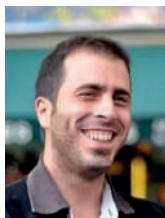
I am the Director of Ashoka Italia. I am keenly interested in social and international movements; after studying in Italy, Canada and the United Kingdom, I specialized in Politics and Communication at the London School of Economics. My career began in London in the field of social policies, where I worked both for the British Government and for private companies like Google, Samsung and RBSH, on issues aimed at children and youngsters, but also to their parents. After returning to Italy in 2011, I established my communication and research agency, focusing on teaching children, teachers and parents how to properly use the social media. I also became the director of European Alternatives, an NGO dealing with human rights. In 2014 I was chosen by Ashoka to establish Ashoka Italia, which was launched in Italy in 2015, with the selection of the first fellows and the building of a work team. Since 2018 I have also been working for the central headquarters of Ashoka, in Washington D.C., as a coordinator of the Impact Measurement Unit.

Cover image: *Young Senegalese who returned home from Libya participated in a training under IOM's Migrants as Messengers project.*
© IOM 2018 / Alioune NDIAYE

Contents

Why should you work in partnership?

The purpose of this module is helping you to think about the composition of the partnership in the context of the creation of a development project, in order to obtain the greatest possible impact through your planning.

I'll start with a general reflection on why working in partnership often has greater potential than working as a separate organization. I'll then provide some suggestions on choosing the most suitable partners according to the project needs, focusing on the different types of collaboration. I'll end the module with some practical indications on how to organize work between all project partners.

IF YOU WISH TO MOVE FAST RUN ALONE, IF YOU WISH TO GET FAR RUN ALONG WITH SOMEONE

A partnership is a cooperation relationship between multiple bodies, like associations, enterprises, institutions, for the implementation of common or complementary projects.

An African proverb reads "if you wish to move fast run alone, if you wish to get far run along with someone". Participating in a development project implies a vision for change, which is comparable to "getting far". According to the suggestions of our wisemen, therefore, we clearly need to find someone with whom we can run, share our vision for change and cooperate to achieve our development goal. That's why first and foremost in development projects, and in the for-profit world in general, working in partnership is important.

Diaspora associations enjoy an advantage from this point of view. In fact, people who identify themselves as member of a particular diaspora, develop a sentiment of belonging, real or symbolic, towards a specific community, and creates links based on common elements as, for example, culture.

In this way, diaspora tends to maintain links with the community of origin also when it is dispersed all over the world.

This leads to the emergence of networks, often transnational, on the base of diversified elements and interests as well as common projects that can leverage on different aspects linked to people personal story and identity, valuing and capitalizing competences acquired also through the migratory path.

This feeling of **affection** for a country of origin and the **sharing**, through a network structure, **of the capital** held by the diaspora, are the elements that potentially turn migrants into powerful development actors, if structural conditions allowing them to participate in all social aspect of the societies they belong to and that they are able to connect are in place.

As a consequence, partnership work – that is collaboration between networking actors – is already part of the sociality typical to the diaspora; you only need to be aware of the value of your network of relations, activate it and work on it to make it useful to your development project.

TO BE AWARE OF THE VALUE OF YOUR NETWORK OF RELATIONS, ACTIVATE IT AND WORK ON IT TO MAKE IT USEFUL

My suggestion to the diaspora associations who wish to promote any development projects is: after identifying a social issue you wish to resolve, imagine how and with whom you can implement the project, starting **from your network of relations, and in particular from who shares your same values and vision of change**. This means understanding which members of the network can help you and activating the communication channels required to make your network of relations useful to the project.

Finding and building a solid partnership is not enough; you must be able to manage it according to modern methods, suited to the globalization and to the speed of today's social changes.

New change rates, therefore, require new forms of organization and that is what our partnership will have to do in order to be useful and keep up with the times.

Partnership work, through fluid teams and shared leadership, is today the most effective way of working, with the potential to have a broader and deeper impact. This is even more relevant to those who promotes transnational projects and strives to bring a positive change in the different communities bridged. Activating your networks within the scope of the diaspora, in fact, does not only have an interpersonal value, but is also the best tool to support the development projects and to quickly increase their impact.

ACTIVATING YOUR NETWORKS WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THE DIASPORA IS THE BEST TOOL TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Therefore, it is important to activate networks that can bring an added value through the engagement of complementary partners and after a thorough analysis of elements of strengths and unicity of each partner with reference to the partnership and to the project.

Today you can work remotely and manage work relations with people from two or three different continents through Skype and Whatsapp: take advantage of these tools and of these opportunities to maintain strong work relations with your partners in Italy and in your countries of origin.

2 Which types of partnerships?

Traditional Partnership

For the partnership work to be effective it is important that you start from a clear definition of the social issue you wish to tackle, and of the method you wish to use. Traditionally the partnership is often defined (see Figure 1) as an agreement with a lead organization linking the beneficiaries who receive a service, the donors who provide the funds, the suppliers who provide services and any partners with specific assignments.
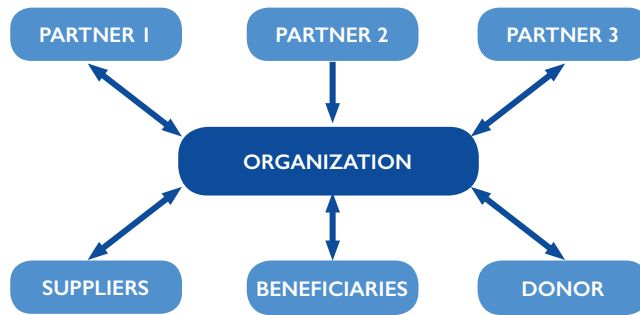
Figure 1 - Traditional partnership

Co-creation partnership model

What I suggest, instead, is that you rethink the partnership, as shown in Figure 2. The idea is starting from a detailed analysis of the social issue and of a shared vision for change to work on. All partners, including the donors and the beneficiaries themselves, work to achieve this explicit vision. The task of the proposing association is just guiding the processes leading to this shared vision for change, and not necessarily having a central role in the execution of the activities.
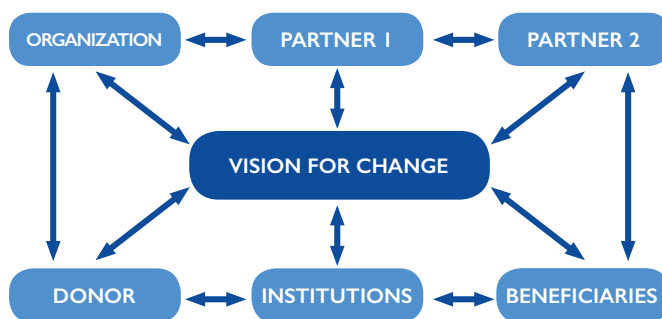
Figure 2 - Co-creation partnership

Co-creation is more effective if you involve different partners, ideally operating on different levels and in different fields.

3   **Potential Partners**

The partnership is often established with other third-sector operators, but is important that you also consider the opportunity of different collaborations, in order to maximize the impact of your project.

In addition **to other NGOs or associations**, you can establish a partnership with **public bodies**, like a school, a hospital, a Chamber of Commerce.

The advantage of this kind of partnership is being able to leverage existing infrastructures and staff: the school may provide teachers, classrooms and material; the hospital healthcare staff and medications; the Chamber of Commerce a pre-existing contact list, a conference room, sectoral studies that otherwise you should carry out from scratch.

THE ADVANTAGE OF THIS KIND OF PARTNERSHIP IS BEING ABLE TO LEVERAGE EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURES AND STAFF

The same applies to partnerships with **institutions**: from municipalities, to Regions, to Ministries. Institutions, even more than public bodies, can provide practical support and visibility. The **flip side**, however, is that **institutions are subject to political changes.** The result of an election may prejudice months or years of work. The decision to establish an institutional partnership, therefore, must be well thought out, even taking into account the possibility of a change in the administration and the proximity of competitive elections.

Businesses or other **private sector** bodies have more and more interest in associating with the third sector, in accordance with the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) or with the Creating Share Value (CSV) logic. These are business programmes aimed at having a social impact in the territories where the company operates.

Sometimes the business directly operates in the social sector, but more often it can fund local third-sector bodies.

I'll discuss businesses as project Partners in greater detail below; for now I wish to point out how important it is that, when approaching companies, the associations can prove to the business not so much the commercial benefit a partnership with the association could ensure, but **how the vision for change** on which the project is focused **can potentially create a fairer, or more participative environment**, from which **even businesses could benefit.**

Businesses have more streamlined procedures compared with the public sector, but the quality of the proposal and its presentation must meet higher standards.

As a consequence, it is essential that you know what you want and only contact the businesses or their CSR managers with a specific proposal. Already having ensured a part of the funds and contacting the businesses as co-funders increases your chances to succeed.

Finally, you can also consider establishing a partnership with **the media.** This includes national (or more probably local) newspapers, radios, TVs, blogs, web pages or influencers on social

Guineans who returned home from different countries participate in a training under IOM's Migrants as Messengers project. © IOM 2018 / Lucas CHANDELLIER

networks. It is important to remember that sending out a message is not enough: you need to make sure that it reaches many people in the target population. Partnering with someone who already has a wide network of contacts, or better still a virtual community, allows to strategically reach an increasing number of people.

4   Partners' role

Not all partners have the same role within the framework of a structured cooperation. An important distinction is that between strategic, local and technical partners.

NOT ALL PARTNERS HAVE THE SAME ROLE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF A STRUCTURED COOPERATION

A **strategic partner** is an organization or body whose presence and guide are essential for the design and implementation of every part of the planning.

A **local partner**, instead, plays an essential role in the implementation of a project part that takes place in a given location, but not in the development of the whole project. For example, if your aim is working in the schools of three different cities in Nigeria, it may make sense to rely on three different local partners.

The **technical partner**, finally, is a body whose inclusion in the project is only due to the unique expertise held by an organization or by a person, which cannot be provided by the lead association or by the strategic partners.

If a project, for example, aims at using the camera as a tool allowing children who live on the streets to show reality from their point of view, it shall rely on a technical partner who can provide cameras, training on how to use them, a darkroom to develop the photos, and so on.

5 How to choose the most suitable partner for the type of intervention to be implemented?

As mentioned in the previous paragraphs, it is essential that you start from the social (or environmental) issue you want to help resolve. Before proposing a solution, we recommend that you look at the sector to understand how the issue in question is usually tackled and by whom. For example, if the proposed method uses theatre as a social redemption tool, you should first explain which existing programmes (by government- or non-governmental entities) already tackle the issues related to children living on the streets, and why the proposed method can have a greater impact compared with the existing situation.

It shall then be easier to properly define the alternative proposal you wish to put forward or test through your project.

Understanding what your association needs

After outlining the alternative method you want to develop through the project, proceed by analysing what you need to implement the project. For example, ask yourself which skills shall be required to go ahead with this proposal. Do you need an organic agriculture expert, a graphics expert, or someone who can speak French?

Then proceed by analysing which **tools and equipment** are required for the project. Do you need any computers, sewing machines or 3D printers? The rarer or more expensive the tools, the more important it shall be to recruit the right partner, who could already have the required material. You should also remember which tools are specifically required for the project communication: are you going to need any cameras? Projectors?

Finally, it is also important to understand which **spaces** your association will need; for example, think of the work or training places, of the rooms for public presentations or of any other space where you could have to operate.

My suggestion, then, is analysing which of these skills, tools and infrastructures are already held by your organization and which are not. Only now should you contact any partners who have precisely the skills, infrastructures or tools your organization lacks.

You should then **take care to avoid contacting partners that are similar to you**; indeed, the more **different and complementary** they are, the more effective the cooperation.

▶ ## Choosing sensibly

After identifying the possible partners, it is time to contact them and to propose them to cooperate.

You should also listen to any feedback to improve your project vision and modify the initial proposal accordingly. Only now shall you be able to choose which of the different partners you contacted is the most suitable to work with you, having the tools, skills or spaces you need.

Your choice shall certainly be based on some criteria, like the match between what you need to implement the project and the characteristics of the partner. It is the so-called suitability criterion. Sometimes, however, there may be multiple partners that are suitable to work with you. How should you then proceed with your choice?

If the prospective partners are equally suitable, I recommend choosing the one with whom you have already satisfactorily worked. A feeling of mutual trust, in fact, is critical for good work relations.

Finally, it is essential that the partner organizations with which you choose to work share **common values**. An association with the right skills, spaces and tools may have very different core values. Not all organizations and companies, for example, see migration as a potential development opportunity for both the country of origin and that of destination.

IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS WITH WHICH YOU CHOOSE TO WORK SHARE COMMON VALUES

To ensure that your partners share your values you can choose between various strategies: you can propose each partner to draw up and sign a statement laying down a set of shared principles (both operational and related to values); or you can only involve organizations that explicitly work on issues you care about; or still you can resort to other diaspora organizations.

Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), a Norwegian humanitarian association, outlines well this concept of partnership as an alliance of values in the document "Norwegian People's Aid Partnership Policy" (2009).

The partnership is basically defined as a relationship based on dialogue, mutual trust and the undertaking of responsibilities. This document can be accessed online and referred to for further information about establishing a partnership specific to the cooperation and development projects.

To make the best decision, you can also assign scores to the prospective partners for the different aspects.

	Names	How useful are they to the project (1–10)?	How simple is it to convince them? (1–10)	How much value sharing? (1–10)
Other NGOs				
Public bodies				
Institutions				
Private companies				
Media				

A low score indicates that the partner is scarcely useful, not easy enough to convince or not aligned with your values. The highest score shall give us a clue as to the right organization to partner with.

6 How to organize the work with your partners?

After choosing the partners and verifying that they are willing to cooperate, you shall need to organize a meeting, preferably in person.

As an alternative, if the partners are located very far away from each other, teleconference can be a useful tool anyway.

During the meeting it will be essential that the partners introduce themselves and get acquainted with each other. Present the final version of the project, and also propose which role each partner shall have in the different project stages. During the meeting,

after presenting your proposal as to the roles of each partner and hearing the opinion of the prospective partners, you should invite everyone to openly speak of the time and costs required to carry out the respective part of the project.

At this stage it is also important that you settle the issues related to internal communications. How frequently shall you meet for updates? Shall you meet in person, by phone or by teleconference? Shall you create a web group, or a **Whatsapp** group to keep up-to-date? Be careful not to overdo it, as too frequent communications may be distracting and have the opposite effect!

IT IS IMPORTANT TO SETTLE THE ISSUES RELATED TO INTERNAL COMMUNICATION AND DEFINE THE ROLES OF EACH PARTNER

Many projects also require the partners to share written materials.

To prevent any confusion with different documents, or with different versions of the same document modified by the various partners, I recommend that you create a set of folders in cloud mode, that is stored on the web and not only in the different devices/computers of the participants. Google drive, Box or Dropbox are just a few of the most common tools used to share documents between different partners, even far away from each other.

The first meeting among the project partners can also be useful to agree upon which partner shall manage the reporting, and which the financial aspects. Shall each partner receive a portion of the funds and take care of covering its own expenditures? Or shall all expenditures be centrally managed by the lead organization? What about the tax-related requirements? Is an invoice required for each expenditure?

In many cases donors only provide a part of the funds at the beginning of the project, and cover the remainder once the project is completed. This means that often associations have to pay some costs in advance using their own funds. This is a sensitive issue, but you should rather tackle it right away. The first meeting can also be used to define who shall pay any costs in advance.

Finally, you should also agree right away on who shall manage the final evaluation of the project. Often this decision is postponed until the project is completed, but it is important that data are collected throughout the duration of the project. In many cases, in order to determine the achieved impact, the same data are collected before and after the project.

It is important that during this first meeting you already discuss **which data shall be collected, who shall collect them**, and **with which frequency**.

You should formalize all these decisions into a partnership agreement signed by both parties. The agreement is not legally binding (unless a notary is involved), but it can be useful to settle any disputes that should arise during the project execution.

The example on the following page is a sample standard partnership agreement:

Guineans who returned home from different countries participate in a training under IOM's Migrants as Messengers project. © IOM 2018 / Lucas CHANDELLIER

Fac simile – PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

The undersigned_____(name, surname)
in his capacity as the President/Legal Representative of_____
(body name) with registered office in_____,
via_____, State _____ _____,
phone _____ , fax _____, email _____,
under his sole responsibility

DECLARES

▪   That the above-mentioned body is willing to join as a partner the project
          _____ (project name) promoted
         by the association_____ (name of the association);

▪   That the above-mentioned body undertakes to cooperate in accordance with the
         terms specified below. (list for each item the specific activities provided for by the
         project for whose implementation you wish to cooperate)
          □   _____
          □   _____
          □   _____
          □   _____

▪   That the above-mentioned body undertakes to receive the sum of EUR …………..,
         corresponding to ………… % of the budget, and to administer it in accordance with
         the rules defined by the agreement between the lead association ………………
         (name of the lead association) and the donor, as well as to report the expenditures
         incurred as agreed upon with the lead association. (Fill in according to the
         indications and eliminate the unnecessary parts)

▪   That the above-mentioned body undertakes to contribute the co-fund specified
         below:
▪   in kind, corresponding to a value of EUR …………….through ………………….
         (specify the services/goods you offer)
▪   In cash, for an amount of EUR …………………………….

Place, date_____

Name_____
Signature_____
(stamp)

The document "*Guidelines, partnership engagement*", drawn up by Save the Children in 2015, provides a comprehensive guide to establishing a partnership in the cooperation and development sector. Tackling these thorny issues from the start shall greatly reduce any subsequent unforeseen developments and possible misunderstandings. This way you shall be ready to start implementing the project with a sensible, strong and consistent partnership, and results are bound to be positive!

7 Partnership with private operators

In Italy the new law no. 125 of 2014 on development cooperation has given businesses the opportunity to become actors for development, in cooperation with no-profit organizations and with associations.

The idea is that businesses must play an almost "public" role, supporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, as guarantors of the workers' rights, of the respect for human rights and of the building of inclusive social systems generating economic and social well-being.

IN ITALY THE NEW LAW NO. 125 OF 2014 ON DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION HAS GIVEN BUSINESSES THE OPPORTUNITY TO BECOME ACTORS FOR DEVELOPMENT

In other words, businesses must restore a trust relationship with consumers, a relationship that is critical to support the market economy, and have an interest in being perceived as allies in the fight for a better world. Hence the opening of businesses to the cooperation and development sector, and the growing popularity of the so-called "corporate social responsibility" (CSR).

On the other hand, even the associations and governments working for the achievement of the sustainable development goals have an interest in involving businesses, as they are a powerful ally for economic development and because they can invest funds in social responsibility projects.

This mutual interest can potentially lead to a win-win relationship for both the businesses and the migrant associations operating in the development cooperation sector. You must be aware of this and encourage the bringing together of these interests, to the advantage of the whole support system.

How can you meet with the businesses, then? First of all, it should be pointed out that cooperation between for-profit and no-profit organizations is just beginning, and guidelines and common rules are still being defined, especially in the field of ethics and of diversified access to funds. I suggest that you stick to the following procedure:

1. Clearly define the contribution a given business could give to your project. Do you need any equipment? Any work space? Any services? Any know-how?

2. Quantify the contribution you need, numerically and also in terms of economic value. Also identify and quantify the benefit the business would reap, should it cooperate with your project. Often it is a visibility and marketing benefit, but it may also be the interest in expanding its prospective market to your country of origin; consider every relevant scenario.

3. Identify two or three businesses that could provide the contribution you need. Choose a medium- to large business, with a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) department and thus with an interest in investing in the development sector, in exchange for more visibility.

4. Contact the CSR manager, briefly describing your project and the contribution you need; if applicable, ask your donor to help you to develop the relationships with these new partners, possibly through a letter of introduction, attesting your relations with other important actors in the cooperation sector, from the United Nations to local administrations.

CHECK LIST

Operating steps to establish the partnership

1. Clearly define the social issue you want to tackle;

2. Analyse how it is usually tackled locally and ask yourself why your proposal is different and potentially better;

3. Ask yourself which skills you are going to need and which shall be available internally to go ahead with your proposal for change;

4. Then ask yourself which spaces and tools are available and which ones are missing;

5. After identifying the resources and skills you lack, ask where, in which organizations you can find what you need. Are there any businesses or associations you can involve as partners?

6. Being complementary is not enough: to cooperate well, you need to share the same values. Then ask yourself which of the associations, businesses and organizations you identified share your values. Which ones are open and familiar with the issues related to migration and the diaspora?

7. After identifying the prospective partners, approach them, introducing your association and your project vision. Ask for their opinion on your proposal and be willing to explain it clearly, even through a PowerPoint presentation;

8. After convincing your partners to participate, modify your proposal, taking into account the suggestions you received, then share the new version of the project with all partners for approval;

9. After obtaining the consent of all partners to the project vision, start discussing the division of labour: who shall take care of what, according to which schedule and with which budget? Who shall take care of the reporting? With which rules?

10. Discuss and share the decision on the organization of internal communications and on how decisions are made in partnership;

11. Formalize all the decisions in writing, signing a partnership agreement that shall be submitted to the donor.

NOTES

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IMPLEMENTING THE PROJECT

**PROJECT
DEVELOPMENT**
MANUAL
**FOR MIGRANTS'
ASSOCIATIONS**

IOM
UN MIGRATION

Implementing the project

Valeria Saggiomo, Alessandra Merlo, Alberto Contarini

This module has been written by more than one author, as implementing a project requires multiple skills and a strong leadership, capable of providing the team with the proper indications, foreseeing risks, monitoring the development of the activities and maintaining a constructive relationship with the beneficiaries of the project activities and with the donor. Imagine you obtained the funds and you are starting to make your vision for change real: how do you begin? This module will guide you step by step towards the project implementation, starting from the leadership and from the composition of the work team, and ending with the project closure, sharing with you the good practices you should adhere to and some suggestion.

Cover image: Knitting and tailoring trainees in Rwanda. © IOM 2018 / Amanda NERO

Contents

Who implements the project: the leader, the team and the decision-making process

▶ ## The leader

Today projects are managed by multiple figures, and the relevant responsibilities are divided between them. These dynamics, however, must be managed by a person capable of leading the team towards success.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO DEFINE THE PROJECT GOVERNANCE

A good project leader shall be well aware that, although a person capable of making wise decision is necessary, the relevant process can follow individual or shared dynamics.

Defining and organizing the decision-making process of your project team could be your first step when starting a project.

In our experience, we have seen many projects get stalled from the start due to this issue, which is often neglected compared with the organization of activities, and which instead turns out to be essential to create a positive work climate, with everyone being aware of his/her role and of his/her decision-making scope, and operating complementarily to the other.

This results in a unique synergy, positively driving the project and reverberating on the relationship with the beneficiaries and with the actors external to the project.

As a consequence, it can be worth it to spend some time thinking about the decision-making process, and to define who makes the decisions and why, in other words, **to define the project governance**.

You should use your experiences, as well as what happens in your association and in your everyday life, as a starting point for your reflections; in fact, we are sure that everyone has his own idea regarding decision sharing and teamwork. On the other hand, we also wish to offer you our opinion, which is based on many good practices we observed in small and large projects, that we are going to share with you in this module. According to our experience, the best results in project management are obtained when the decision-making project is participative, consistently with the philosophy driving the individual associations towards the implementation of development cooperation initiatives.

In other words, we recommend that **you share the decision-making process with your project partners** and with your staff, according to a clear method defining rules and limits of the participation in the decisions of each group of stakeholders.

IT IS A GOOD PRACTICE TO SHARE THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS WITH YOUR PROJECT PARTNERS

The leader who in the end shall make the decision should stress the contribution of those who participated in it, sharing the merits of a good choice while taking responsibility for the decision.

This way the leader helps creating a team spirit driven by the principle of collaboration rather than by competition.

However, it is important to point out that, although good practices require the decision making process to be shared, the final decision must not necessarily be the one shared by the majority.

At times, during the life of a project, one needs to make some unpopular and bold decisions, like choosing to include or exclude a group of beneficiaries, and it is important that the leader can also take responsibility for those choices.

Our recommendation is that you discuss the decision-making process with your partner and draw up an organizational chart, outlining the hierarchy within the project staff, the lines

of responsibility and the decision-making scope of each group actively participating in the project execution.

Depending on the model you choose, the decision-making process diagram could be similar to the following:
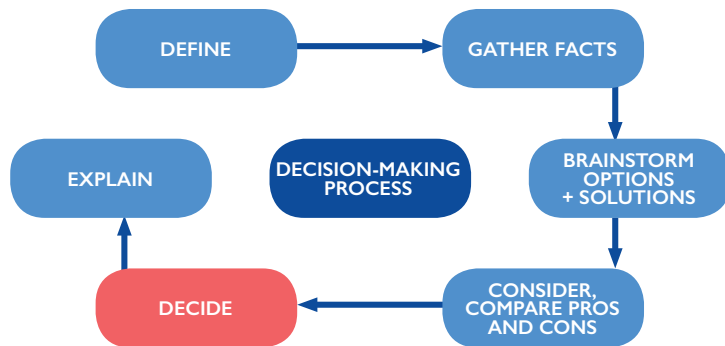
This diagram clearly shows that the decision-making process is driven by single manager or lead association, which is responsible for making the decision, but the decision-making process is participative, as it includes consulting a group of people or partner associations. How?

1. First of all, by **defining the issue** regarding which a decision needs to be made. For example, let's assume the problem is a low turnout of patients at a dispensary the project has built in a village. This problem must be defined and clarified.

2. In order to clarify the problem, you need to gather numerical data and **facts** that can help define the scope of the intervention by the manager or the lead association. For example, you will need to obtain accurate data about the turnout and relate them with other data, like the presence of staff at the dispensary, the opening and closing hours, the season during which the drop in the turnout occurs and so on.

3. This is followed by a step called "brainstorming" in the diagram, which we can call "consultation". This is the **participative** stage, during which you invite the partner and the people you think are concerned with the problem, to jointly discuss the underlying reasons and the options available to resolve it, and to finally propose the relevant solutions.

4. After obtaining the possible solutions, the leader or manager shall analyse them, assessing them and weighing **the relevant advantages and disadvantages**.

5. Only after this process, whose duration may be variable, shall the leader make the decision.

6. It shall then be the leader's responsibility to explain and communicate the decision to all the parties involved in the consultation and concerned with the decision.

It is important that all the project staff members and the members of your association are aware of the decision-making process in place for the execution of the process itself. Therefore, it may be helpful to draw this diagram on a notice board, also specifying "who" shall be involved in each stage. This will allow to clarify right away, for example, that there is a participative process in place, including the consultation of multiple parties and the gathering of the possible solutions, but that this does not necessarily imply that the proposed solutions shall be adopted, as it is the leader's responsibility to assess the respective advantages and disadvantages, to decide and to explain his decision.

▶ The team

Now it is time to choose the team.

You shall have a clear idea of the resources you need, as you carried out this step during the project planning, which includes giving consideration to the human resources.

As a consequence, you will already know how many staff units you need, and to do what, and you will have decided jointly with your partners who shall benefit from these resources. What matters right now is establishing with your partners a **common criterion for the selection** of the human resources and being transparent and loyal.

THE STAFF SELECTION PROCESS AND THE RELEVANT ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES TAKE TIME THAT MUST BE CONSIDERED WHEN STARTING THE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Some partnerships **share the process of staff selection** by the individual partners, and this, even in small projects, is a **good practice that should be adopted**, as it helps creating a team spirit inside the partnership first and then among the staff members.

The staff selection process and the relevant administrative practices take time that must be considered when starting the project implementation, and duly included in the work plan.

Often, instead, the staff selection step is not included in the work plan, as if it should spontaneously develop, requiring no time and work.

According to the project duration, therefore, you will have to consider an initial period, technically called *Inception Phase*, during which you shall take care of the administrative and logistic issues that are required to start the project: the team building, the physical premises of the process both in Italy and in the reference country, any necessary equipment, like computers and printers, the opening of any bank current accounts and so on.

2   Spreading word of the project

If during the process preparation you had agreed with the different actors the possibility to work in a given sector, now that the project has been financed it is time to inform all these actors that the project is starting and that what you planned together shall now be implemented.

The association that promoted the project, in collaboration with the different partners, is responsible for this task, and shall meet again with the **local authorities, the beneficiaries** and **all the other project actors** to inform them that the project has been funded and that it is going to start.

When visiting the local authorities involved in the project, give consideration both to those of the third-party country where the project shall be implemented and to any local authorities that supported you in Italy, like the municipality where the association resides.

IT IS IMPORTANT FOR THE MIGRANTS' ASSOCIATION TO ESTABLISH STRONG TIES WITH BENEFICIARY TERRITORY WHERE THE PROJECT WILL BE IMPLEMENTED

The lead association and the partners, each for their reference territory, can agree to split the relevant workload during this step.

For example, often the local partner in the reference country, like Senegal, shall visit the local authorities, and the lead migrants' association in Italy shall visit the Italian authorities. he same applies to the beneficiaries, but remember that it is important for the migrants' association to establish strong ties with the beneficiary territory, and these ties require it to be regularly present. As a consequence, it could be advisable for the migrants' association to make a trip at the beginning of the project implementation to take care, along with the partners, of this information stage.

So the project should be given appropriate visibility, how?

A **good practice we wish to share with you** is preparing for example a brochure, in the main language spoken in the reference country, describing the project, its goals and the outputs it shall deliver, in a given time period. As the purpose of the material is giving visibility to the project, the brochure could have to follow any guidelines laid down by the donor and the relevant visibility rules, for example for the use of the logos. If the donor provided no clear indications, we recommend that you ask the donor and share the draft copy of the brochure before having it printed.

ANOTHER WAY TO GIVE VISIBILITY TO THE PROJECT, VERY COMMONLY USED ON-SITE, IS ORGANIZING AD EVENT

Even a **poster to be affixed on the wall** is a good practice we have often seen in the local administration offices of the beneficiary countries. Before the institutional visits, therefore, prepare a well-made poster, taking care that it is in the local language, and explicitly ask to affix it on the wall in the place where notice is given of local development initiatives. The image enhancement could exceed your expectations!

Another way to give visibility to the project, very commonly used on-site, is organizing an event, a kind of **project kick-off** ceremony, informally involving the citizens and people. This will give the association the opportunity to speak about itself and its role as a local and transnational development actor, as well as to invite the local authorities, to obtain their public endorsement, the donor, for visibility purposes, and all the citizens willing to attend the event.

For further information about visibility, please refer to the module of this manual entirely devoted to communication.

3   Starting the activities and organizing their monitoring

After settling all the organizational issues, hiring the staff you need and informing all parties that the project is close to starting, it is time to plan the beginning of the activities and to set up appropriate execution and quality control mechanisms, or, in other words, monitoring mechanisms. What we are going to suggest must be agreed upon with all project partners, if possible during a meeting in person. Monitoring is a periodic and constant control of how your project is progressing. What shall you check? On one hand you shall simply check that the activities you planned are actually carried out (monitoring of activities). On the other hand you shall need to check that the benefits resulting from these activities are enough to achieve the outcomes and goals for change in the reference context(s) (monitoring of outcomes and goals).

Let's start from the monitoring of the outcomes.

▶ Monitoring the outcomes

Project outcome control is based on a set of outcome indicators you identified during the planning stage and on the Work Plan drawn up in the design stage . The set of indicators is included in the Logical Framework of the project, which has been approved by the donor. After retrieving the Logical Framework and examining the outcome indicators, you shall ask yourself a series of questions on how to collect the indicator data and explore along with the other partners the **feasibility of the data collection**. For example, ask yourself:

– Who shall take care of collecting the data for this specific indicator, as for exemple the yearly budget of the cooperative members?

— When: every three months? At the end of the year?

— After collecting this piece of data, where do we record it? (For example, in an Excel file gathering the data of all the cooperative members);

— With whom do you want to share the collected piece of data? For example, with all the cooperative members or only with your donor; it is a choice of yours that defines the level of sharing of the information and of transparency in your cooperative.

Remember that collecting the data takes time and commitment; data do not come on their own: you need to request, collect and analyse them. As a consequence, pay proper attention to this process, as it is critical for the monitoring step. As it takes effort to collect and manage the data for each indicator, it is important that the number of indicators is not too high, otherwise the monitoring work becomes too heavy compared with the general project management. The tool we propose to monitor the achievement of the project outcomes and goals is the **Monitoring Framework**, which combines in a single diagram the logical framework indicators, along with a series of columns that describe their progress and mention the agreements you reached as to the data collection. The Monitoring Framework we recommend that you use as a monitoring tool has the following layout:

Column 1 - contains the project indicators, as defined in your logical framework;

Column 2 - contains the base value of your indicator, that is its value when the project started;

Columns 3, 4, and 5 - and any others you may decide to add, contain the value of the indicator collected during the project, with a pre-defined frequency, like every month, every three months, every six months and so on;

Column 6 - contains the value of the indicator at the conclusion of the project;

Columns 7-10 - contain information about the data collection process for the indicator; in particular:

Column 7 - specifies the collector, that is which partnership association and which member of the association is responsible for collecting the data;

Column 8 - specifies when data are collected, with which frequency – for example, on a weekly, biweekly monthly, quarterly basis, and so on;

Column 9 - describes how data are collected, for example through a questionnaire, by referring to a register, by directly observing an event and so on;

Column 10 - contains a text field allowing the monitoring person to enter any remarks on the indicator's trend. Column 10 can for example contain a short note pointing out the need to verify why a given indicator does not grow, the obstacles the project is encountering and the need to identify them and to resolve the issues stalling the goal achievement.

Young Senegalese who returned home interviews one another about their migration experiences.
© IOM 2018 / Julia BURPEE

MONITORING FRAMEWORK

PORJECT'S TITLE:

COL. 1	COL. 2	COL. 3	COL. 4	COL. 5	COL. 6	COL. 7	COL. 8	COL. 9	COL. 10
MONITORING AREA 1	BASE VALUE	INTERMEDIATE VALUE 1	INTERMEDIATE VALUE 2	INTERMEDIATE VALUE 3	FINAL VALUE	WHO COLLECT THE DATA	WHEN DATA ARE COLLECTED	HOW DATA ARE COLLECTED	NOTES
INDICATOR 1.1									
INDICATOR 1.2									
INDICATOR 1.3									
INDICATOR 1.4									
MONITORING AREA 2									
INDICATOR 2.1									
INDICATOR 2.2									
INDICATOR 2.3									
INDICATOR 2.4									
MONITORING AREA 3									
INDICATOR 3.1									
INDICATOR 3.2									
INDICATOR 3.3									
INDICATOR 3.4									

Figure 1 - monitoring framework

▶ ## Monitoring activities

Activities are monitored through the **Activity Monitoring Table.** It is a table whose starting point is the Work Plan; it allows to set a series of observation periods (for example, a quarter) and verify the progress.

At the beginning of the project implementation stage, the activities identified for each Outcome and specified in the Logical Framework can be further broken down into subactivities. The purpose of the breakdown is obtaining enough details to estimate the execution time and to specify the assignments to the persons in charge.

For example, with reference to the Outcome "Starting of the professional training programme" the three activities could be broken down as shown in Figure 2.

Outcome	**2.** Starting of a professional training programme		
Activities	**2.1** Selecting trainers	**2.2** Preparing the material	**2.3** Delivering the training
Sub-activities	**2.1.1** Defining the necessary profiles **2.1.2** Carrying out the interviews **2.1.3** Choosing the professionals	**2.2.1** Drawing up the draft version of the contents **2.2.2** Finalizing the manual and the case studies **2.2.3** Taking care of the editing	**2.3.1** Taking care of the logistical issues **2.3.2** Delivering the course **2.3.3** Delivering the coaching

Figure 2 - Activity breakdown

This, therefore, shall be the Activity Monitoring Table, over an observation period of three months.

OUTPUT 2 - PROFESSIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMME	MILESTONES	QUARTER 1		QUARTER 2		IMPLEMENTATION PROBLEMS	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN	PERSON IN CHARGE	REMARKS
		EXPECTED	IMPL.	EXPECTED	IMPL.				
2.1 Selecting trainers	Trainers selected (7.3)								
2.1.1 Defining the necessary profiles									
2.1.2 Carrying out the interviews									
2.1.3 Choose professionals									
2.2 Preparing the material	Material ready and approved (31.3)								
2.2.1 Drawing up the draft version of the contents									
2.2.2 Finalizing the manual and the case studies									
2.2.3 Taking care of the editing									
2.3 Delivering the training									
2.3.1 Taking care of the logistical issues									
2.3.2 Delivering the course									
2.3.3 Delivering the coaching									

Figure 3 - Activity monitoring table

You can use the table as follows:

1. At the beginning of the three-month period proceed with the detail planning (the activities/subactivities for the quarter in question shall be marked with a light blue background);

2. At the end of the three-month period carry out the first observation for the quarter in question: in the "carried out" column, mark with a green colour the cells containing the activities/subactivities that were carried out according to the planning; mark with a yellow colour the cells containing the activities that were only partially carried out as planned; finally, mark with a red colour the cells containing the activities that were not carried out. The next columns allow to specify the issues with the activity execution, the corrective actions to be taken and the persons in charge of carrying out the actions in question. This information, in addition to being supplied to the internal monitoring system, provides the data for the periodic reports to the funder.;

3. Once the monitoring for the current quarter is completed, proceed with the planning of the next quarter, adapting the work plan to the results of the implementation monitoring period that has just ended. This means that if there are any activities that were not carried out during the previous quarter, they shall be included in the next one, in addition to the activities already planned for the period in question.

Monitoring risks

During the planning stage we discussed the issue of risk analysis, that is all the situations that can hinder the project performance and its success.

During planning you identified the most likely risks and defined a mitigation strategy.

For example: should the road leading to your cooperative become impassable during the rainy season (risk), how would you ensure that prospective purchasers can have access to your products? The answer to this question is your risk mitigation strategy.

In our example, your mitigation strategy could include ensuring that products are transported to the customer, instead of waiting for the customer to reach the cooperative to purchase the product. This would require having a 4x4 van, and spending a portion of your budget to purchase the fuel.

RISKS ARE MONITORED ON A CONTINUOUS BASIS DURING THE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

If the risk is high you will need to obtain funding to cover the purchase of the fuel and the renting of the van during the rainy season.

In the initial stage of project implementation, then, the *Risk Matrix* is updated, re-assessing the probability that the risks already identified occur and identifying any new risks that should arise.

The matrix is then expanded by adding a column containing the **risk indicator,** that results from events that may occur at a given time and that act as alarm bells, warning you of the necessity to activate the mitigation actions.

Risks are monitored on a continuous basis during project implementation, with the frequency laid down for the physical and financial monitoring.

Trainees in shoemaking in Rwanda. © IOM 2018 / Amanda NERO

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▶ ## Monitoring expenditures

Every activity that is performed requires the disbursement of a sum of money.

The money available to the project must be carefully managed, to avoid using the funds for activities not included in the project, or spending sums that are not consistent with, or exceed, the ones laid down in the individual budget lines.

WHEN CARRYING OUT THE ACTIVITIES IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU MONITOR THE INDIVIDUAL EXPENDITURES

Financial management and expenditure monitoring must be set up from the beginning, and must be carried out on an ongoing basis and in a timely fashion.

When carrying out the activities, therefore, it is important that you monitor the individual expenditures and compare them with the available budget, to correct any errors and avoid "discovering" later that the remaining resources are not enough to carry out the other activities.

How should you monitor the expenditures? The simplest way is using Excel, a calculation program we are all familiar with; set up an **Input table**, where you shall enter all the expenditures incurred during the project performance, automatically linking the items in question to the budget in the "spent sum" column.

Code	Budget Costs	Unit	N° of Unit/Duration	Unit Cost (Euro)	Total BDG	% on total	Spent Sum	Balance
	1 Staff Costs							
1.1	Local coordinator	MONTH	7	593	4,151		0	4,151,00
1.2	Local operator	MONTH	0	-			0	0,00
1.3	Senior computer trainer	DAY	19	88	1,672		0	1,672,00
1.4	Coordinator for Italy	MONTH	5	1,000	5,000		0	5,000,00
1.5	Junior computer trainer	DAY	0	-			0	0,00
TOTAL STAFF COSTS					10,823	56,17%		10,823,00

The Input table can then be linked to the report using the Excel functions themselves. The following is a sample Input table for expenditure recording:

An example of Input Table to register the expenditures

DOCUMENT DATE	ITEM OF EXPENDITURE	MACRO ITEM	ACTIVITIES	DOC. NUMBER	SUPPLIER	AMOUNT EUR	DUE DATE
01/05/2018	Stationery	Operating cost	Training Computer maintenance skill	Doc of 01/05/2017 no. 3	Supplier 1	10	30/05/2018
05/05/2018	Computers	Equipment/Fixed Assets	Children selection		Supplier 2	1500	30/06/2018
07/05/2018	Publications	Operating cost	Project coordination and management	no1 of	Supplier 3	750	30/06/2018
09/05/2018	Computers	Equipment/Fixed Assets	Training computer maintenance skill	no.45 of 09/05/2018	Supplier 1	450	30/07/2018

As you can see from the sample table, the Input table includes the column "Item of expenditure".

The "Item of Expenditure" column allows to group all the costs associated with a specific "item of expenditure" and to calculate the spent total, thus obtaining the spent amount and, by difference, the available balance.

All this information shall be useful to build your financial report.

How should you do that? By using the "sumif" function we already used to build the module devoted to budget development.

When defining the fields of the Input table for the expenditures you should include some specific columns, like those shown in the above example, called "supplier" (specifying the name of the supplier) and "due date".

The latter column, "due date", allows to constantly keep under control the future deadlines, and thus to also plan the financial expenditures in greater detail and with greater care.

Here are a few operating notes and indications you should follow for financial management and reporting:

– All expenditures must be accompanied by a document certifying it (a receipt or an invoice, also known as ***supporting documents***);

– All supporting documents must be promptly given to the administrative manager;

– Payments are not made if there are no accompanying supporting documents;

– It must be possible to associate the expenditures with the project. As a consequence, if possible, you should include in the

description the name of the project and the activity for which the expenditure was incurred;

– In the supporting document (invoice, receipt) manually specify: project name – item of expenditure – code of the item of expenditure. This shall simplify both the accounting recognition and any controls by the donor.

Each supporting document shall be stored in an archive, that you should keep in both paper and digital form. You can use the following methods to store the documents:

– Photocopy the document and scan it (if possible) for digital storage;

– Store it in paper form in a project dossier divided by item of expenditure;

– Store the supporting documents in the computer.

All documents must be stored according to the same structure as the budget, and thus under the individual chapters and items of the budget.

Pay attention to the name you assign to the electronic files of your documents! We recommend that you agree upon the naming policy with your partners and with any other person managing the project funds. This way all the persons concerned shall be able to easily search for all the documents.

A rather common practice is including the project name or code in the file name. Storage becomes essential during reporting and/or in case of controls and audits by the donor.

> **Remember that a clear data storage and recording system reduces the risk of mistakes and increases the sharing of information, improving the project impact.**

WHAT ABOUT TIME OPTIMIZATION?
REPORTING USING PIVOT TABLES

This Excel function is often used by professionals, but not well known by most users. However, it is a very useful tool for small associations as well. Pivot tables are a powerful data analysis tool allowing to significantly reduce the data management and analysis time, decreasing the risk of errors and providing flexible and clear reports. Pivot tables automatically group the data contained in the input tables we set up in this module. The sample table below groups the budget expenses by activity to be carried out.

PROJECT BUDGET PIVOT

Row labels	TOTAL sum
Project coordination and management	9,800.00
Staff costs	9,000.00
Operating costs	800.00
Children selection	120.00
Staff costs	0.00
Operating costs	120.00
Training on computer maintenance	8,567.00
Staff costs	1,200.00
Operating costs	367.00
Equipment	7.000.00
Training on mobile phone maintenance	636.00
Staff costs	480.00
Operating costs	156.00
(blank)	0.00
	0.00
Overall total	**19,123.00**

The table below, instead, breaks down the budget by activity but also by project partner.

PROJECT BUDGET PIVOT

TOTAL sum						
	LEAD ASSOCIATION	PARTNER 2	PARTNER 1	PARTNER 2	PARTNER 3	Overall total
Project coordination and management			5,000.00		4,800.00	9,800.00
Staff cost			5,000.00		4,000.00	9,000.00
Operating Cost					800.00	800.00
Children selection	150.00	0,00	100.00	20.00		270.00
Staff cost	150.00		0.00			150.00
Operating Cost		0.00	100.00	20.00		120.00
Training on computer maintenance	7,000.00	1,300.00	267.00			8,567.00
Staff cost		1,200.00				1,200.00
Operating Cost		100.00	267.00			367.00
Equipment/Fixed Assets	7,000.00					7,000.00
Training on mobile phone maintenance	486.00	10.00	140.00			636.00
Staff cost	480.00					480.00
Operating Cost	6.00	10.00	140.00			156.00
Overall total	**7,636.00**	**1,310.00**	**5,507.00**	**20.00**	**4,800.00**	**19,273.00**

This function requires an initial effort to properly set up the work, whose benefits shall be reaped when you use it.

4   Requesting changes to the project

Imagine the following scenario: during the project implementation phase, you realize you need to make some changes to your logical framework, either because you deemed it advisable to modify an indicator, or because the need has arisen to change some activities in order to achieve the outcome, or even because you have failed to meet the implementation schedule.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO START ACTING PROMPTLY TO REQUEST ANY CHANGE TO THE PROJECT

If you need to make any change to the project, to the logical framework, to the budget and to all the other components of your action agreed upon with the donor, you need to request from the donor the authorization to proceed with the change in question. It is not merely a matter of bureaucracy: it is a change to the agreement reached with the donor, to the subject matter of the contract mutually signed. For this reason, as it is a change to a contract, it is important that, no matter how small it is, this change is agreed upon and approved by the donor. How should you do that?

Should you need to modify the project, you should request from the donor an **amendment** to the project, that is a change or correction.

The request for amendment is a change to the project, which must be implemented in accordance with the indications provided by the donor and which takes time to be assessed and approved.

Only after the amendment has been approved shall the new project document be deemed valid. As a consequence it shall be important that, should you identify the need to make a change to the project, you start acting promptly, as soon as possible and certainly not when the project is close to be completed, as should the approval be given after the project closing date, the change cannot be deemed valid.

A typical amendment that often risks to be requested too late, in the light of the time it takes to obtain the concession, is the **cost-free extension** of the project, which is requested when the project period is close to expiring and the parties realize they cannot complete all the activities within the project closing date. What shall you do, then?

DURING THE COST-FREE EXTENSION PERIOD, YOU SHALL USE THE PROJECT FUNDS ALLOCATED FOR THAT ACTIVITY

Well before the project ends, in agreement with the donor and in accordance with the official procedures prescribed for the submission of the amendment, you shall request an extension of the project time not exceeding 10–20 per cent of the total time, in order to complete the activities in progress.

Generally, you can only request from the donor a short time extension, and the extension in question **must not require the granting** of additional funds for the period. Hence the term "cost-free" extension. During the cost-free extension period, you shall use the project funds allocated for that activity. The staff cost, instead, shall still be paid by you.

It is important that you request the cost-free extension some time before the project expires, to ensure that the donor has enough time to assess the proposed extension before the project ends.

Trainees in shoemaking in Rwanda. © IOM 2018 / Amanda NERO

5 Closing the project

Now it is time to start preparing **to close the project**.

In some cases, once the project duration expires or little before, you will need to get ready to undergo the final evaluation and lay down all the procedures required to ensure that the beneficiaries can meet the goals and outputs even after the project expiry (sustainability).

The project expiry does not imply the conclusion of the project activities. In fact, there are still a few actions that must be carried out and mainly concern administrative issues.

The association shall **properly and clearly store all the documents** in dossiers for easy future reference. As a consequence, you need to store:

– a copy of the project;

– a copy of the budget;

– a copy of all the supporting documents certifying the expenditures, divided by budget chapters;

– a copy of the inventory of the purchased goods and of their distribution (to beneficiaries) or transfer;

– a copy of all the reports that were sent to the donor;

– photos, videos, presentation material.

It is important to ensure that the documents allow to reconstruct all the activities that were carried out and the expenditures incurred even after a long time period, and by people who were not directly involved.

Should the project include the donation of equipment or machinery to the local partner, you should draw up a **transfer document** certifying the donation and its purposes.

You shall have to **close the current bank account** used for the project and verify that any contracts (letting of premises, service contracts) signed for the project performance are closed and that there are no pending issues.

Only when the documents have been properly stored shall you be able to state that the project is actually completed.

CHECK LIST

Operating steps to implement the project

1. Define the project governance, specifying in a diagram who is responsible for what and how the decision-making process is organized;

2. Spread word of the project, inform of it the local authorities, the direct and indirect beneficiaries and the other organizations operating in the same sector, in all project-related places, both in Italy and in the third-party country;

3. Draw up the monitoring table and define the roles and responsibilities for the monitoring of activities, risks and expenditures. Properly share the information collected during the monitoring with all project partners;

4. Once the project expires, store the main project documents to ensure that the project is closed properly.

NOTES

Serena Carta

COMMUNICATING THE PROJECT: WHY IT IS IMPORTANT AND HOW YOU SHOULD PROCEED

**PROJECT
DEVELOPMENT**
MANUAL
**FOR MIGRANTS'
ASSOCIATIONS**

IOM
UN MIGRATION

Communicating the project: Why it is important and how you should proceed

Serena Carta

For over ten years I have been dealing with information and communication for the non-profit sector. I cooperate with cultural and social promotion associations, non-governmental organizations, foundations and international organizations. My job is helping them increase the visibility and promote the activities, but also improve the outbound and inbound communication processes. The experience I have gained on-field - in Italy, in Northern Europe and in Africa in particular - has taught me to give the word communication a social and civil connotation. A "good" communication, in fact, can promote positive changes, as it allows to connect and multiply knowledge, ideas and resources that drive human progress. During these years, I have seen commendable and innovative projects struggle to get the attention they would deserve as word of their existence could not be spread beyond the small circle of members, volunteers, friends and operators (sometimes due to a fair dose of scepticism). Instead, you should be aware that impact on society can be increased not only by promoting local activities and initiatives, but also by speaking about who you are, what you do and how you operate, through the many available media. The challenge is learning to find your way among the existing communication channels, studying them closely and then understanding which ones are suitable for you.

Cover image: *Rohingya Cash for work participants waiting for payments.* © IOM 2018 / Abdullah Al MASHRIF

Contents

Communicating to...

Make a difference

Communication takes time, and the first step is sitting at your desk, with paper and pencil, and spend a few hours working on it, alone – as self-taught authors – or with the aid of a professional. This module, therefore, aims at providing you with the basic tools you require to start setting up a communication strategy, that is a map capable of helping you to systematize the ideas, to identify and then to integrate the most suitable media, as well as to plan and implement the communication activities of your projects. For people like you, who play an active role in diaspora associations, communication should first and foremost be a responsibility, rather than a duty.

I'll try to explain you why by quoting two scholars, Gaia Peruzzi and Andrea Volterrani, who in 2016 published a useful book on social communication:[1] "Social communication is the communication aimed at promoting rights, justice and social solidarity; it is the communication whose purpose is spreading meanings, ideas and practices informed by values of fairness, peace and inclusion. A communication aimed at establishing and spreading relationships informed by criteria and feelings of fraternity and communality, of equality and of social sustainability, with particular attention to the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged people. A communication aimed at fighting the purposes and excesses of individualism, of selfishness, of unfair power and of absolute profit". In other words: **social communication is aimed at actively engaging people to change behaviours and lifestyles**. In the light of the above, it is quite clear to me that sharing ideas, pathways, projects, processes, stories, problems and solutions allows people to do their job well, or indeed better.

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1 G. Peruzzi, A. Volterrani, *La comunicazione sociale,* Editori Laterza, 2016.

Multiply opportunities

Engaging in communication activities certainly requires investing a significant amount of resources, but can provide tangible benefits in terms of social and financial capital. **Deciding to give visibility to your activities and initiatives on the media also means opening yourself to new opportunities, both in your country of origin and in that of residence.** Making yourself known to the public means exposing yourself with your ideas, but also distinguishing yourself for your peculiarities, *attracting attention and ensuring that people remembers you.* Talking about yourself honestly and transparently *improves your reputation and increases your trustworthiness.* Carefully managing your presence on the web, regularly updating the most popular social networks, helps *to expand the community of your supporters and volunteers* who, receiving up-to-date information on the activities of your association and on how it uses their donations and their contribution, shall feel part of the "global family", and shall have no hesitation to keep supporting you. Even the network of your partners benefits from the communication: spending time on the web *makes it easier to get in touch* with other individuals or entities that share your mission, with *whom you can ally and who can help you to operate more effectively.* Even donors appreciate and encourage the sharing of the progress and outcomes of the projects they fund: not only because this enhances the value of their work, but also because spreading word of the activities *allows to reach more beneficiaries and increases the impact of the initiatives.* In other words, **communicating is in your interest!**

EVEN DONORS APPRECIATE AND ENCOURAGE THE SHARING OF THE PROGRESS AND OUTCOMES OF THE PROJECTS THEY FUND

MIGRANTS' ASSOCIATIONS WHO COMMUNICATE INCREASE THEIR SOCIAL IMPACT BECAUSE THEY:

- Give voice to people who are normally unheard
- Share and promote local skills and knowledge
- Overturn stereotypes and prejudices
- Teach respect for different opinions
- Transfer good practices
- Spread positive news

BOX 1

STORYTELLING - THE ART OF TELLING STORIES WHICH DEPICT WORLDS

> **66** *Stories. "(...) the only ones that from time immemorial can combine information, knowledge, wisdom, emotions, care about oneself and other people. There have been civilizations that never used the wheel, but none that never told stories".*
>
> *(Luisa Cerrada, Il mestiere di scrivere)*

What would the world be like without stories? We are all sensitive to their spell, when they evoke landscapes and characters that bring back feelings we lived directly or indirectly, that move and excite us. Stories are powerful: they help to broaden our imagination, adding fragments of possible worlds. They let us enter territories that otherwise would have remained unknown, in a light-hearted and pleasant way, without boring us. That's why people identify with the stories, grow fond of them and are inspired by them in their life.

In the light of the above, I encourage you to speak about yourself, your associations, your projects and the people behind them as if you were storytellers or epic poets. In other words, I invite you to adopt the technique of storytelling, that is the art of telling stories, in all the communication initiatives you decide to deploy.

Learning to tell about the project starting from the stories means giving prominence to the voices and experiences of the people with whom you come into contact in the communities and territories where you operate: from operators to volunteers, members of associations, direct and indirect beneficiaries, donors. They are small personal stories, unlike the news commonly reported by mainstream media. This way you will share stories of courage, empowerment and transformation that otherwise would remain voiceless, and that play an essential role to showcase the strength of promoting human rights and global justice.

Do not be afraid of telling your personal stories as migrants, to help the readers – whether from Italy or from foreign countries – to understand your point of view, to draw inspiration from it for their own experience, to find similarities with your story, or simply to better understand the uniqueness of each migration path.

10 actions for effective storytelling

1. *Aim at informing:* though in a creative and original form, your main goal must still be providing information about something that you know very well and that you wish to share with other people;

2. *Focus on people:* protagonists tell about themselves in person, nobody does it on their behalf. If the context allows it, write the message

jointly with them, or ask them to write it in person. You can choose to give voice to:

- *Beneficiaries*, those who directly or indirectly reap the benefits of your project. What has happened in their life since they have gotten acquainted with you? What was there before and what is there now? Which resources have they deployed to help change?

- *Operators and Volunteers*, those who help create a change in the life of the beneficiaries. Who are they? Which skill and expertise have they invested? Which passion or aim drives them?

- *Donors*, those who care about the stories of the beneficiaries and who have chosen to support your projects. Who are they and why do they believe in you?

3. *Fight prejudices and stereotypes:* show that reality has many facets, give prominence to different voices and perspectives;

4. *Share concrete achievements:* switch the focus of the message from the problem to the solution. Show how the money provided by the donors has been spent, what people are doing, how their life actually changes;

5. *Give prominence to emotions and feelings:* the protagonists are real people, who suffer and rejoice like all of us. The reader identifies with their stories and recognizes parts of his own life, like challenges, difficulties and successes;

6. *Describe every situation with honesty and truthfulness:* the audience takes time to read your stories; in exchange, present them with fragments of reality, and show that they can trust you;

7. *Engage the reader:* make him feel part of the fate of your protagonists, possibly telling their stories as if they were part of a serial; entertain, intrigue and amuse him;

8. *Give the stories a beginning and an end:* develop the stories through actions and changes that follow a chronological order;

9. *Combine text, videos and photos:* if you can, enhance your written messages with photos and original videos. On the web images are the most appreciated and shared contents!

10. *Write simply:* use an easy to understand, familiar style (and be careful to avoid orthography and grammar errors!).

2 Where should you start from? Communication strategies

There is no magic formula, no secret ingredient: to spread word of your association and to tell about your commitment and your mission, you need a communication strategy (a tactic!) good enough to ensure that certain things happen. **The following are method and process indications that will help you to draw up a realistic and sustainable action plan, consistent with the human, financial and time resources at your disposal.** You shall also find a few examples, aimed at helping you to better visualize the concepts: do not copy them – it is not in your interest, if they do not refer to your context! – but let them inspire you.

The first step I recommend is gathering a workgroup with whom you can discuss for at least half a day, settling in a comfortable place and taking paper and pencil. You will have to **answer four questions** to start producing ideas, broaden your perspective and gather all the information in your possession: the answers shall become the foundation of the communication strategy for the project your association is working on. Remember: the architecture of the information you gather shall be similar to the following diagram.
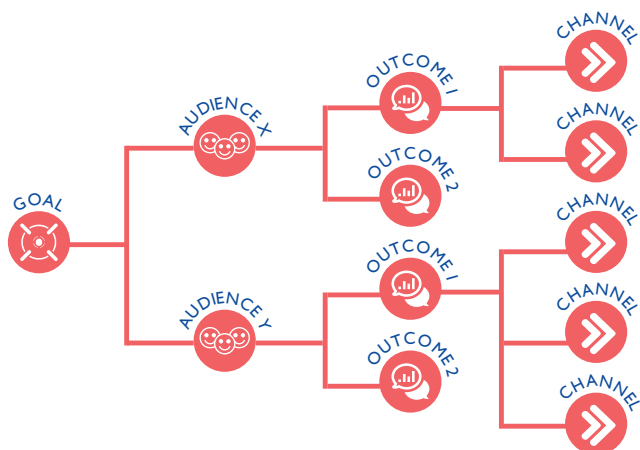
FIRST QUESTION: WHICH IS YOUR GOAL?

That is, who are you and what do you want your audience to know? What do you wish other people to know about your project and why? The goal is the foundation of your strategy; it must show you the way and motivate you when any difficulties arise. At this level of analysis you should be ambitious: it is time to think big and to leverage your value, identifying the characteristics that make your initiative unique and original and that are worth being shared with those who still do not know you, or with those who support you and believe in you.

Sample global goals

- Your goal is proving that your association is an agent of change: you wish to tell about how the situation of the territory and community in which you operate changes before and after your intervention;

- Your goal is acting as a reference point for the migrants based in your place of residence in Italy: you wish to spread word of the services you offer, but also preserve your culture of origin;

- Your goal is raising money to support the projects in the country of origin;

- Your goal is telling about who the migrants are, how they live and what they do, as you think that sharing your stories, those of your association's members and those of your communities is an effective method to improve the culture of acceptance, integration and interaction in Italy.

SECOND QUESTION: WHO DO YOU WISH TO ADDRESS?

Technically we call it audience or reference target. You cannot speak to everyone: as a consequence, you should select the communities and categories of people (just a few, to begin with) you are most interested in addressing. After identifying them, think about their characteristics (age, sex, how they inform themselves, the issues they are most receptive about): this will

help you to determine the most appropriate communication channels and topics. Each audience requires a specific assessment: it may sound banal, but you cannot speak about the same issues and in the same way to the families of migrants who live in your city and to the institutions.

Examples of audience

OUTCOMES ARE ACTUAL GOALS, CORRESPONDING TO THE DIRECT AND CONCRETE CONSEQUENCES OF YOUR COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

- students / young people / teenagers

- families of migrants

- other migrants' associations with which you share your mission

- institutions

- private businesses

THIRD QUESTION: WHICH OUTCOMES DO YOU WISH TO ACHIEVE?
That is, what do you want your communication activities to trigger? Which changes do you expect? Outcomes are actual goals, corresponding to the direct and concrete consequences of your communication strategy. They are consistent with the global goal and change according to your target.

Examples of outcomes

Eight months after the project started, the following has happened...

- migrants from Senegal living in Rome have received up-to-date information about the project activities in Italy and in Senegal (OUTCOME: informing the diaspora of the project state);

- you have established a partnership with a migrants' association in Tuscany which shares your mission (OUTCOME: reinforcing connections with migrants' comminuty elsewhere in Italy);

- you have organized two fund-raising events which allowed you to partially support one of your projects (OUTCOME: raising funds);

- you have opened a blog recording the testimonies – photos, videos, articles – of the project beneficiaries (OUTCOME: giving voice to voiceless people);

- the Facebook page has grown and has received many new support messages (OUTCOME: promoting your association).

FOURTH QUESTION: THROUGH WHICH CHANNELS ARE YOU GOING TO COMMUNICATE?

That is, which online and offline tools do you choose to use to transmit your messages? Choose through which media you wish to tell about you, taking into account the characteristics of your target audience and the outcomes you wish to achieve, and realistically estimating the time, financial and human resources at your disposal. Remember that each channel must be updated regularly, so you should rather have a single, well-maintained and lively channel, than many neglected ones!

BEFORE LAUNCHING YOUR COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN, THEN, CAREFULLY STUDY THE CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUR LOCAL CONTEXT

I shall provide no examples, as the chapter that follows is only aimed at illustrating the most popular communication channels, allowing you to choose the ones that suit you.

WARNING! WHICH ERRORS SHOULD YOU AVOID?

1. Projects promoted by migrants' associations very often involve two or more countries: in this case **it is essential that you create specific communication strategies for each country in which you work**, as the contexts, needs and people are different. What may work in Italy, in fact, shall not necessarily be successful in your country of origin, due to culture and communication habits or to the available technology. Before launching your communication campaign, then, carefully study the characteristics of your local context, set realistic goals and give preference to local resources and contents;

2. The strategy must be **tested for a certain time**: it is not set in stone, but must be adapted to the changing conditions or improved, if you realize something is not working. I recommend that you test it for a few months, after which you can assess what shall be retained and what shall be discarded or changed;

3. If your association has not much time at its disposal and nobody in it has any expertise in communication, it may be worth contacting a non-profit sector consultant, who can help you to get started.

IOM in Cambodia partners with a local hospitality school where students are trained in the culinary arts, hotel management and catering. © IOM 2016 / Muse MOHAMMED

3 **The tools of the trade: from the social networks to the press department**

To choose the most appropriate channel to tell your audience about you and your work, you need to know what the "market" of web and non-web communication tools can offer. We shall start by having a closer look to the social networks – also known as "new media" – that leverage the potential offered by the Internet, then we shall conclude our analysis with the more traditional activity of the press department. It shall be your responsibility to fill your project communication toolbox with the tools you deem the most suitable for the context in which you operate.

▶ ## The social networks

They are the most visited web sites, literally "inhabited" by people, groups and communities that exchange large volumes of information every second; it is allegedly easier to find a piece of news on the Facebook wall than on the home page of a site! The social networks are also the channels where you can test a people-oriented style of communication, informal and simple. The most popular ones – like Facebook, Twitter or Instagram, that we shall discuss soon – have free and rather user-friendly versions, but you need to observe a few rules.

THE SOCIAL NETWORKS ARE ALSO THE CHANNELS WHERE YOU CAN TEST A PEOPLE-ORIENTED STYLE OF COMMUNICATION

The first rule, applying to all the social networks you wish to inhabit with your association, is the following: the contents you share must be well thought-out and significant. In other words: do not write whatever goes through your mind, but learn to publish significant contents, when needed.

The second rule is that you do not need to be present on all platforms: it is important that you carefully choose the ones

which are visited by your reference audience, and which the resources at your disposal allow you to regularly update.

Here I have chosen to tell you about Facebook, Twitter and Instagram because to this date they are the platforms on which most people meet. I shall not provide specific instructions on how to use them – for example on how to open a group on Facebook, record a video on Instagram or publish a tweet – but I'll share with you some guidelines aimed at helping you to understand whether they are suitable for you, as well as some operating tips to properly use them (above all Facebook, the undisputed king of social relationships on the web!).

FACEBOOK

PEOPLE NORMALLY BROWSE FACEBOOK DURING BREAKS: TRY TO BE USEFUL, CONSTRUCTIVE AND PLEASANT, SPONTANEOUS

The social network founded by Mark Zuckerberg offers the associations operating in the world of solidarity the opportunity to tell other people about themselves and to be heard, to interact with and engage the followers (that is, the people who clicked on the "like" link in your page and thus wish to receive your updates) through words, texts, photos and videos. Opening and managing a page on Facebook (not a profile – mind you! – that is personal and reserved for individuals),[2] even though you have no budget for it, is a good way **to remind your community that you exist and wish to share stories and news, ideas and values**.

People normally browse Facebook during breaks: as a consequence, you should try to be useful, constructive and pleasant, spontaneous. Use a warm, familiar and engaging "tone": write about yourselves and your feelings, share your opinions and take stance (you do not have to please everybody!). You should also act strategically, for the purposes of the project,

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2 You must necessarily open a page if you wish to be present on Facebook in the name of your organization. The Facebook rules, in fact forbid setting up a personal profile to represent "your group, company or product".

and attach value to all contributions: remember to @tag[3] your partners, donors and volunteers, and use the #hashtags[4] to identify projects and activities. This shall encourage sharing and help to spread your messages.

Writing original and creative content, engaging the reader, is not always easy; similarly, sometimes it may seem difficult to keep updating your page on a regular basis. In this case you can resort to the editorial calendar, an actual calendar with days and hours into which you can enter the contents you wish to share, scheduling their publication and spreading it over time. Create your favourite calendar template, on paper or on a PC: in the following page I have suggested one you can reproduce in Word.

What to write and when? My suggestion is publishing some content 2 or 3 times per week, alternating between three types of contents:

1. **Promotional:** contents regarding your association and the project state, presenting outputs or goals; in short, contents providing information about you and your activities;

2. **Useful:** contents teaching something new, possibly regarding your country of origin (a recipe, the anniversary of a historic event, a cultural aspect, etc.) or regarding a legislative novelty; in short, contents that do not directly provide information about you and your association but that allow to share a piece of knowledge on one of the topics you are qualified to discuss;

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3 To tag a person or a page use the at sign (= @), followed by the name you wish to mention; this will create a link to the relevant profile or page. The tagged person or association shall receive a notification – that is, it will be informed that someone mentioned it – and will be more likely to read the post in question.

4 The hashtag is the hash mark (= #); you can insert it before the keywords of your message, to attach value to them and make them stand out. The hashtag allows to aggregate similar contents according to keywords, as well as to more easily share and follow the topics of interest.

An easy but effective way to share useful content is posting an article you found enlightening yourselves!

3. **Engaging:** contents that encourage people to chat and reply; publishing opinions and point of views on current topics, or revealing background information, are very effective tactics.

The following is a sample format you can use to organize your communication activities, according to a detailed and carefully thought-out calendar:

NOVEMBER					
Week I	**Monday**	**Tuesday**	**Wednesday**	**Thursday**	**Friday**
h 9 - 12				For example Here I publish the recipe of a typical dish of my country of origin.	
h 12 - 14		Fill these spaces with detailed contents! **For example Here I write that my association has participated in the AMICO 2018 training initiative.**			
h 14 - 18					For example Here I share a short video of the local team lunch after the weekly meeting.

Week II	**Monday**	**Tuesday**	**Wednesday**	**Thursday**	**Friday**
h 9 - 12			■		
h 12 - 14	■				■
h 14 - 18					

Week III	**Monday**	**Tuesday**	**Wednesday**	**Thursday**	**Friday**
h 9 - 12	■				
h 12 - 14					
h 14 - 18		■			■

Week IV	**Monday**	**Tuesday**	**Wednesday**	**Thursday**	**Friday**
h 9 - 12	■		■		
h 12 - 14					■
h 14 - 18					

■ **Promotional content**   ■ **Useful content**   ■ **Engaging content**

BOX 2

SUGGESTIONS TO KEEP YOUR FACEBOOK PAGE ALIVE

• Give voice to the protagonists of your projects, through the technique of storytelling;

• Publish contents on a regular basis (use the editorial calendar as an aid for this purpose);

• Do not copy the contents, be original, identify your peculiarities;

• Provide plenty of information about you (both successes and failures);

• Share first impressions after an event;

• Share what you like or don't like, what you believe in;

• Build a network of relationships: actively participate in the groups and follow pages on topics similar to yours;

• Maintain close relationships with the users: always answer the comments and messages;

• Encourage relationships and participations: ask direct questions to your followers;

• Spread word of your FB page on the other communication channels (site, blog, brochure);

• If you lose focus, revisit your communication strategy and clarify the reason for which you are on FB (remind yourself of the goal, of the targets and of the outputs).

Trainees in food processing in Rwanda. © IOM 2018 / Amanda NERO

TWITTER

To be clear, it is the social network with the blue bird logo, only allowing to post short sentences (currently the limit is 280 characters). **Inhabiting Twitter can be useful, first of all, to follow the national and international threads on current topics**. On Twitter non-profit experts, activists, international organizations, politicians and institutions post comments and constantly discuss on epochal topics, and "listening" to them can help you to stay informed on world events in real time, in addition to providing cues and ideas for further research, if you are interested.

PUBLISH ONE POST PER DAY, SIGNALLING A NOVELTY RELATED TO YOUR ASSOCIATION

The risk of following the threads on Twitter is being overwhelmed by the constant flow of messages. As a consequence, I recommend creating some lists, that is grouping your favourite profiles according to the topics you are interested in, to ensure that you can focus on the discussions among the members of a given group of people or on a given topic.

What can you do on Twitter? Publish one post per day, signalling a novelty related to your association or sharing the tweet of some other user that is related with your activity and that can be interesting for your followers; or still, intervene in the discussions where you have something to say and answer the calls about you.

INSTAGRAM

It is the social network allowing you to publish photos (the nice, properly lit ones!), and **to tell your story through images**. People who inhabit it speak a visual language, pop and unconventional; in fact it is mainly used by the new generations. **Currently it is the perfect site to use if your goal is discussing migration even with young people**. By doing what? Mainly two things:

1. Sharing background information about the most human and least institutional aspects of your association, like what happens behind the scenes or the convivial moments;

2. Sharing beautiful and evocative photos of people, places or situations representing values you wish to spread. It can have an emotional impact on your audience and that spur people to join or support you.

BOX 3

HATE SPEECH - HOW SHOULD YOU REACT TO NEGATIVE COMMENTS ONLINE?

The use of violent language is increasingly common on the social networks. Negative, or worse still aggressive comments encouraging discrimination and intolerance, arise fear or rage, and may make you feel troubled or unable to manage the situation. As a consequence, I would like to share with you some suggestions on how to reply, firmly and without embarrassment, to verbal attacks, insults, or just different opinions.

• Let's start with an observation: you cannot always change the mind of people whose opinions are different from yours. But you have the right to react, politely, to explain your stance.
• Always reply: your followers trust you and expect a reply reaffirming your shared values.
• Always reply kindly and respectfully: lead by example.
• Prepare a reply in which you explain your stance on the issue that was the subject-matter of the comment. Point out the inappropriateness of the comment in question and, should that be the case, prove that the shared information is untrue by quoting a source, like an article.
• Avoid confrontational, rude or aggressive replies: avoid the stand-off effect. You should avoid starting a conversation (asking questions, a new comment or an opinion) with particularly aggressive people.
• In case of a hate attack, an insult or an offence, remember the person in question that the spaces your association has decided to open on the web are intended for dialogue and good-natured, respectful confrontation. If, despite your exhortation to apologize and to tone-down the aggressiveness, the person persists with his violent and overbearing attitude, I recommend that you block his profile.
• Strive to create a culture encouraging people to contrast racism and intolerance in the digital world: use public and school meetings to raise the awareness of adults and children as to intercultural communication and provide them with the tools required to actively contrast hate comments.
• Finally, remember that words are important and that it is your responsibility to choose them carefully. Words can discriminate, but also emancipate. Words count, when they label us as subject to or above the laws or when they tell us that people have a bit less or a bit more rights than the others. Words build walls or open boundaries. They make us cry or enrage us. Words offend or heal.

▶ ## Site and blog

Proceeding with our discussion of the web tools, we cannot forget the **website**, that **attests our official and institutional presence on the Internet**.

You can choose to have a so-called "showcase" site, mostly static, used to provide basic information about your association, to present your mission and the projects you are implementing, but also to publish short announcements. The site must at least include the following: who you are and what your goal is, how you pursue it, the context in which you work, the issues you want to tackle and the solutions you propose, your contact data and the link to the social networks.

EVEN BLOGS, LIKE THE SOCIAL NETWORKS, MUST BE UPDATED REGULARLY

If you have enough time and human resources, you can add a **blog**, where you will publish in-depth accounts, opinions and first-person stories, **as if it was a daily logbook of the association**.

Even the blog, like the social networks, must be updated regularly, no matter whether once per month or once per week. Use the editorial calendar as an aid to plan (in advance!) the contents to be published and to alternate the issues you discuss.

Personally, **I do not recommend that you create a site for each project of which you are the leader or a partner**: instead, you should include its description in the site of the association (if you don't have one yet, the project can provide the right occasion to open it!), publishing a brief data sheet, agreed upon with the other partner, providing the main information about it.

The most popular web application for website creation is **Wordpress**; its free base level allows to access all the essential functions.

▶ ## Newsletter

It is an advanced but very effective communication tool, as it allows to keep people informed by sending updates about your association directly to their email inbox. Here are a few reasons for you to send a periodic newsletter:

1. The email inbox is an intimate place, where we feel inclined to read;

2. People give their consent to be contacted; that means they placed their trust in us, and we can fulfil their need for information;

3. It is low-cost;

4. People who want to reply or comment can do it without necessarily replying to the judgements and opinions of the others: they can reply directly to you.

There are **web applications** specifically designed **to send well-made newsletters to many email addresses**: the most popular ones include TinyLetter, MailChimp and MailUp, which are free to use up to a certain number of contacts and have different degrees of user-friendliness.

To send the newsletters you shall need a list of email addresses, and you shall always have to be sure that people have consented to their use. There are many ways to collect email addresses: events, calls and subscription procedures through the social networks, the site or the blog. Whether live or online, explicitly ask people if they wish to receive your newsletter, clearly explaining how often you shall send it and what it shall contain (if you don't plan to send it with a regular basis, you may use a formula like "Our newsletter does not have a fixed frequency. We only send it when we have something to say").

Even in this case strategy is essential: Why do you want to send a newsletter? What do you want to say? Which is your goal? What does it add to your communication strategy? Here are a few sample goals you may want to pursue:

EXPLICITLY ASK PEOPLE IF THEY WISH TO RECEIVE YOUR NEWSLETTER

1. You don't want people you have contacted to forget about you and you wish to **periodically inform them** of the news about your association;

2. You want to send the **calendar of events and initiatives** you organize or attend, invite people and possibly give away discounted tickets to encourage participation;

3. You want to send an actual **news bulletin**, a collection of articles (written or selected by you) on issues you care about;

4. **Fund raising**: you want to receive donations, therefore you send the newsletters on special occasions, like anniversaries, holidays, the deadline for the choice of the beneficiaries of the half per cent tax contribution, or other.

Press department and relationship with media

Regularly managing the press department activity and the relations with media means getting in touch with journalists from newspapers, magazines, radios or TVs (local, to begin with) to obtain visibility for the activities and the main outcomes of your association's projects. How to proceed? Browse your contacts and make a list of journalists you can address, collect email addresses and phone numbers and keep them informed about initiatives and goals. Build a trust relationship with them, invite them to your events, preferably meet them in person and tell them about your work. If you can engage them, it shall be them who contact you to ask what's new!

News related to the non-profit sector traditionally find little space in newspapers, due to the scant attention paid by journalists but also to the difficulties for associations to

generate debate on development and solidarity issues, beyond promoting their organization. **Here are a few tips and good practices to pique the curiosity of journalists and to encourage them to improve the quality of information on social issues[5]:**

1. Do not simply describe the problems; also tell about the positive and encouraging outcomes you achieved;

2. Picture the communities concerned not just as victims, but as active protagonist of a political, economic, social and cultural life;

3. Differentiate between news reporting and institutional communication, offering untold stories, food for thought, opinions and supplemental information beyond your activities and your projects;

4. Avoid technical terms, but simplify language and if needed explain the technical jargon typical of projects;

5. Propose sources and direct testimonies from the "field"; put the journalists from the country of origin in touch with those working in the country of residence;

6. Offer journalists to help them look at the most controversial global issues from different perspectives – economic, political and cultural, for example. Encourage the understanding of the events and of their complexity by explaining their context and causes. Emphasize the mutual dependencies, the challenges common to different countries as the contribution of municipal and local initiatives;

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5 The list is drawn from the "Guidelines for a responsible international information" signed by journalists, international cooperation actors, local authorities, professors and students belonging to the DevReporter network. Cfr. https://bit.ly/2NYWacJ

7. Avoid describing events in terms of urgency, conflict or disaster, or as simple news items. Help journalists to follow the events and their evolution on an ongoing basis, regularly providing information and updates.

▶ ## Visual identity

They say that presentation also counts. In web communication, like in paper communication, **your project should have a distinctive logo or graphical element** characterizing what is technically called its "visual identity". After defining the graphic design of your project, it is important to ensure that it remains consistent in all outbound communications.

Also pay attention to the **photos** accompanying your messages; if you have no original pictures directly shot by you (which are generally to be preferred),[6] you can search for them online, but make sure to only choose them among the ones licensed under Creative Commons, that is images that the author allows other people to freely use (Flickr Creative Commons, Wikimedia Commons and Pixabay are three sites from which you can download free images licensed under CC).

DONOR VISIBILITY
The visual design of the project also includes the logos of your association, of the partner and above all of the donors. Each donor has specific guidelines to obtain appropriate and guaranteed visibility on press materials, social media, web sites and blogs, multimedia products, publications and paper documents, events. Directly discuss the matter with your

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6 For images picturing minors, always remember to obtain the privacy protection waiver; use the pixel effect to cover their face if you did not obtain the consent.

contact person in the funding entity: obtain clear indications regarding the use of the logo or of other graphic references; ask on which occasions and for which materials they need to be approved. Finally share all this information with the people helping you to manage communication.

CHECK LIST

Operating steps to: set up the project communication

1. Choose the visual identity of the project (logo) and consistently use it for all communication activities;

2. Think about the purpose of the communication activity: what do you want to obtain and what is your target audience?

3. Choose the communication channel, adapting the most common channel to your target audience;

4. Set up a communication strategy, deciding the type of content to be spread, who shall take care of it, with which frequency;

5. Create project visibility material (posters, brochures and so on), to ensure that your message also reaches people who do not use the social networks.

NOTES

Valeria Saggiomo

EVALUATION: AN OPPORTUNITY FOR IMPROVEMENT

**PROJECT
DEVELOPMENT**
MANUAL
**FOR MIGRANTS'
ASSOCIATIONS**

Evaluation:
an opportunity for improvement

Valeria Saggiomo

I am a Development Cooperation expert and in the past twenty years I have worked and lived in Kenya, Somalia and Sudan, where I have managed projects and programmes for NGOs, the United Nations and the Italian Cooperation. In 2007, in Italy, I began studying and researching the role of the civil society in the peace and development processes, focusing in particular on the Islamic associations in Somalia, and on the diaspora associations as transnational development actors. Today I teach Development Cooperation at the University of Naples "L'Orientale", and I take advantage of my experience to evaluate projects promoted by non-governmental and migrant associations in Africa, in the Middle East and in the Near East. I firmly believe that associations are a powerful driving force for world development and I work with the main organizations helping associations to acquire the tools and knowledge required to make a real difference.

Contents

Introduction

I wish to start by telling you a short story. A few years ago I returned to Eastern Africa, to evaluate a project promoted by a migrants' association, on behalf of their donor. The goal of the project was improving access to water for a few rural communities, and this was the first experience of the association with a transnational project in the country of origin. I met the president and the staff members. There was a tense atmosphere and I really felt that my presence made everyone uncomfortable. I introduced myself and I began explaining the reason of my visit. Then I asked them to describe the project and the process that had brought the association back to Eastern Africa, the agreements they had signed, the hurdles they had faced, the outcomes they had achieved and those they had failed to achieve. But nobody dared to speak, as everyone was afraid to tell something wrong. It took me several days to get across the message that the evaluation could be an opportunity for all the parties, to understand what the association had achieved so far and to reflect on how to achieve more and improve in the future. After an initial moment of hesitation, everyone began to participate in the discussion. However, this feeling of unease is always there every time I visit a project for an evaluation, and every time I think it should not be so. I'll tell you why. This module will guide you through the process starting at the conclusion of the project that you will promote and implement. The first step is asking yourself **what have we achieved? Can we do more or better in the future?** This is the starting point of the final evaluation process we shall discuss in this module. We shall see what it means to evaluate your project, and which growth opportunities arise from this process, if it is carried out in the right spirit and with the broadest possible involvement of those who took part in our development initiative. The module will provide you with the tools and information required to play a primary role in the evaluation process and to grow through your experiences, mistakes and good practices.

What is the evaluation, when is it performed and what is its purpose?

It is true, the evaluation expresses a judgement on what an association did and on how it acted, in the context of a project it intended to implement. For this reason the evaluation is often perceived as something dangerous, that can jeopardize the activities of the team and of the organization itself, in case the judgement should be negative. This kind of definition and the ensuing "defensive" attitude greatly limits the benefits that could potentially be obtained when the evaluation is shared and participative. **It is time to stop seeing the evaluation as a mere judgement, and to ponder the true meaning of the evaluation, which is "giving value"** to the project. I find this original meaning perfectly meshes with the goal and mission of any development association, which is improving the quality of people's life, **creating social value**. From this perspective, **the evaluation is the process recognizing the social value created in the community by your association and by all partners through the project, and suggesting how to improve the future interventions.**

The evaluation is typically carried out at the conclusion of a project, to verify to which extent the development goals have been achieved and to reflect on the positive and negative experiences encountered during the project implementation, for future planning. This type of evaluation is called **final**.

Sometimes, however, at the conclusion of a project, like the building of a school or of an hospital, it may not be readily apparent how our school or our hospital improved the life of the people living nearby. For example you may notice that more children have been enrolled or attend the school, but you'll be unable to understand how going to school improved the life of the children, for example by increasing the level of literacy or the health of children or women. To observe this kind of long-term change, you would need to visit the project after some

" **TAKING THE WRONG PATH CAN HELP DISCOVER THE WAY (GHANA PROVERB)**

time, when the impact of the school or of the hospital has some chance of becoming apparent. To evaluate the impact of a project – that is what happens in the community as a consequence of the project, you can carry out an ex-post evaluation, which analyses the social changes one, two or even more years after the project has concluded.

But the evaluation can also be carried out mid-way through the implementation of a very long project (three years or more), or of a pilot project, that is an innovative project that is being experimented for the first time. In these two cases – pilot or long-term project – the association may deem it useful to understand, mid-way through the process, whether the strategy it has laid down has good chances to succeed and if it needs to correct the course by a few degrees, to use a sailor's expression. When the evaluation is carried out mid-way through a project, it is called **intermediate** evaluation.

Finally, the evaluation can be carried out on a predictive basis, that is before the project starts, to try to understand whether the strategy chosen and described in the change theory has good chances to succeed. In that case we speak of **ex ante** evaluation or of **feasibility study**. This type of evaluation is typically associated with a specific aspect of our intervention strategy, like the environmental, social, cultural or technological aspect. For example, we could decide to evaluate the potential social impact of a project concerning the management of water

Sri Lankan returnee from Burkina Faso engaged in livelihood activity under reintegration support.
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resources to irrigate some fields for cultivation. In that case the question you should ask yourself is: which effect shall the irrigation system have on people living nearby? Shall the way they use water be altered? If yes, how? And to which extent? Are there going to be any negative consequences? The purpose of the ex ante evaluation shall be predicting whether the project would have any negative social and economic impact; should that be the case, the project will have to be changed, or measures will have to be taken to protect the people living nearby..

EX-ANTE EVALUATION SHALL BE PREDICTING WHETHER THE PROJECT WOULD HAVE ANY NEGATIVE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACT

No matter whether the evaluation is carried out before, during or after the project, **the benefits it provides are important:** predicting any involuntary damages, verifying the right process to reach a goal, learning from mistakes to work better in the future, understanding how our process has changed, for the better, the life of people.

EX-ANTE EVALUATION	INTERMEDIATE EVALUATION
EX-POST EVALUATION	FINAL EVALUATION

For this reason **the evaluation should not be regarded purely as a judgement time, but as a growth and improvement opportunity** for the association promoting any development projects and for the communities taking part in it.

2 Who performs the evaluation?

When working on a development project, closely in touch with the communities and the groups of beneficiaries, emotional involvement is high. For example, one may get carried away by his project vision, become passionate about a group of particularly disadvantages beneficiaries, or feel extremely frustrated about the continuous snags that need to be overcome in order to implement the project. The passion driving you to work is a strength but can also be a weakness when you have to judge your work. It is well established that *"passion impairs judgement"*, and this also applies to the evaluation of a project.

THE PASSION DRIVING YOU TO WORK IS A STRENGTH BUT CAN ALSO BE A WEAKNESS WHEN YOU HAVE TO JUDGE YOUR WORK

For this reason you should entrust the evaluation to **an external observer** capable of objectively looking at the improvement that your project induced in the relevant community.

When, after the conclusion of the project, you will have to choose your evaluator, make sure that he is an expert in the evaluation of development projects, with the experience and qualifications required to lend **credibility** to the results; you will have to make sure that the evaluator is not involved in the project activity and above all in your association, to ensure that his judgement is **impartial** and **independent**. Sometimes you do not have the opportunity to choose your evaluator, as the choice could be made by the donor. This occurs mainly when the donor requires a single evaluation for a whole programme, that is a set of projects funded under the same procedure. For example, in the case of the A.MI.CO. Award tendering procedure, promoted by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in favour of migrants' associations, rather than evaluating the individual projects, the IOM could choose to evaluate the whole A.MI.CO. Award programme, and to entrust the evaluation to an external expert who will visit the individual projects, or a few of the most significant ones.

3   According to which criteria are development projects evaluated?

The evaluator studying your project shall ask himself two basic questions, which are: in the light of the initial social issue, did the association do the right thing by promoting the project action? (Relevance and Impact); And did it operate properly? (Effectiveness, Efficiency; Sustainability).

To answer these two big questions, the first dealing with the merit of what your association did, and the other dealing with the method, the evaluator shall refer to some judgement criteria, which are:

EVALUATION CRITERIA:				
RELEVANCE	EFFECTIVENESS	EFFICIENCY	SUSTAINABILITY	IMPACT

RELEVANCE

The relevance of your project is measured with reference to its context and to the issue to be resolved that triggered your intervention. The projects, in fact, must be aimed at improving a problematic situation and must be part of a local development and change process which is consistent with the improvement you wish to obtain. For example, in the project I visited in Eastern Africa, the construction of a pipeline to provide the village with drinkable water was part of the development plan of the Sool region, which had decided to invest in the access to drinkable water as a basic service to improve the quality of live and the health of people. Once the construction work was completed thanks to the project, the management and maintenance of the infrastructure had been entrusted to the local authorities, thus assuring the delivery of water and the infrastructural sustainability of the project. If the water sector had not been so **relevant** for the local authorities, there would have been no agreement over the project and, once concluded, would have remained orphaned.

THE PROJECTS MUST BE AIMED AT IMPROVING A PROBLEMATIC SITUATION AND MUST BE PART OF A LOCAL DEVELOPMENT AND CHANGE PROCESS

When an evaluator considers the project relevance, he does it on multiple levels:

1. **Local community level** – the evaluator tries to understand whether the project promoted by the association is important for the community, asking the direct beneficiaries of the project for their opinion. Generally, **the more the community has been involved** in the project identification stage, for example directly expressing the need for the construction of a water line connecting the city centre and the rural villages, the higher the compliance with the relevance criterion;

2. **Local and national** administration level – the evaluator tries to identify the role of the project in the local and national development strategies, referring to the local development plans and speaking with the relevant competent authorities. In general, the greater the **alignment of the project with the local development plans**, and the better informed and the more involved the authorities, the higher the compliance with the relevance criterion;

3. **External level** – the evaluator will verify the presence or the absence of external actors (NGOs, international organizations, other donors) operating in the reference sector and in the area where the project has been implemented. In general, if the sector is among the priorities of local authorities, there will be multiple actors working on it. **The evaluator will verify that the most relevant external actors are informed of the initiative** promoted by the association; he will also verify that the latter does not overlap with the interventions by other actors, and indeed that there is cooperation and coordination between all the actors working in the water sector in the specific area where the project has been implemented.

While assessing the relevance, finally, the evaluator will try to understand how your project has tackled the priority issues listed in the 2030 Development Agenda, and thus which of the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals your projects contributes to achieve.

IMPACT

Observing **what has happened as a consequence of the project**, that is what has changed in the life of the villagers after the construction of a water system, is the best way to understand whether the project *has done the right thing*.

The social impact of a project is the change induced by your project in the context in which the project has been implemented. The change could be immediately appreciable, but generally it takes some time before it can actually observed and measured.

THE SOCIAL IMPACT OF YOUR PROJECT CAN BE POSITIVE, AS IS TO BE HOPED, BUT ALSO NEGATIVE

How is the social impact measured? By comparing the situation *before* and *after* the project. For example, let's go back to the water project I assessed in Eastern Africa: in that case, when the project concluded, the pipes had been laid and connected to three fountains inside the village. The community was ready to use the system, but the connection to the main pipe had not been opened yet, therefore the fountains were dry. This connection was the responsibility of the regional authorities, and was expected to be completed in a month. For this reason the donor had scheduled an evaluation mission six months after the conclusion of the project, to verify that the system was in operation and that the availability of water in the village resulted in a positive change to the villagers.

You should also remember that the **social impact** of your project can be *positive*, as is to be hoped, but also *negative*, that is, it may have worsened the quality of life for a group of people, or have resulted in **conflicts** due to a poor management of the project itself.

A typical example related to the water project is the management of the water sources created by the project.

The engineering of the water system may be technically excellent. If once work is completed the association does not put in place the necessary agreements for the management of the new village resources, however, a well-implemented project

may result in a **conflict** about who shall manage the water and the relevant prospective income.

EFFECTIVENESS

The effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability criteria refer to how your association has worked, considering the strategies you adopted to achieve your goals and trying to understand whether your choices and work method have been winning.

In particular, the **effectiveness criterion analyses the extent to which the goals have been achieved**, with particular reference to the specific goal of your project, going through the steps that, according to your analysis, would have ensured your action to succeed (intermediate outcomes). To evaluate the extent to which a goal and the relevant outcomes have been achieved, we refer to the indicators. The evaluator will request the indicator measurement data and verify the association report through field audits and interviews with the beneficiaries.

TO EVALUATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH A GOAL AND THE RELEVANT OUTCOMES HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED, WE REFER TO THE INDICATORS

Should the evaluator find that the **goal has not been fully achieved**, the first thing he will try to understand is **why**. This often means analysing the **external conditions affecting the successful implementation of a project**, which you included in the last column of the logical framework or in the project risk analysis. In other words, the evaluator will try to understand if the partial failure of your action is due to events outside your control, like political or environmental factors, or to the action of third-party actors, or is due to your association, to dynamics you could directly control and on which you could have worked.

Should it be due to external factors, you must prove that you implemented a good risk management strategy.
If the shortfall, instead, is the result of dynamics internal to your association, like any disagreement as to the management, frequent changes in the staff in charge of the project, confusion in fund utilization, the analysis of the efficiency criterion will point at the management error that delayed the project success or entirely prevented it.

EFFICIENCY

Efficiency refers **to the way your association has managed the resources for the project execution**, with particular reference to the "time" resource, to the human resources (the staff), and to the financial resources (budget). The evaluator will try to understand whether you used well the available time (project duration) or if there have been any delays in the execution of the activities and in the achievement of any outcomes. In this case, he will try to understand the reason of the delays and above all what you did in order to mitigate the damage the delay could have caused.

Each project has a life of its own, and like in the life of each of us, difficulties arise suddenly, and we must deal with them. The efficiency analysis does not assume that there were no difficulties in the execution of your project – this would be rare if not unlikely. The efficiency analysis, instead, assesses how you, as the association in charge of the project, identified and managed the difficulties in question. The efficiency analysis assesses the capability to manage the project and its resources, including the project staff and the available budget. The analysis of the efficiency of your association, or if you prefer of your management capability, is based on the project documents, and on the activity progress reports (monitoring) in particular, and compares them with the programming described in the initial project document, including the *work plan* and the budget

People forced to migrate to other regions to find employment in Madagascar because of drought.
© IOM 2017 / Natalie OREN

plan. The evaluator shall also interview the staff members involved in the project implementation and ask to describe the implementation stages, the problems that arose and how they were dealt with. In general they are individual interviews, to ensure that the staff members feel free to express their opinion without reticence.

SUSTAINABILITY

The last criterion the evaluator uses to understand the extent of the social value provided by your project is sustainability.

The concept of sustainability has become a cornerstone of the promotion of development policies and of the relevant project actions, so much so that it is mentioned in the millennium development goals, that since 2015 have become the Sustainable Development Goals. Emphasis on sustainability is aimed at pointing out that modern development policies must also ensure a better future for the generations that will follow the one who benefits from the project implementation.

> **DO NOT JUDGE ME BY MY SUCCESSES, JUDGE ME BY HOW MANY TIMES I FELL DOWN AND GOT BACK UP AGAIN (NELSON MANDELA)**

Sustainability refers to the likelihood that the project benefits persist even after the conclusion of the project. The example of the project I evaluated in Eastern Africa once again helps to understand what this means in practice. In that case, better access to drinkable water for the villagers is the change that the project has made in the life of people. However, we need to ask ourselves whether this change has good chances to be permanent, or if instead, for any reason, the benefits ensured by the water pipeline risk to be interrupted.

How can the evaluator understand if your association's project is sustainable? First of all, he shall consider the degree of **ownership** of your project, that is to which extent **beneficiaries** are involved and active in the management of the new offered service. Generally, the more the local community is active and given responsibility for the asset it received (for example, for the fountains giving access to drinkable water) the higher the degree of ownership and the higher the probability that the

community takes care of the service to ensure its efficiency over time. But ownership is also and primarily measured with reference to the involvement and responsibility of **local administration**, whose institutional role requires them to take care of managing the service for the population. If the pipeline breaks, for example, who repairs it? Who takes care of it to the advantage of the beneficiaries? The evaluator, then, shall want to verify whether your association considered this issue in advance and, in order to ensure the sustainability of the service offered to people, reached specific agreements with the local or national administrations, clearly defining who shall take care of the routine and extraordinary maintenance of the system, and by which means.

REFERENCE TO THE INVOLVEMENT AND RESPONSIBILITY OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATIONS

The criterion of sustainability applies to **several aspects of the project** your association promoted.

For example, when assessing the **financial sustainability**, the evaluator shall try to understand whether, after the financial input offered by the project, any additional resources are available or can be found, to ensure that people can keep benefiting from the change brought by the project. In the case of the project I evaluated, the financial sustainability of the water system was ensured by the fact that the villagers paid a sum, though very small, for the water. The small financial contribution was collected and set aside by the local authorities, that then used it for the maintenance and to extend the service, if possible.

When assessing the **environmental sustainability**, the evaluator shall try to understand whether the improvement proposed by the association through the project has a positive or negative effect on the surrounding environment. In the case of the water pipeline construction project I'm using as an example, environmental sustainability refers to the possible depletion of the water source, as a consequence of the exploitation allowed by the system, and shall calculate the maximum amount of water that can be drawn from the source to ensure that it does not get depleted.

THE EVALUATOR SHALL ASK HIMSELF WHETHER THE CONDITIONS FOR THE TECHNOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY

If the project has introduced a new technology in the reference context, the evaluator shall ask himself whether the conditions for the **technological sustainability** of the system are met, that is whether the chosen technology (pipes, pumps, fountains) is appropriate for the context, whether the expertise required for the maintenance and the spare parts are available, and so on.

When assessing the **political and institutional sustainability** of your project, the evaluator shall consider the degree of involvement of local authorities and institutions, their availability to take care of the management of public utility systems and the consistency of this undertaking with the governance model existing at a local or national level.

Finally, when assessing the **social and cultural sustainability**, the evaluator shall analyse how much your intervention respects the lifestyle of the beneficiary communities and is aligned with local principles and values, or whether on the contrary it introduces any novelties that breach customs and habits deemed important by the beneficiaries. For example, in some rural villages of Africa the task of collecting water is normally entrusted to women, for whom it represents an important social occasion to build and consolidate female-only personal relationships. The evaluator shall consider whether your association has taken this aspect into account, and has implemented any measures safeguarding the interest of women in retaining the social opportunities associated with water collection.

Relevance	The alignment of the goals of a project with local problems, needs and priorities.
Effectiveness	Effectiveness analyses the degree of achievement of the goals, and of your project's specific goal in particular.
Efficiency	The way your association has managed the resources available for the project implementation.
Sustainability	The likelihood that the project benefits persist even after the conclusion of the project.
Impact	The change induced by the project in the context in which it was implemented.

BOX 1

A TEMPLATE FOR THE SET-UP
OF THE EVALUATION TERMS OF REFERENCE

Context

In this paragraph you shall describe:

- The context of the country where the project was implemented;

- The reference framework of the sector related to the project;

- The project, with its goals, results and activities;

- The main stakeholders of your project (direct and indirect).

Evaluation Description

In this paragraph you shall describe:

- The goals of the evaluation;

- Any items the evaluation must include (like surveys on the satisfaction of the beneficiaries, or of local authorities and so on);

- Evaluation steps; they are typically the following: a) study of documents; b) field work/visit; c) data analysis and drawing up of the first draft report; d) discussion of the first draft report and gathering of comments; e) drawing up of the final report.

Evaluator Qualifications

In this paragraph you shall describe:

- Number of experts required for the evaluation (normally one for small projects) and duration of the evaluation in days (for example, 25 days of which 10 on-field);

- Experience required for the evaluation (number of year of experience in the field of evaluation, knowledge of a specific area and of the context in which the project is executed, languages the evaluator needs to speak and so on);

- Presence and availability of the project staff during the different steps.

Place and Duration of the Evaluation

In this paragraph you shall briefly describe:

- Where the evaluation shall be carried out, with particular reference to the place (village, city) where the project was implemented;

- A brief diagram specifying the total duration of the evaluation in days and the time allocation for the different steps.

Evaluation Document

In this paragraph you shall describe the essential sections the evaluation documents must contain, for example:

An initial summary, a section describing the context, a section discussing the findings, a section for the recommendations and the lessons learned.

You can include a table of contents of the evaluation document which the evaluator will have to follow.

Knitting and tailoring trainees in Rwanda. © IOM 2017 / Amanda NERO

4   Being evaluated: what to do and what to avoid

The first thing the association will have to do when getting ready for the evaluation is starting an **internal reflection**, resulting in a discussion between the project staff, the beneficiaries and the external actors, about what the project has managed to implement and what it has not, about the reasons of the delays or difficulties and about what to do in the future to improve the effectiveness. Work on a project is often rather intense and it is difficult to find any "extra time" for this kind of reflections. As the lead association, you shall choose to devote a week to this reflection before the external evaluator arrives. You shall meet partners, beneficiaries and stakeholders, and you shall discover how useful a shared final reflection is, better still if held "outside" the work rooms, in a garden, outdoors, around a food-laden table or where you feel most relaxed. In addition to its utility as an internal evaluation of the project, this work shall lay the groundwork to organize the mission of the external evaluator, to collect and rearrange all the project documents, to understand which data are still missing and it would be useful to collect, who the evaluator should meet, and above all to define the goal of the evaluation: what do you expect from the evaluator?

Now it is time to start preparing for the mission of the evaluator. Contact him/her; propose a travel itinerary and a list of people to be met, from the project staff, the beneficiaries and the local authorities to the external actors, including the ones that where not directly involved in the project. At least two weeks before the evaluation mission, ask the evaluator to agree upon an itinerary, also specifying the people to be met. After receiving the travel plan of the evaluator, you shall take care of the travel arrangements, the logistics, the means of transport and the meetings with the people to be interviewed; you shall also make sure that everyone is available at the dates and times laid down for the evaluation mission. It is a good

practice that you accompany the evaluator during the mission, but let the interviews be conducted without your presence, to protect the privacy of the interviewed people and ensure their anonymity.

The evaluator has reached the project site. Your association has previously discussed the successes and failures of the project; as a consequence, you all feel ready to actively participate in the evaluation, through the interviews. In general, the duration of the interviews may range from one hour to a much longer time, for key project staff. The interviews can be carried out formally or more informally, even depending on the style the evaluator customarily adopts. Be collaborative and willing to share any kind of information that should be requested with reference to the project.

BE COLLABORATIVE AND WILLING TO SHARE ANY KIND OF INFORMATION THAT SHOULD BE REQUESTED WITH REFERENCE TO THE PROJECT

Be protagonists! The internal evaluation you carried out before the evaluation mission has allowed you to think about the project and to identify the successful activities you think should be given value by the evaluator. Similarly, you have identified the hurdles you faced and pondered about how these hurdles have negatively affected your activities. Use this reflection of yours to guide the evaluator through the analysis of the successful and unsuccessful elements, and use your experience to draw an outside, objective and constructive vision of what in your opinion was done properly and of what could have been done better.

Finally it is important that once the evaluation mission is completed the evaluator provide you with a feedback, an opinion about what he found during the mission. Explicitly ask the evaluator to share with you and your partners his first impressions. Feel free to discuss with the evaluator these first impressions if they seem to be partial or unsubstantiated. It is important to point out that it is a normal practice for the evaluator to share and discuss the draft evaluation document with you before finalizing it, so do not be timid, but also avoid intrusively trying to impose your vision.

5   The results of the evaluation: lessons learned and recommendations for future initiatives

The more the evaluation can be participative as described in the previous paragraphs and to include the points of view of the main stakeholders, the more useful its results.

The evaluation results are recorded in the evaluation document. There is no standard format, and the following suggestions are only based on my experience; the document is expected to contain at least the following:

Summary – a summary of the main points emerging from the evaluation survey, including the recommendations (one to two pages);

Context – the context from which the evaluation survey starts; it includes a brief description of the country and of the issues the project has tackled, and a short introduction to the project, specifying the goal and the main areas in which the partnership operated (one page);

Methodology – it is a rather detailed description of the research method the evaluator decided to adopt for that specific evaluation survey. It includes a reference to any evaluation limits (one page);

Evaluation outcome – commonly referred to as findings, conclusions o results, and describing the outcome of the evaluation. This part must be accurate, substantiated by "evidence" based on the data collected during the survey, enriched by success and failure cases, written objectively and as neutrally as possible. It must comply with a relevant code of ethics every evaluator knows, which basically obeys the key principle *"Do no Harm"*; that means the document must not harm any individuals or groups who took part in the evaluation, neither directly nor indirectly.

As a consequence, no personal names shall be mentioned, and informers shall not be recognizable, to ensure their anonymity. The findings must provide a balanced representation of the project, emphasizing the successful elements as much as the failures, if any (up to twenty pages);

Recommendations and lessons learned – The lessons learned, expressed in summary form, sometimes using a bullet list, are often based on the internal reflection on the project results that the association carried out while preparing for the evaluation or that the evaluator spurred during the evaluation. The recommendations on how to improve in the future or on where to invest in the next stage of the programme are based on an analysis carried out by the evaluator but that must be shared with the project staff and with the partners, to ensure that it is specific and feasible. While the lessons learned look at the past to understand what the association has learned from the experience, the recommendations look at the future and are a guide for the new programming (two to three pages).

THE EVALUATION DOCUMENT IS ALSO A GUIDE FOR THE FUTURE, A REFERENCE THAT WILL COME IN HANDY WHEN YOU START DRAWING UP ANOTHER PROJECT

When drawn up according to the above principles, the evaluation document is not just a snapshot of the project your association has implemented, in partnership with other actors, and an "historical memory" of what you did, but it is also a guide for the future, a reference that will come in handy when you start drawing up another project, to keep enabling positive development processes in the countries you bridge.

This is the benefit of the final or intermediate evaluation: an opportunity to reflect, guided by an external professional, an historical memory of what you achieved, and a guideline for future development actions!

Have a happy evaluation!

CHECK LIST

Operating steps to: draw up the final evaluation of the project

1. One month before the project conclusion, start an internal reflection, involving the project staff, the partners and the direct beneficiaries, on what the project has managed to achieve and what it has not, outlining the main successes and critical issues;

2. If you organize the evaluation yourself, you need to select the evaluator through a public procedure. To launch the procedure, draw up the Terms of Reference of the evaluator, a document summarizing what you expect from the evaluation mission, clearly specifying the product of the evaluation and the characteristics the evaluator you are looking for shall have (for an example of Reference Terms, see box 1). Do not forget to ensure that the selection procedure is given plenty of visibility;

3. Two weeks before the date scheduled for the evaluation mission, contact the evaluator and agree upon the evaluation itinerary;

4. Organize the logistics of the evaluation mission, informing the possible stakeholders who shall be interviewed and making sure that they are available on the date scheduled for the mission;

5. Remember that the project leader should accompany the evaluator during the mission, but should not attend the interviews carried out by the evaluator.

A survivor of trafficking learns weaving at a shelter home. © IOM 2017 / Bashir Ahmed SUJAN

NOTES