

Guidance to Getting Grants and Showing Results

Three Steps: 1. Create Strategic and Projects Frameworks, 2. Project Proposal 3. Project Evaluation

Community groups that want to tap into development money and bring development to their communities need to be able to get funding. The only way to get funding is to present a well-planned project that can show how goals are achieved. The following guidance gives organizations a roadmap on how to get development money and show whether desired results are achieved.

Step 1: Strategic and Projects Frameworks

Strategic Framework (SF): An SF will allow your organization to show that you have a development problem you are trying to solve, a strategy to solve the problem, and ways to show that your projects are helping to solve the problem. An SF included the following:

Mission Statement: The mission statement is a short sentence that states the organization's purpose. All projects the organization does should somehow be tied with the mission statement. For example, "our mission is to reduce the suffering of hungry children in our town."

Objective: The general objective(s) that an organization has, and can be easily linked to the mission statement. It is very general, such as generating income, conserving the environment, improving access to education, or increasing agricultural productivity. In the example above, the Objective could be "to reduce hunger among children in our town."

Goal: The Goal shows the ways you will achieve the Objective. In the example above one Goal could be "to prepare meals for hungry children."

Indicators: Indicators measure how well you are reaching towards a goal or objective. In the example above, an indicator could be the "number of children fed", or number of meals provided".

Possible Projects: Projects that you organization wants to undertake needs to achieve results for indicators. In the example above, illustrative activities could be "a school lunch feeding program", or "a breakfast feeding program".

Projects Framework (PF): The PF takes an illustrative activity and shows how it will look as a project. This will allow the organization to show how project activities will contribute towards the overall goals of the organization. A PF shows:

Inputs: The actual ingredients that are needed to make the project possible. For example, cassava, firewood, labor for pounding, mortar and pestle, a pot, and water are "inputs" for fufu, just like cloth and labor for sewing are inputs for making school uniforms.

Outputs: This tells what the inputs will create. Cassava, labor for pounding, and water will have an output of 5 balls of fufu.

Outcome: This tells how the output will change the world, and should be linked to the indicator in the SF. The 5 balls of fufu will have the outcome of 10 children who are fed.

Impact: The impact reveals how the outcome changes to world for the future, and should relate to the IR or SO. In the fufu example, the impact will be that the children are able to concentrate in school and learn because they are not hungry, or they may be able to produce more crops because they are strong to farm. Linking this to your SO or mission, you can say that "the fed children will suffer less." But it is difficult to measure suffering.

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Step 2: Project Proposal

The second step will be to use the SF and PF to write a full project proposal. A good proposal includes:

- Mission Statement:** To let the donor understand the purpose of your organization. This should be taken from your SF.
- Organization History:** To let the donor know how you came to be and show your record of past projects.
- Statement of Problem:** This should tell the story of the problem that you want to address. This will tell the donor why the issue you are addressing is important for them to fund. In the fufu example, the problem may be that these 10 children have nobody to cook for them.
- Project Objectives:** This will explain the outcomes and impacts that your project will provide. It should be taken from the PF. In the fufu example, the objective (or outcome) may be to feed the 10 children.
- Project Method:** This will describe the action and inputs that will be taken to achieve the objectives and outputs. In the fufu example, it may be that the group will purchase cassava and firewood, cook the cassava, pound it into fufu with the mortar and pestle, and create 5 balls of fufu. Then the group will serve up lunch to the 10 children, and achieve the goal of reducing suffering of hungry children.
- Project Evaluation:** The project evaluation is the third step and will be detailed in the next section. The evaluation will show a plan for when your group finishes the project to go back and see whether the goals were achieved.

Step 3: Project Evaluation

When a project is finished, how will your group prove that you achieved your goals? This is important to funders, because if they give money to a project that is supposed to reduce the suffering of hungry children, they will want to know that the project indeed reduced their suffering. An evaluation is very important for a couple of reasons. If you can show that you achieved your goals, then that will help your organizational history when applying for other grants. It will show that you do what you say you will do, and will give you more chances to get more money. An evaluation is also important because if the goals were not achieved, it gives the committee a chance to explain why.

There are many ways to evaluate a project. In the fufu example, the committee could survey the children and ask them a number of questions, like “are you full?”, “do you concentrate better in school now?” If the children say they are full and can concentrate, you can say that you achieved your goals. If only 1 out of 10 say they were full, then you will have to explain why you did not achieve your goals. Maybe there was a drought, and the price of cassava went very high and the committee could not buy enough cassava to pound the fufu. Or maybe a committee member mishandled money. The committee can then explain the problem, and tell how they will fix the situation.

The evaluation could also survey children who did not get the fufu and compare that group. If 8 out of 10 in your project could concentrate better in school, and only 3 out of 8 of the group not in the program could concentrate, then the committee can say that the project is helping reduce suffering of children.

It is also important to be able to show results in your evaluation, because if you achieve results, then the donor organization has achieved results too. So now Bridge can say to people that we helped feed 10 hungry children and helped them concentrate in school. If Bridge shows these results, then people will be more likely to fund Bridge’s projects. So donor organizations need results through evaluations.