



**Tech  
Mahindra  
FOUNDATION**

NGO Resource Center  
Karve Institute of Social Service  
In Collaboration with Tech Mahindra Foundation

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**Capacity Building  
Workshop for NGO**

**Proposal Writing,  
Programme Planning and  
Monitoring**

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## INTRODUCTION

There are about 33 Lakh registered non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in India, with a ratio of 1 NGO per 600 citizens. In spite of this, many NGOs merely exist on paper, without really being active in the field. The possible reasons for this state of affairs are, insufficient funds, as well as inadequate human and material resources.

A number of NGOs send out proposals to funding agencies and do receive funding. But many others have but little knowledge of how proposals should be written and presented. Similarly, a large number of those NGOs receiving funds have inadequate knowledge of how to plan programmes and the activities therein, and also of the criteria / indicators of activities and outcomes. This results in vague goals and lack of clarity about what exactly have they achieved through their efforts.

This proposal writing manual lays out the process of planning, deciding criteria and indicators of activities as well as of monitoring.

For any project to succeed, it is necessary to give thought and to explain the reasons for starting the project, the goals and objectives of the programmes and lay out in detail, the activities therein. Attention has to be given to the following, while writing a proposal to be sent to a funding agency for financial aid.

The goal of programme should be consistent with the main aims and objectives of the organization; and should be stated in two or three sentences. For instance, if the organization is working on educational issues in slums, then the goal of the programme should relate to some aspect of education and issues thereof.

## SOME TIPS ABOUT WRITING OBJECTIVES

- Objectives should be written in clear words and simple sentences.
- One sentence should contain only one objective.
- One programme should have no more than three or four objectives. More objectives would expand the scope of the programme beyond the limits of manageability. It would be difficult to achieve added objectives within the material and human resources and time available to the organization.

- The objectives of the programme should be consistent with the goals of the organization.
- The programme objectives should be practical and realistic.
- The objectives should lead the organization toward its developmental goals.
- The main consideration while deciding the objectives should be the well being of the beneficiaries.

**In short, the objectives should be SMART, i.e.**

**S: Specific:** The objective should state exactly ‘what’ is to be achieved.

**M: Measurable:** The level of achievement should lend itself to quantitative measurement, e.g. 90%, 75% and so on.

**A: Achievable:** The achievement of the objective should be within the reach of the organization’s human, economic and other resources as well as the time at its disposal.

**R: Realistic:** The objective should be based on the socio-economic reality of the client group as well as of the organization.

**T: Time bound:** Objectives are always related to specific time spans. Therefore, a time limit has to be set for achieving an objective. If it is not achieved within this period, it may lose its relevance.

Programme planning can be undertaken after deciding and laying down the objectives.

## **PLANNING**

The basic premise in planning is: ‘what, how, when and by who’. It means deciding what is to be done, how it can be done, when it is to be done and who will be given the responsibility of doing it.

In order to do this, activities have to be broken down into tasks and their details have to be worked out. Suppose a coaching class is to be organized for educationally backward school children in a slum. The first activity would be to contact the schools in and /or around the slum. The specific tasks would be: finding out the number of schools, their names and addresses, best time for establishing contact, giving information to school authorities about the prospective coaching class and so on.

After specifying the tasks we have to decide how they are to be performed. For example, names and addresses of the schools can be found out by asking local residents or by actually searching through the neighbourhood or by looking through lists obtained from the Municipal Corporation or Zilla Parishad. We have to decide which method to follow.

Then we have to plan when the schools can be contacted, how many visits are necessary, how long would it take and what will be the time span for this activity. Besides we have to decide who among our staff is best suited to undertake these tasks.

Deciding this means determining the indicators for this activity. The activity would be complete when all the tasks are successfully carried out.

While planning in this manner, each activity has to be mentioned, giving details of tasks and the time in which they have to be completed. For instance, if the programme is to run for one year, planning should be broken up in quarters. A quarterly time table has to be prepared in which the activities and tasks for each quarter should be detailed.

The following things should be taken into consideration while planning a programme:

Sr. No.	First Quarter Activities	Tasks/ indicators	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Second Quarter	Third Quarter	Fourth Quarter
	Contacting schools in or around the slum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finding out the total number of schools</li> <li>• Finding out names and addresses of schools</li> <li>• Deciding the best time for contact</li> <li>• Giving information to school authorities about programme</li> </ul>						

Identifying target group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deciding criteria of target group: age-group, class, marks obtained in exams, attendance in school</li> <li>Determining scholastic backwardness</li> </ul>							
Establishing contact with parents.								
Discussions with parents/ teachers about objectives of programme.								
Collecting names of scholastically backward children.								
Assessing needs of children								

Thus, we have to lay down detailed indicators of each task/activity and when (in which month) it is to be carried out, i.e. the tasks and the time table for completing them.

Later, a list of further activities like preparing a syllabus, deciding on the study material, compiling it, finding out and appointing teachers and so on has to be made. These activities have to come in their logical sequence and have to be laid down in the plan. The major activities should be included in the proposal with the time schedule for completing them.

How to determine the tasks that comprise and complete an activity? To do this we have to decide criteria/ indicators. For instance, what is a target group, what do we mean by scholastic backwardness, what education material is necessary and how to prepare it, and so on.

## An example:

### Target Group

- Age group of children: 12 to 16 years
- Class: 7th to 10th
- Marks obtained in exams: <50%
- Attendance in class: <50%

The target group will be made up of children fitting into these criteria. Indicator of successfully forming the target group will be: all children will have met the criteria and the group will consist of the required number of children.

## MONITORING

Once the work plan is in place, it is important to prepare a monitoring plan, so that work can proceed smoothly. We have to make time table for monitoring, too. We will continue with the same example to consider the following:

Sr. No.	Nature of Activity (specify each activity clearly)	Responsibility (who will perform the activity)	Responsibility for monitoring (performer's superior)	Frequency (time table for monitoring)	Report to be sent to (Reporting has to be done by the monitor)
1	Contacting schools in or around the slum	Field worker, staff member	Supervisor/ coordinator	First week: daily, orally. Second week: twice orally/in writing	Project director / manager
2	Identifying target group				
3					
4					
5					
6					

To make a monitoring plan, it is first necessary to allot the tasks to various staff members. This should be done according to the

qualifications and capabilities of the staff members (right job for the right person). It is also to be decided who should shoulder the responsibility for monitoring. It should be done by a person directly supervising the staff member who carries out the activity.

Monitoring would show whether the activities are being performed as per specification and schedule. After each specified time schedule, assessment of achievement of objectives is to be done. This means assessment of outcomes (results) and entails determining criteria of achievement and indicators showing that objectives are achieved.

**An example:**

Assessing outcomes of the following activities of the coaching class:

- A list of children in the desired age-group is made.
- Information about educational status of the children is collected.
- Information about scholastically backward children is collected.
- Contact has been established with parents / teachers.
- Children’s needs are understood.

This can be put on a chart as under:

Sr. No.	Objectives of programme	Activity	Indicator	Method of assessment	Qualitative outcome	Quantitative outcome
1	Helping needy children to improve their scholastic level	Identifying target group	Age-group, class, marks, attendance	Check the list against indicators	Target group is formed as per indicators	Required number of children within the criteria
2						
3						
4						

If all the above is successfully done, it means the target group is identified. Outcome indicators for each activity have to be laid down in this manner.

All these factors have to be carefully considered before project

proposal is written and sent. A framework is needed for each activity mentioning the time needed, human resource required, necessary material and equipment, funds required. This framework has to be prepared and sent along with the proposal.

While making an estimate of cost, the following expenses have to be considered:

1. Number of required personnel, for specified time and their salaries / honoraria.
2. Required resources: Education and other material, rent, expenses for basic amenities and other necessities.  
 Separate one-time / non-recurring expenses (capital expenditure) and recurring expenses (operational expenditure).
3. Miscellaneous: Telephone, photocopies, stationery, contingency etc.

**Schedule of expenditure:**

Sr. No.	Type of expenditure	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
1	Capital expenditure (non-recurring) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey of slum</li> <li>• Preparation of education material</li> <li>• Equipment like computers, LCD etc.</li> </ul>				
	Sub-Total				
2	Operational expenditure (recurring every year) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Salaries               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Project coordinator</li> <li>– Project assistant</li> <li>– Staff members</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Honorarium of teachers/experts</li> <li>• Rent</li> <li>• Office expenses</li> <li>• Stationery</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Maintenance and repairs</li> <li>• Contingency</li> </ul>				
	Sub-Total				
	Grand-Total				