RESI
RURAL ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE
INICIATIVA PËR QËNDRUESHMËRI EKONOMIKE RURALE
INICIJATIVA ZA ODRŽIVOST RURALNE EKONOMIJE

WITH FUNDING FROM
AUSTRIAN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

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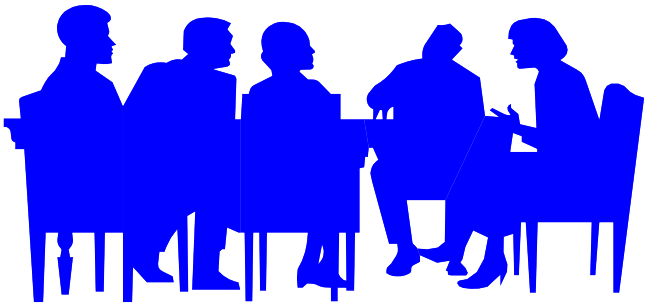
PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT AND FUNDRAISING



WE HAVE AN IDEA!

As NGO, the focus of the organization is to assist communities to achieve improvement in their lifestyle. To this end we work with the poor themselves and with local and international partners who share the vision to create just and peaceful societies where communities can exercise their fundamental rights.

To fulfill the role of an NGO in the community you need to be able to create solutions that can be effectively implemented. This requires a number of key activities to take place:

A Project
Funding
Strategy
Proposals
Budgeting
Monitoring
Implementation

Contained in the following training we will address key issues that will assist your organization to continue to grow and benefit the local and wider community.

1. DOES YOUR COMMUNITY NEED A PROJECT?

How do projects fit in the 'bigger picture'? Context, environment, reality!

Context of the project

To capture the bigger picture of the organisation's work

- Projects are not islands
- We are connected to other organisations thus with shared goals and values
- A sense of connectedness gives meaning to our work
- To appreciate the efforts, challenges and contributions of other actors

To appreciate the value of collective effort

- No individual can create dramatic or significant change. 'We are not heroes'
- It is the aggregate effect (of all staff and organisations) that is central
- The insights that emerge from a group discussion are simply not possible at the individual level
- Together we create a bigger impact

Whether our relationships are by necessity or by choice, our actions always have some effect, intentional or unintentional on other people or situations.

1.1 WHY SHOULD THIS PROJECT BE DONE BY YOUR ORGANISATION?

- Assess why it should be your organisation implementing this project.
- Analyse the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT analysis).
- Find out how a program can and should connect with other programs, within your organisation or with other organisations.
- What do projects in your organisation have in common?
- What does your organisation's work have in common with other agencies?
- The above will also give you the opportunity to make sure you are not repeating anybody else's work.

By looking at the context, you can assess and apply the 'do no harm' concept: you make sure that your program and the way you are implementing it, does not 'harm' or exacerbate situations (i.e. creating tensions).

1.2 ASSESSING NEEDS

Information gathering techniques

Several methods can be used to collect data from the sources that are available. Some require the involvement of individuals and groups'; others, such as observation require less direct involvement. The following is a listing of techniques for collecting information.

- *Individually oriented methods (Interviews)*
- *Group Oriented Methods (Focus groups)*
- *Observations*

Exercise 1:

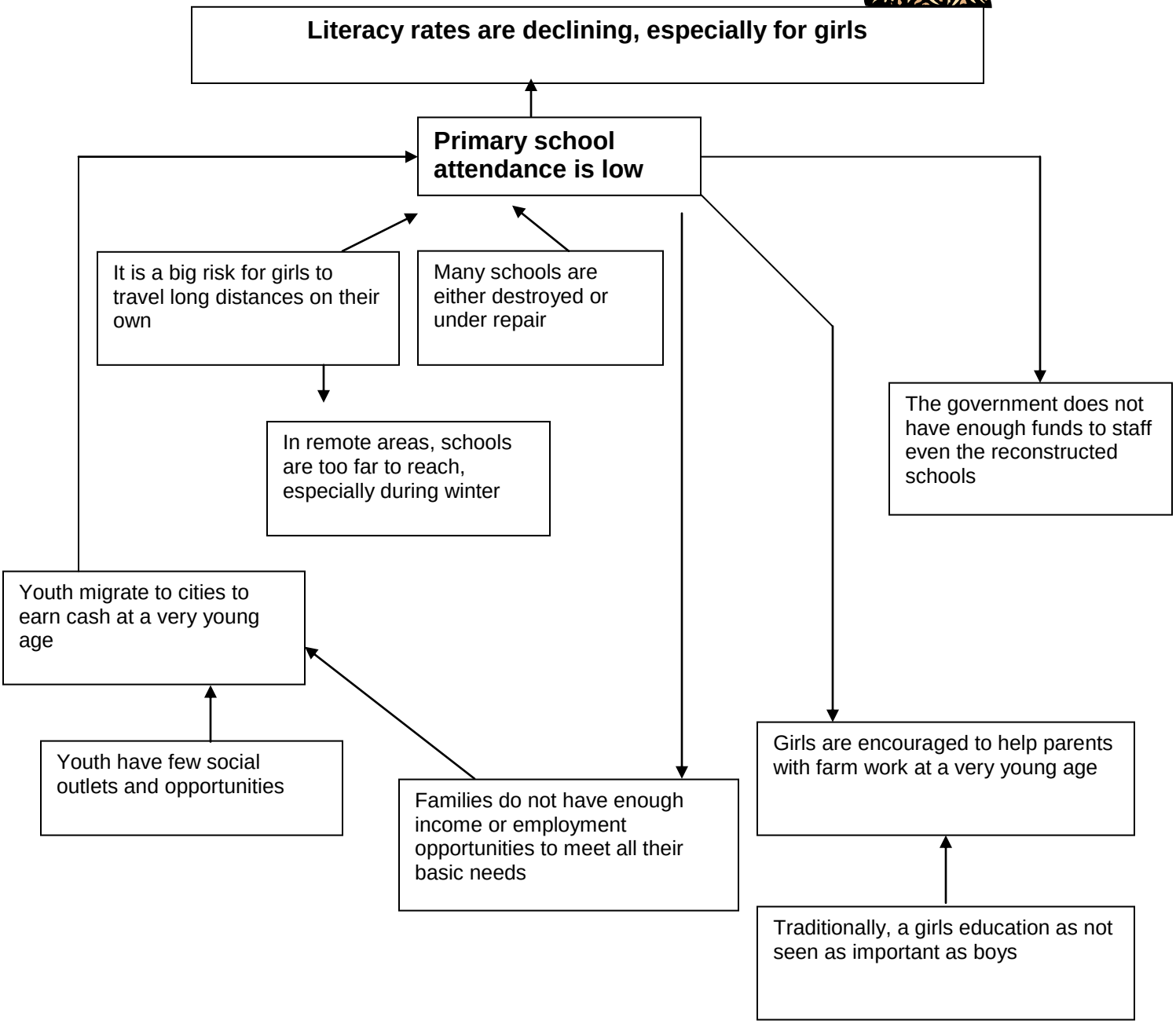
Break into groups. Ask the group to prepare a few question in relation to collecting information for the development of a project proposal. Ask one person from each group to report back.

A note taker will record the discussion

1.3 CONVERTING IDEAS INTO ACTION

Problem Tree

This is considered the most effective form of problem analysis for the purpose of project design, as well as the most complex one.
A problem tree diagram (example):



See Annex 1

Exercise 2: Take the ideas the group discussed for information gathering, the group should develop a problem tree. Allow 45 minutes. Groups to present back.

The next major step in this process is to convert your problem, causes, and interventions into a goal, objectives, and outputs.

Problem analysis is converted into a **logical framework**. This tool is used to summarize your project.

Hierarchy of objectives	Objectively verifiable indicators (OVIs)	Means of Verification (MOV)	Assumptions
Final Goal			
Objective			
Outputs			
Activities			

Figure 1: Structure of Logical Framework

After the goal, objectives outputs and activities are determined they should be put into a log frame and identify the indicators, means of verification and assumptions for each point.

Indicators are quantitative or qualitative criteria for success that enable one to measure or assess the achievement of project goals.

Means of verification

Definition: Although often interpreted as "sources of information" only by project planners-progress reports studies-the means of verification refers more broadly to how the information for measuring against the indicator will be obtained.

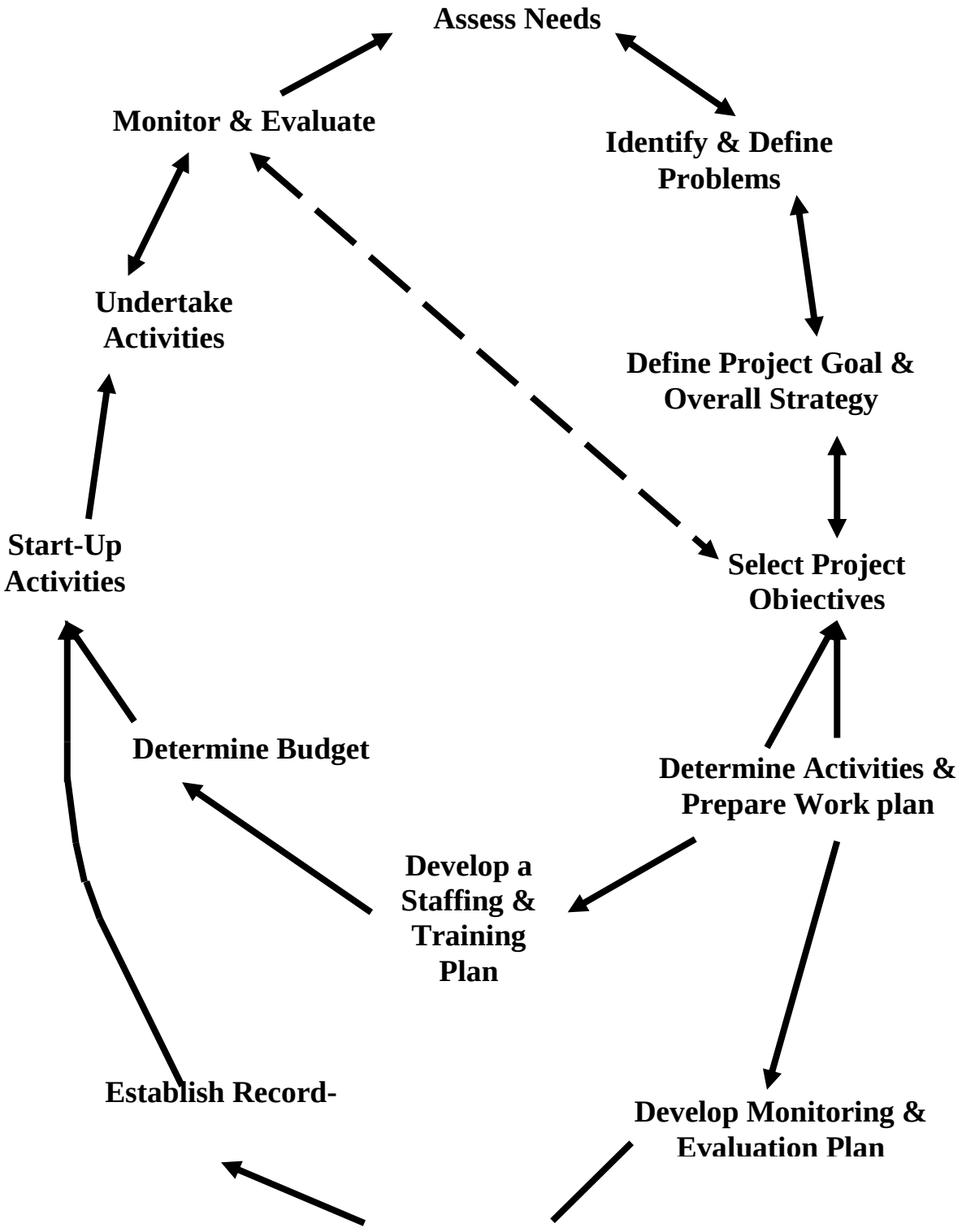
Example: household interviews

Risks and Assumptions

With direct reference to the log frame the risks and assumptions column pertains to those factors or events occurring in the context in which the project will operate, that are likely to influence the project outcome and which the project is not able to control.

The following flow diagram will provide an overview of all the many facets required to implement a successful project.

Project cycle



2. GUIDELINES FOR WRITING PROJECT PROPOSALS AND PROJECT DESIGN

Program versus Project – What is the difference?

A Program is on a wider or larger scale than a project. A program will normally include a series of projects and planned activities, possibly across a variety of sectors, which have a wider reaching developmental aim.

A project is more specific, is generally on a smaller scale than a program and will very likely form part of an overall program.

For example, the government may have an overall program for reforming the state education system. The program may include various individual projects for teacher training, school rehabilitation and curriculum development.

Project Proposal versus Concept Paper – What is the difference?

A Concept Paper is a summary document, which outlines an organization and a project idea and provides the donor with sufficient information so it can come back and say if it is interested in knowing more. It should be no more than 2 pages in length. If the answer is yes, then you will most likely be asked to submit a Project Proposal.

Elements of a Concept Paper:

Executive Summary	(One Page)
Background or Text	(Half a Page)
Problem Statement	(Half a Page)
Project Strategy, Goals & Objectives	(Two – Three Pages)
Outputs and Activities	(Half a Page)
Evaluation Plan – a brief overview, not in great detail	(Half a Page)
Budget Summary	(Half a Page)
Appendices – a brief budget, map of the area (optional, but helpful)	_____
	5-6 pages total

Exercise 3:

Use the problem tree developed in the previous exercise to outline the elements of the concept paper.

Allow 20 minutes

2.1 THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

A Project Proposal is a fuller, more detailed document, which is structured to ensure that the donor has a clear understanding of the proposed project. It will contain all the information the donor requires to make a decision on whether or not to fund the project.

Guide for Writing a Funding Proposal

There are many different guidelines and formats for writing project proposals. Before you start CHECK with the donor if they have their own funding application forms, standard format or guidelines for how the proposal should look.

If the donor does have a set format – then you should use it! It will save you time and effort, make life easer for the donor and may even increase your chances of success. It also displays your organization's ability and willingness to take a professional approach.

The following "Proposal Writing Hints" offers a basic model for you to use if the donor does not have specific requirements. You may need to add or delete information as required for each project.

Project Title

- Check to see if the agency you have in mind has any specifications for the title Page (often they have a required format).
- Usually the Title Page includes the name of the agency with the signatures of key people in your organization (Name of agency, Department Head, Supervisor, Head of Mission, Contact Details, etc).
- Your cover should look professional and neat. However, do not waste time using fancy report covers or expensive binding. You are trying to impress the potential funding agency with how you really need funding!
- The words you use in your title should clearly reflect the focus of your proposal. Try to remove words from your title that really are not necessary for understanding. Title No: 1 has too many words. Title No: 2 is just as clear but with fewer words.

  Title No: 1 **Development of a Local Learning Center for Community Education**

  Title No: 2 **Local Learning Center for Community Education**

Project Overview

- Think of the Project Overview as an Executive Summary. Be specific and concise. Do not go into detail on aspects of your proposal that are further clarified at a later point in your proposal.
- The Project Overview should "paint a picture" of your proposal in the mind of the reader. It should establish the framework so that the rest of the proposal has a frame of reference.

- The best time to prepare the Project Overview is after you have completed the entire proposal (and you understand all aspects of your proposal very well). Let the Overview by your last piece of writing and then insert it at the beginning of your proposal.

Background Information

Explain as briefly as possible the origin of the project idea and what steps were taken by the organization, in consultation with other potential stakeholders, to arrive at this concept paper, duration and target areas. Discuss other projects of the organization that are relevant, particularly in the target area and explain why the organization is qualified to undertake the proposed project.

Problem Statement

- It may be easier to think of this section as a review of Relevant Information. Describe pervious projects and studies that are similar to what you are proposing. Show the funding agency that you know what you are proposing because your are familiar with what has preceded you.

- Position your project in relation to other efforts and show how your project will:

  a) Extend the work that has previously been done,
  b) Avoid the mistakes and/or errors that have been previously made, or
  c) Be unique since it does not follow the same path as previously followed.

- Use the statement of the problem to show that your proposed project is definitely needed and should be funded.

- It is essential to include a well-documented statement of the need/problems that is the basis for your project. What are the pressing problems that you want to address? How do you know these problems are important? What other sources/programs similarly support these needs as major needs?

- Is there a special reason why you and/or your organization are uniquely suited to conduct this project? (Geographic location, language expertise, prior involvements in this area, close relationship to the project clientele, track records, ability to access multiethnic community etc).

- It can really help gain funding support for your project if you have already taken some small steps to begin your project. An excellent small step that can occur prior to requesting funding is a needs assessment that you can complete (survey, interviews, focus groups, etc). Write up your needs assessment as a short Report, cite the Report in your proposal, and include a copy with proposal.

- What are other agencies doing / planning? Are there other projects in progress / planned and how do these projects complement each other?

Goals and Objectives

- Try and differentiate between your goals and your objectives - and include both.

  Goals are the large statements of what you hope to accomplish but usually are not very measurable. They create the setting for what you are proposing.

  Objectives are operational, tell specific things you will be accomplishing in your project, and are very measurable.

- Present measurable objectives for your project. If your are dealing with "things" it is easier to be measurable than if your are dealing with "people". Your proposal is easier to understand (and the outcomes are much more clear) if you describe your objectives in measurable ways.

Activities and outputs

Activities are a series of specific steps or tasks carried out in order to achieve an objective.

Outputs are the results that will be produced from implementing project activities. It is best to mention one output at a time and list the activities that pertain to the specific output. Specific inputs for a set of activities under one output should follow. Do the same for each output.

Example:

Objective 1:
- ***Activity1 – Output 1***
- ***Activity 2 – Output 2***

Exercise 4:

For each objective developed by your group during the previous session develop a list of the activities needed to accomplish that objective.

Clientele

- Include specific information about the population or clientele on which your project is focused.

  - Have you already had contact with the clientele group?
  - Do you have the support of the clientele group to move ahead with the project?
  - Are the members of the group involved in the preparation of the proposal?

Sometimes a project is funded and then the director finds that the clientele group does not want to be involved? Do not let that happen to you!

Staff/Administration

- Make sure you notify people who you identify in this section and receive their approval ***before you send in your proposal.***

- Use this section to describe the roles of the different people associated with your project and the importance of each.

- Make sure to clarify how each of the roles are essential to the success the project and each role clearly relates to operational zing the methods you have described.

- So what do you say about your key people? To start, make sure you include name, title, experience and qualifications. Include other information if your feel it is important to the success of your project.

- The descriptions of your personnel should let the funding agency know that you have excellent people who are committed to the project. You are not asking the funding agency to "trust" you. The validity for what you are proposing is directly related to the people that will work with the project.

- The project should be reviewed by the organization and go through the approval process

Available Resources

- Collaborative efforts are usually considered very favorably! Many funding agencies like to see cooperative ventures as the basis for local action. In other words, the funding agency's dollars are being brought together with other existing organizations that are already committed and involved in dealing with the needs that the project is responding to.

Personnel (Management Structure)

- Refer back to your Staff/Administration section and identify those people who will actually receive funding under the proposal - these are the ones to be identified in this section.

- Include short descriptions of each of the people who will be involved in your project and supported by the funding. The descriptions should clarify in the mind of the potential funding agency that these people are ideally suited to conduct the project.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Describe to the donor how you will monitor the project during implementation. What indicators will you apply during the project to assess progress towards achieving your objectives? Indicators are actual measurable criteria, e.g. measuring satisfaction

amongst trainees or numbers of people starting up their own business. You will have to monitor the project throughout its duration - and BE PREPARED TO MAKE CHANGES if things are not going according to plan.

- If you plan to use a survey or questionnaire to help in evaluating the success of your project you may want to include in the Appendices a draft of what you are considering for the questionnaire/survey.

- Your proposal should include a detailed account of how you will evaluate the project at various stages and at the end of the project. Your final report to the donor will have to include a detailed evaluation of the project's success.

Facilities - Equipment

- Be careful in listing the equipment that will be needed for your project. Funding sources are usually much more willing to provide funds for the support of personnel than they are to support the purchase of equipment (that may or may not directly benefit the funded project).

Budget

- Make your budget **realistic**. Carefully think through exactly what you will need from the funding agency to carry out the project and establish your budget around this amount. (Do not forget, funding agencies receive lots of requests for funding. They can easily tell when someone has inflated a budget in order to procure funds for other purposes. Do not get caught in this situation.)

- Have someone else in your organization review your budget to see how realistic you are.

- Do you really need a large amount of funding at the beginning of the project or will your project be "phased up" over a period of time? Sometimes it is not very realistic to expect a new project to be able to be up and operating (and spending large amounts) during the first 6 months or year of operating.
- Check with the agency to see if they have suggested/required budget categories that they want you to use.

- If the potential funding agency does not have any suggested/required budget categories, organize your budget around a set of meaningful categories that work for the project you are proposing. Categories that you may want to consider for itemizing your budget are:

Personnel (salary and benefits, taxes)
Consultants (salary)
Instruction
Equipment
Supplies
Communication (telephone/mail/e-mail)
Materials preparation
Travel
Rental of facilities

Evaluation
Other expenses
Indirect costs (costs required by your organization)

Government Charges

Bank Charges

A suggested budget format for a three-year funding proposal:

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
PERSONNEL	.	.	.
Person #1	.	.	.
Person #1	.	.	.
Person #3	.	.	.
Sub-Total	.	.	.
FACILITIES (list)	.	.	.
Sub-Total	.	.	.
EQUIPMENT (list)	.	.	.
Sub-Total	.	.	.
SUPPLIES (list)	.	.	.
Sub-Total	.	.	.
COMMUNICATION (list)	.	.	.
Telephone	.	.	.
Postage	.	.	.
Email/Fax			
Sub-Total	.	.	.
TRAVEL (list)	.	.	.
Fuel	.	.	.
Vehicle Rental	.	.	.
Maintenance	.	.	.
Sub-Total	.	.	.
.	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
TOTAL	.	.	.
SUM TOTAL			.

Appendices

- Appendices should be devoted to those aspects of your project that are of secondary interest to the reader. Begin by assuming that the reader will only have a short time to read your proposal and it will only be the main body of your proposal (not the Appendices). Then, assume that you have gotten the attention of the reader who would now like some additional information.

  Here are some possible sections to include in the Appendices:

  Time Line - A clear indication of the time frame for the project and the times when each aspect of the project will be implemented. Try creating the time line as a graphic representation (not too many words). If done well, it will help demonstrate the feasibility of the project in a very visible way.

  Letters of Support - Funding agencies would like to know that others feel strongly enough about your project that they are willing to write a letter in support of the project.

  Monitoring Evaluation Instrument - Include a draft copy of the actual evaluation instrument you plan to use (survey, questionnaire, interview guide, etc.). This will let your prospective funding agency know that you are serious about making evaluation an integral part of your project - and funding agencies like to hear this! Indicate DRAFT at the top of the instrument and then make it look as real as possible.

DURING THE WORKSHOP AND THROUGHOUT THE EXERCISES, GROUPS SHOULD DEVELOP AN 'IDEA' THAT SHOULD THEN BE DRAFTED INTO A PROPOSAL BEFORE THE NEXT SESSION.
PREFERABLY AN IDEA THAT CAN BE REALISTICALLY IMPLEMENTED AND PRESENTED TO DONORS.

END OF STAGE ONE

3. FUNDRAISING IN THE CONTEXT OF NGOs

As an NGO you will always be required to fundraise.

Fundraising is undertaking activities, which will generate income for an organization. The money (funds) will be used by the organization to carry out a project or planned activities, which will benefit their institution and the people they work with. Fundraising is a basic and critical function of the management of an NGO. Remember that the 'humanitarian world' is a very competitive environment, where a high number of agencies are competing for limited funds. Appropriate fundraising strategies are crucial

3.1 SOME KEY QUESTIONS

Before you even begin fundraising, there are some key questions you must answer.

3.1.1 Do we need to fundraise?

An organization needs to agree that looking for money outside the organization is the right solution to the problem. Is money the only answer to the problem or is there anything else that can be done? Remember cutting costs also generates extra income. Will money provide for the long-term or will new funds simply help in the short-term? What will happen when the money runs out?

Remember – more money, means more work such as accounting and reporting. An organisation needs to be careful that more money will not cause more problems than it solves.

3.1.2 Who will be involved in fundraising?

Draw on existing experience your organization needs to decide who is the best person in the organization to organize / lead the fundraising? Check if anyone within the organization has experience of fundraising and use that experience. It is very important to get a local colleague or team member with experience to assist you. Fundraising is a skill and it will help the sustainability of your work and increase your skills and confidence if you work jointly with an experienced fundraiser.

3.1.3 Can we legally accept funds?

It is important to check that your group / organization can legally accept funds. You need to think about what to do if you cannot. The donor may require you to provide clear evidence of your legal status or that you set-up a separate bank account for the funds you receive.

4. FUNDRAISING – MAKE A STRATEGIC PLAN

Your organization needs to develop a carefully thought out strategy if it wants to raise funds. It should do this regardless of where the funds are being sought. A plan specifically for fundraising will help your NGO:

- To have a clear idea of the goals and objectives it has for fundraising
- To plan all the activities needed so you can be more successful
- To put together written materials such as grant proposals, letters to donors, etc
- To introduce new Board members and staff to what you are doing
- To gain experience in teamwork and strengthen the internal management of the organization

Exercise 5:

Break into groups. What are some fundraising events your NGO could hold to raise funds from the community

This training module looks at 3 sources of funding:

Number 1 – Community Based Fundraising (CBF)

Community based fundraising is when an NGO recruits partners and organises events, which will locally raise funds for its work. It differs from donor based fundraising as it will involve different local partners such as private individuals, businesses, local government, other NGOs, etc. There is a strong element of 'self-help' involved. This kind of fundraising is not new to the region, various events have been organized to raise funds for specific purposes.

Community-based fundraising

There are many forms of community-based fundraising or ''self help', which an organization can undertake for raising money. In each case the organization's members themselves raise all or part of the necessary funds for their future projects / planned activities. Examples of community-based fundraising include:

- Organizing fund-raising events for the public such as a fair or festival, a lottery or prize draw, a show or performance of some kind, a picnic, sports day or summer camp.
- Selling equipment, goods or property, which it owns and does not need anymore
- Making gifts of money to the organization or items, which could be used for the project or sold to raise money.
- Participating in commercial activities or charging for services and using the funds to finance the project.
- Giving their time and energy for free in carrying out activities relating to the project
- Promotional goods: t-shirts, pens, badges, lighters etc.

This type of fundraising is very important because:

- It can educate the public about the work of your NGO.
- It can also be used as a way to increase membership.

- Your NGO gets to meet the community and has a chance to explain and discuss your work and share ideas and experiences
- You can hand out leaflets, pictures and other materials, which demonstrate your work.
- It gives your organization an opportunity to sell books, pictures, t-shirts and other items to raise funds.

Community based Fundraising is already happening in Kosovo and it is a very effective way of building team spirit in your organization, of getting your NGO better known locally and involving the local community in your activities.

Number 2 – Loans

A loan is money borrowed, which you agree to pay back in a given period of time. Often interest will be charged on the loan at a given percentage rate of the total amount borrowed and means that the original amount borrowed plus the interest charged must be re-paid at the end of the agreed loan period.

If your organization decides to take out a loan to fund a project / planned activities, you must be sure that the project /activities will raise enough money to re-pay the debt in full. A loan is more suited to projects such as agricultural development (where produce can then be sold to re-pay the debt), manufacturing, the set-up of small businesses such as handicrafts, shoe repairs, etc, introducing public transport.

Loans are only suitable for projects, which will make enough money to pay back the original amount borrowed plus the interest charges.

Number 3 - Grants

Grants do not have to be re-paid, but are normally given for a specific project or program of activities. Grants are normally given to groups and not individuals. Some funding agencies (donors) will only provide grants to NGOs and not, for example, to local authorities or village councils. Others only provide funding to organizations, which clearly target a specific sector (health, education or agriculture) or work with a minority or disadvantaged group in society, e.g. orphaned children or single mothers.

Who may provide your organization with a grant?

Grants are available from national organizations or international organizations (e.g. foreign donors, foreign governments or international NGOs and aid agencies) and private individuals or businesses.

4.1 Combined financing

It is important as an NGO to be creative in thinking how you can finance your activities.
One way to do this is to combine different sources of funding to finance your project / activities.

For example, most donors will expect your organization to make some kind of contribution, either financial or 'in kind'. In addition to this, it may be possible to cover the remaining costs of the project by applying to several donors and obtaining some funds from each. Make sure that you inform the donors of your intentions and provide a detailed budget outlining the contributions in each case.

Another alternative is to apply for a grant and a loan and so cover the complete costs in this way. Or apply for some funding and organize various community-based events to raise the remaining funds needed.

If the project will involve profit-making activities, your organization could consider setting up its own 'revolving loan scheme' to finance all or part of a project. For example, a group of farmers are provided with a loan to clear land, buy seeds, plant crops and buy tools and fertilizers, which will increase their productivity. The farmers are charged a small amount of interest on the money they borrow, which the pay back in addition to the amount of the loan. When the first set of farmers has paid back their loans, the money is then used to assist other farmers in the area.

Exercise 6:

Different Types of Fundraising – Carefully read through the following case study. In your groups, discuss the approach to financing used. What are the key factors to note? In your groups, put together a small presentation to explain this method of financing and prepare to present it to the other trainees.

> A group of single mothers have recently set-up a local NGO. They have already attended training on how to set-up an NGO and have a good understanding of the structure of an NGO, the people involved and their roles and responsibilities and are already building this training into their activities.
>
> The women need a suitable building to work from and have decided to raise funds for this project. They have decided to organize a series of community-based fundraising events, including a craft fair and children's' sports day.
>
> They have approached the local government for a grant and are waiting for the reply. Also, a local building contractor has offered to do part of the construction work for free.
>
> The NGO needs to find the funds for the construction materials and for the remaining part of the construction work. They are applying to X organization for this.
>
> What are the key factors you have to consider in funding a project in this way? Prepare a short presentation to convince the Donor of the best funding solution and why they should fund this project?

4.2 Evaluation your fundraising program

Your strategic plan needs to include how you will evaluate your organization's fundraising performance and the performance of the Board members and other members of the fundraising team.

Whether a great success or a terrible failure – you can learn from this experience and use it in the future. It is important to see what approaches to fundraising worked well and can this be repeated. Where were mistakes made and how have you learned from this.

It is very important to put time and effort into learning how to be more successful – this way you can better achieve your goals as an NGO.

4.3 The donor community and their role in funding NGOs

Donors

A donor is any organization or institution who gives resources. This usually means money or other value-measured instruments, such as equipment, personnel, training or humanitarian commodities.

Raising money from donor organizations

If your NGO hopes to seek donor funding, it is up to you and your team to approach donors in a professional manner. There are many donors and funding organizations. How can you identify, which is the right agency to work with?

Conduct Research

You need to do some research and collect information on the donor community and their range of interests. This activity will cost very little, if anything, and is a worthwhile investment before you start writing!! Remember to include the findings of your research in your strategic plan for fundraising.

At the same time as you find out about donors' activities, you should learn more about the current work and future plans of the NGOs in your area. You do not want to be duplicating or overlapping with the work of other organizations. First, this is a waste of valuable resources and second, you are unlikely to receive funding from a donor if they see a similar initiative already in progress.

Where can you find information on donors?

- Ask the local NGOs, international NGOs and other development institutions and local government in your area for information on funding presently available and who has previously worked in the area.

- Check in the local newspapers for articles and reports on the activities of funding agencies.
- Gather good reliable (i.e. first-hand) and up-to-date information on the current and future interests of donors.
- Attend meetings, conferences and seminars to increase your knowledge of NGO and donor activities and to meet with potential donors.
- Direct contact with donors

Do as much donor research as you can so you can really target your application for funding at the right organization.

Write Letters of Interest

A 'letter of interest' is an introductory letter, which you send to the donor as a first step in making contact and building relations. It is an indication to the donor that you are interested in receiving funding. You may submit a letter of interest in response to an invitation to tender. Remember you have already done your donor research at this stage and so are sure that the interests of the donor and your NGO are compatible.

Your letter of interest should include:

1. The right contact person at the donor agency – check who that is if you are not sure.

2. A brief introduction to your NGO, who you are, what you do, where you are working and with whom.

3. A brochure, leaflet or some form of promotional material about your organization, your experience and work in the past and your plans for the future.

4. Your full contact details – address, telephone, fax, email, contact names, etc. The donor needs to be able to get back in touch with you if necessary.

5. A clear statement of why you are contacting the donor and what you want to achieve.

6. Any requests you may have for additional information. Examples of request for additional information include:

- Does the donor operate according to a funding cycle (i.e. specific financial year, plan for the next two years funding)
- When is the best time / deadline for applying for funding
- Are there costs which the donor will not cover, e.g. operating costs or certain activities, which it does not support for religious, political or moral reasons?
- Is there an upper / lower limit for grants awarded?
- How long will it take to process your funding application?

These are all important considerations, which you need to take into account in your fundraising plan.

7. A request for a meeting with the NGO

Meet With the Donors

Try to arrange a meeting with any donors you are interested in receiving funding from. It is important to be well prepared for any meetings you arrange. What is even better is if you can invite the donor to your office or to the project location so the donor has a better picture of where you work and the type of work that you do and can also directly identify the needs you are trying to address.

Be prepared to answer any questions the donor may have. Try to think in advance what these questions might be. Think in advance what some of the basic concerns of the donor might be and be ready to discuss these.

It is important that everyone involved with meeting the donor is well briefed and understands the reason for the meeting and the issues to be discussed.

Presentations

Your organization may even consider preparing a more formal presentation for the donor. This is a very good way for you to demonstrate good teamwork and good management - two of the most important things the donor will want to see when considering funding your project.

Remember this may be the only opportunity you get to present your ideas in person to the donor, so make good use of the opportunity – be well-prepared, professional and clear about what you want to achieve.

Exercise VI:

Divide into two groups. One group will present the donors while the other group will be the new NGO trying to present the project proposal.

The NGO will have to present their organizational background to the donor using the Proposal Presentations they were to prepare. Participants will give their comments on the NGO presentation and preparation of the project proposal.

Summarize Agreements

Make sure that summarize any agreements at the end of any meetings or discussions you and your organisation have with a potential donor. It is important that you and the donor are both clear on what has been agreed and what the next step should be in you applying for funding.

Follow-up

It is both professional and polite to follow-up on any meetings you have with a donor and especially important to follow-up if you submit a letter of interest.

The Donor's Assessment

Expect the donor to assess your proposal in detail. Particularly the budget and the line items and how it relates back the project and the planned activities. The donor will look closely at the

aims and objectives of the project and how they tie together with the activities and outputs. The donor will want to see clear links between each. It will also consider how well the project fits with the mission and overall aims of your NGO. The donor will consider how well your organisation is suited / qualified to implement the project. It will also look carefully to see you have sufficient human resources. Donors will expect to see a clear link between the activities you have planned and how effective they will be in solving the problems you have described. They will look at the research you conducted and whether it matches your reported findings. The feasibility of your project, a clear and appropriate strategy and a clear idea of what the project involves financially will help win the support of the donor.

What if ….

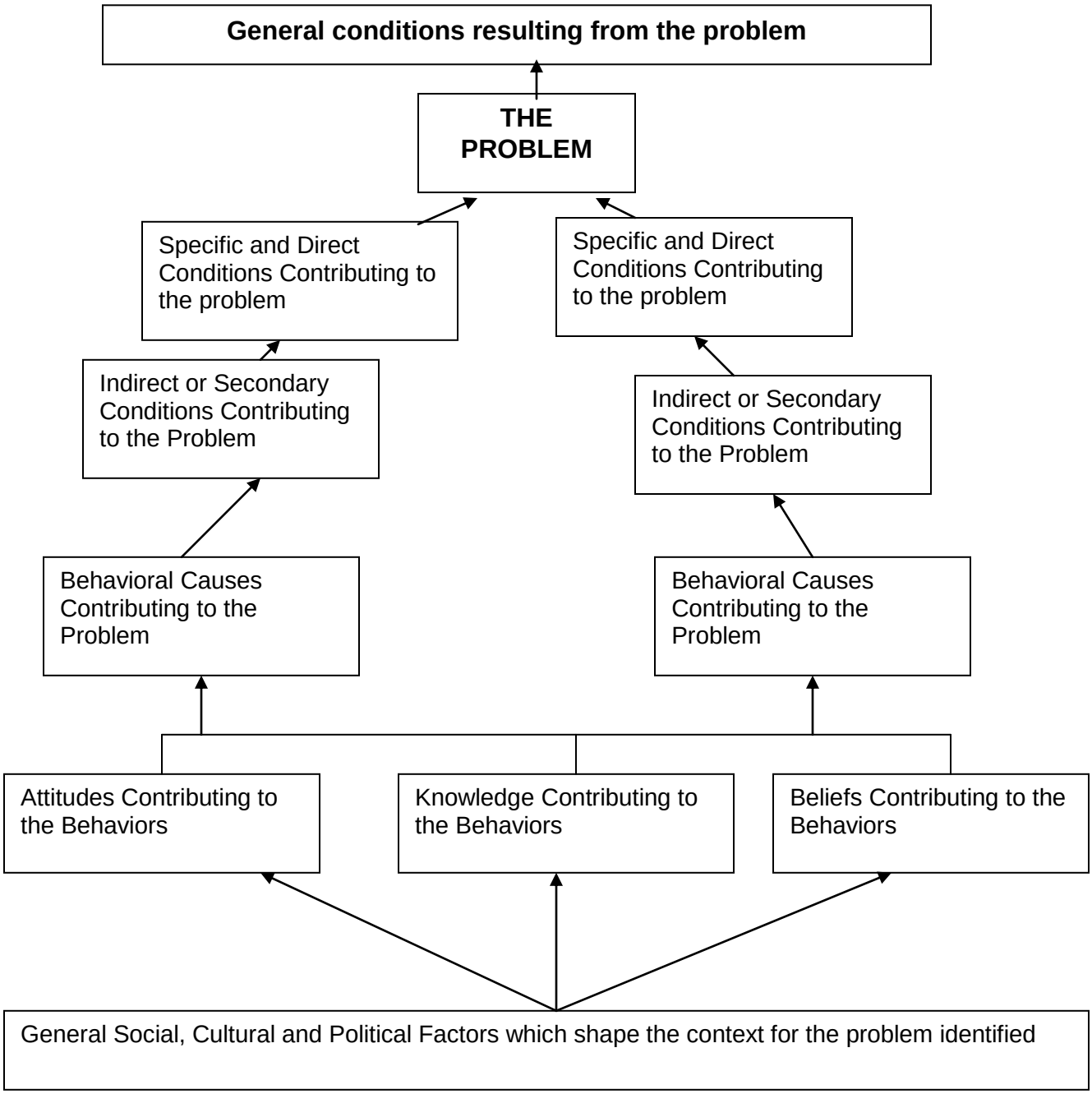
Your proposal is rejected outright

You should be told why this is so. If you are not told, then you are entitled to ask and must do so. Knowing why your proposal did not succeed is a good learning experience. What will happen if you don't get funding? Can you do alternative work; begin some of the smaller activities? Discuss this in advance with your colleagues so they are aware of the chance of a negative result.

You are awarded your grant

Remember to celebrate! Then you will need to tackle the work. Plan how you and your colleagues will handle the funds, keep accounts, etc. It is important to sit down and plan the next stages and think about what is involved and how you will manage the project.

If you are only awarded part of the grant

You need think where else you can look for additional funds. Again, think about this in advance with your colleagues. Don't wait until you know the donor's decision. Plan ahead where you can find alternative funds so the project can go ahead. Remember to ask the donor why you only received part of the grant and also if there are constraints on how this money can be used.

Annex 1 – Problem Tree