



PM4NGOs

A quick Guide to the
Project DPro

Project Management for Development
Professionals – PMD Pro

Second Edition

Publisher

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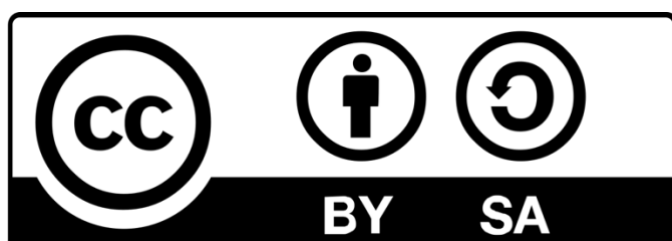
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Preface

This quick guide is a **brief introduction** to the Second Edition of PM4NGOs’ Guide to Project Management for Development Professionals (PMD Pro) to help you decide if this approach is suitable for you, your team and your organization. This second edition of the PMD Pro has been rebranded to Project DPro to align the terminology with the Program DPro and other best practices and methodologies that have been developed by partner organizations – the DPro family. *Please note* that you will need to read the full guide to the Project DPro to completely understand the methodology, to correctly apply the tools and processes, and to prepare for the Project DPro (PMD Pro) Foundation exam.

SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT DPRO GUIDE

Structure of the Project DPro Guide

The Guide is divided into 5 sections: Introduction, Phases, Principles, Adapting and Changes made since the first edition, followed by a Glossary and useful Annexes.

Changing the World Through Projects

Development and humanitarian organizations manage their work through projects. Their offices are staffed by project officers who manage project teams. In turn, the project team writes project proposals, develops project plans, implements project activities, monitors project progress, and evaluates project impact. Then, most importantly, beneficiary communities invest their time, energy, and resources in the projects. They trust the projects to build upon their collective strengths, to reinforce their areas of comparative weakness, and to solve the challenges that otherwise might be considered out of their control.

While the livelihoods of hundreds of millions of people depend on the ability of development and humanitarian organizations to deliver project results effectively and efficiently, project management is seldom identified as a strategic priority for organizations. There tends to be a focus on the technical programmatic areas of projects such as public health, education, child protection, WASH, advocacy, and so on. Organizations tend to hire technical, programmatic specialists who are then asked to manage projects and lead project teams.

These technical, programmatic specialists tend to be very good at identifying treatment protocols for illnesses, developing curricula for schools, designing improved agricultural systems, and analyzing the root causes of poverty. However, it is uncommon to find that they have extensive experience and skills in the area of project management.

The purpose of the Project DPro Guide is to improve the project management capacity of development and humanitarian professionals, providing a contextualized, balanced, comprehensive, and adaptable body of knowledge and toolkit to help increase the efficiency and effectiveness of projects in the sector. It is for:

- Project managers and team members who are new to project management;
- Project managers and team members who are new to the development and humanitarian sectors;
- Development sector professionals who intend to pursue professional credentials in project management;
- Public sector team members working on development initiatives in their respective countries and regions;
- Local implementing partners executing projects on the ground;
- Consultants/contract staff operating in the development sector.

Managing Projects in Development and Humanitarian Sectors

All projects share similar challenges, whether in the private sector (construction, telecommunication, information technology), development sector, or public sector:

- Designing and delivering project results in the context of time, budget, quality, scope, risk and constraints;
- Developing comprehensive and detailed project plans and managing them through the entire life of the project;

- Managing projects that are often implemented via contractors, sub-contractors and suppliers; and
- Identifying potential risks and establishing processes to avoid and address these risks and ensuring that the intended project benefits are delivered.

Development projects do however have unique characteristics:

- Development and humanitarian projects are responsible for delivering tangible outputs and also for delivering less-tangible outcomes related to promoting social change and/or behavioral change. Development projects are less likely to focus on delivering concrete products as the ultimate goal of the project and are often service oriented, intended to bring about improvements in the well-being of the project's target populations.
- Development projects aim to address complex problems of poverty, inequality, and injustice.
- Development projects tend to operate in exceptionally challenging contexts (limited resources, high risks, complex procurement networks, unstable political/financial environments, unsafe conditions).
- Project implementation is often managed through a complex array of stakeholder relationships (partner agencies, government ministries, community-based organizations, contractors, global consortia) that have different compliance requirements, perspectives, and expectations.
- The project approach is often as important as the outcomes themselves (including a high priority placed on participation, rights-based approaches).
- Transferring knowledge and learning to the target population is a priority during each and every phase of the project.
- Projects in the development and humanitarian sectors can be subject to changing and challenging funding environments.

Why does Project Management matter?

- ✓ **Agents of Change:** The development and humanitarian sectors have experienced substantial growth in the past few decades. Any rapid growth comes with 'growing pains' as roles and responsibilities within the sectors are identified and clarified. Projects are the foundation for the sectors, the vehicle through which changes can occur. It is therefore vital that the management of projects is effective and efficient so that these changes can take place.
- ✓ **Context:** It is important to understand the differences between projects, programs, and portfolio and therefore understand the context in which projects operate. The focus of Project DPro is to provide adaptable tools and processes to help those implementing projects on the ground, increasing the likelihood of success.
- ✓ **Accountability:** There is an increased demand for accountability in the development and humanitarian sector. There are different levels of accountability: upward, downward, and horizontal.

Defining Terms

Moving forward through the Guide it's important to understand some of the key terms used.

Project Management

A project is a temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result. Based on this definition, the purpose of **project management** is to plan, organize and manage resources to bring about the successful completion of specific project goals, outcomes (results) and outputs (deliverables).

Within the context of project management, the **project manager** is responsible for ensuring the overall success of the project, but not personally responsible for completing the project work. Instead, the responsibility of the project manager is to work closely with an array of stakeholders to ensure the work of the project is done. It is not unusual for stakeholders within a single project to have different ethnicities, languages, cultures and even nationalities. The challenge of managing groups within this context can be especially difficult.

The Triple Constraint

Projects have a “triple constraint” of:

- Scope/Quality
- Cost/Resources
- Time/Schedule



This can be best understood when drawn as a triangle, which should always stay in balance.

Program and Portfolio Management

- ✓ **Program Management** is the process of managing a group of related projects in a coordinated way to obtain benefits and control not available through managing them individually. See our *Guide to Program Management* (Program DPro).
- ✓ **Portfolio Management** oversees the performance of the organization’s collection of project and programs.

Where do Projects come from?

Projects and the funding for projects can take many different forms, depending on the context, the organizational structure, and strategy of the organization. While there may be different mechanisms in which projects are developed and funded, the framework from which we approach projects remains the same.

- ✓ **INGO/Implementing Partner:** An international NGO may run a program and have several different local, implementing partners conducting the activities and doing the work that contributes to an overall programmatic goal. Frequently these are called projects, but in all reality, each implementing partner component could potentially be considered a project. In most cases with this kind of project, the components of the intervention have already been identified and designed, with the focus of the implementing partners on the execution of the activities.
- ✓ **Stand-Alone Projects:** Some organizations may have multiple funding streams that allow a certain level of flexibility when it comes to identifying and implementing projects. Stand-alone projects are usually funded by the organization through these alternative forms of (unrestricted) funding.
- ✓ **Projects under Programs:** An organization will likely have several programs running at any given time with specific outcomes. In each, several project interventions will be designed and implemented.

The Principles of Project Management

Principles guide the way in which we approach projects, providing a framework for structuring our management of interventions. Project DPro outlines five Principles of Project Management: Well-Governed, Participatory, Comprehensive, Integrated, and Adaptive. For more details see section 3 of the Guide.

Project Manager Competencies

The Art & Science of Project Management

The “art” of project management focuses on the people elements of a project. It requires skills that enable project managers to lead, enable, motivate and communicate.

The “science” of project management focuses on the technical, project management competencies of planning, estimating, measuring and controlling of work. The “science” of project management maintains the *Triple Constraint Triangle* and constantly assesses the activities of the project to ensure that targets will be met and outcomes achieved.

A key to a successful project is identifying a balanced project manager who is comfortable with both the “art” and “science” of project management.

Project DPro Project Management Competency Model

Classifying project management skills into the categories of “art” and “science” is helpful, it is only a first step in identifying the characteristics of a successful project manager. A more comprehensive project management competency model will help identify the requisite skills of project managers and can then serve as a tool to assess skill levels, identify areas for improvement, and to map areas for career development. While multiple competency models exist for project managers, the Project DPro model organizes project management competencies into four areas:

- **Technical** – these are often referred to collectively as the “science” behind project management. Can the project manager identify, select and employ the right tools and processes to ensure project management success?
- **Leadership/Interpersonal** – often referred to collectively as the “art” of project management. For example, how does the project manager communicate, inspire, and resolve conflict?
- **Personal/Self-Management** – the project manager's ability to self-manage. For example, can the project manager effectively prioritize, manage time and organize work?
- **Development Sector Specific** – the ability to apply the technical, leadership /interpersonal and personal/self-management competencies in the context of development projects. For example, can the project manager identify, select and employ the right tools and processes that are unique to the development sector?

While all four competency areas of project management are critical to ensuring project success, the scope of the Project DPro Guide specifically focuses on the “science” competency areas of Technical and Development Specific.

Phases in Development and Humanitarian Projects

For successful development and humanitarian projects, it is critical that the full array of project management competencies be applied in a balanced way through the entire life of the project. Many organizations have developed Project Life Cycle diagrams which they use to identify the phases that map the process of the project from start to end. By grouping activities into a project life cycle sequence, the project manager and the core team can better:

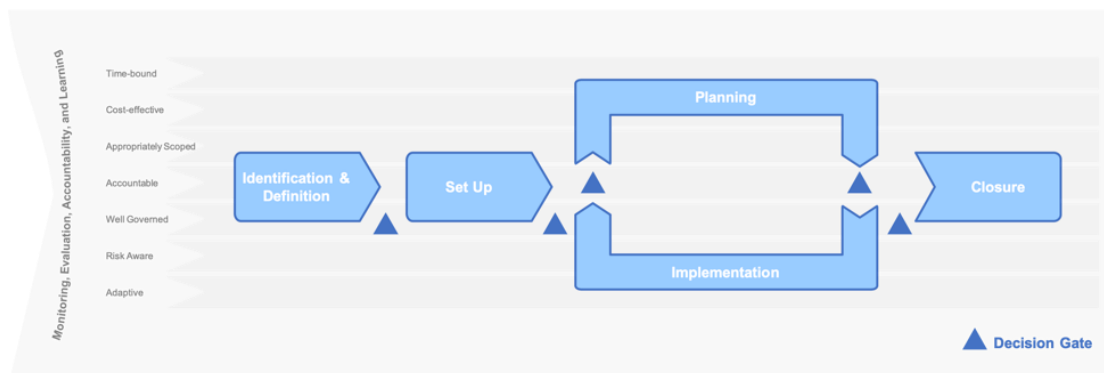
- Define the phases that connect the beginning of a project to its end.
- Identify the processes that project teams must implement as they move through the phases of the project life cycle.
- Illustrate how the project management life cycle can be used to model the management of projects.

- Model how projects work within an environment of ‘constraints’, where changes to any one constraint will result in consequential changes to the other project parameters.

The Project DPro Phase Model

Project DPro uses a phase model approach, providing guidance on what ought to be covered in each phase of the project. The Project DPro Phase Model can be incorporated into already existing project lifecycles or can stand alone if a lifecycle is not available within the organization. It is important to point out that the phases don’t necessarily take place consecutively, but rather they interact with one another. You do not start one phase - stop it - and start the next phase. This allows for more flexibility and adaptability of the phase model into a variety of different projects and sectors. The Phase Model has 5 phases:

- ✓ **Identification and Design:** It is during this phase that the project teams identify and define needs, explore opportunities, analyze the project environment, and design alternatives for project design. The decisions made during the Project Identification and Design Phase set the strategic and operational framework within which the project will subsequently operate.
- ✓ **Project Set Up:** It is during this phase that the project is officially authorized and its overall parameters are defined and communicated to the main project stakeholders. It is also during this phase that the project team establishes the high-level project governance structure.
- ✓ **Project Planning:** Starting from the documents developed in earlier phases of the project, the team develops a comprehensive and detailed implementation plan and supplementary plans (MEAL, Supply Chain, etc.) that provides a model for all the work of the project. These plans are revisited throughout the life of the project and updated (if necessary) to reflect the changing contexts of the project.
- ✓ **Project Implementation:** The day-to-day work of project implementation is to lead and manage the application of the project implementation plan: Leading the team, dealing with issues, managing the project team and creatively integrating the different elements of the project plan.
- ✓ **Project Closure:** This phase includes implementing all the transition activities that need to occur at the end of a project, including (but not limited to) confirming the deliverables with beneficiaries, collecting lessons learned, and completing the administrative, financial and contractual closure activities.



The Project DPro Phase Model was designed with the express intent of ensuring that the model is balanced and comprehensive which is especially important within the context of the development and humanitarian sectors. Too often, development organizations have placed an especially strong emphasis on designing and implementing the project which sometimes overshadows the importance of other phases in the life of the project.

Decision Gates

In the Project DPro Phase Model the triangles located between (and within) the project phases are **Decision Gates**. They are checkpoints in the project where you will justify that the project should move forward as is, make changes based upon information available, or stop the project altogether. The Decision Gate process should be participatory and linked to the project management tolerances and the governance structure of the project team. Placing decision gates at regular points in the project (e.g. at the beginning of each year of the project's implementation) helps to:

- Keep the project focused on the need that the project was originally undertaken to address;
- Ensure that the context and assumptions that initially led to the approval of the project still exist;
- Provide an opportunity for the project team and key stakeholders to decide whether to: continue the project as it is presently conceived; modify the project plan; terminate a project (which is not necessarily a failure if the intervention is no longer appropriate, feasible, or necessary).

How the Phases are Organized

We will go through each of the Project DPro Phases in detail, highlighting the tools and processes to achieve the output for each phase. The format is:

- **Introduction:** Highlights the importance of the phase and provides a general overview of the key components to consider during this phase.
- **Key Output:** For each phase, there is a specific output that should be produced based upon the tools and processes highlighted.
- **What this Means in Practice:** Summarizes the linkage from the previous phase to the current phase and incorporates any additional considerations you need to make during the phase.
- **Inputs:** Outlines all of the documents and tools that will be helpful in completing the processes for the phase.
- **Processes:** Defines and provides examples of all of the processes and tools to achieve the phase output.
- **Checklist for Success:** At the end of each phase in the full Guide, a “Checklist for Success” is provided that highlights some of the key points and questions you need to consider during this phase.

Additionally, in the full guide we have provided stories and mini case studies that showcase concrete examples of what the tools and processes look like in practice.

SECTION 2. PROJECT DPRO PHASES

Phase 1: Project Identification and Definition

Introduction

All projects begin as an idea, a need or opportunity that is assessed, analyzed, and ultimately developed into a project, which is managed through the project life cycle. It is during this process that we begin answering the critical question ‘Are we doing the right project?’

During the Project Identification and Definition Phase, time, resources, and effort are

invested to define needs, explore opportunities, analyze the project environment, cultivate relationships, build trust, develop partnerships, and define the high-level framework for the intervention.

Key Outputs

- ✓ **Stakeholder Analysis.** Do a comprehensive assessment of who the stakeholders are, their power and influence, and explore ways to engage them. From this you will develop a stakeholder management strategy.
- ✓ **Project Logical Frame (Log Frame)** is a key process and tool that helps to outline how the activities will lead to the outputs and outcome of the project and includes project indicators.
- ✓ **Project Proposal** will likely be developed and submitted to obtain funding in this phase. It will contain a high-level analysis of the project scope, budget, timeline, risks, sustainability, team requirements and project closure considerations.
- ✓ The **High-Level Project Charter** describes the high-level scope of the project so that there is a common understanding of what the project is trying to achieve.

Who is Involved in this Phase

The Project Identification and Definition Phase provides an opportunity early in the project life cycle to establish a participatory approach with stakeholders. While participatory approaches to project definition and development can require more time and resources, using this approach will:

- Give stakeholders the opportunity to take control of their own development process;
- Strengthen the project design using information and feedback from multiple perspectives;
- Increase project ownership among stakeholders.

Because you will be doing high-level analyses during this phase it is crucial to involve the support and operational teams within your organization, and to engage with the MEAL team. Supply chain, HR, and finance will need to be consulted particularly during the proposal writing process. These personnel can be incredibly helpful in better ensuring more accurate estimations when it comes to time, budget, and scope.

What this Means in Practice

- ✓ **Resource Mobilization and Participation of Stakeholders:** The reality of this phase sometimes means that there is a very limited time to identify the project and define the design and parameters of the scope of work. This is why it is so important to take a structured approach to identifying and defining the project and mobilizing the resources needed to effectively do so, and engage with stakeholders.
- ✓ **Establishing formal Decision Gates**, and involving stakeholders in the process, better ensures that you are doing the right project, in the right way. Some examples of Decision Gates during the Identification and Definition phase can include:
 - *Needs Assessment:* Validates that the need exists and is a priority for the community, stakeholders, and beneficiaries. Informs the parameters of the project through data and feedback from stakeholders.
 - *Concept Note:* Presents a high-level project concept in which stakeholders (the organization, program team, and/or donor) determine if the project meets the criteria for moving forward to the project proposal.

- *Project Proposal*: Outlines the high-level elements of the project including: scope of work, budget, timeframe, risks, stakeholders, intervention logic, and resource requirements. Intended to obtain funding.

Inputs

To successfully move through the Identification and Definition Phase, you will need a variety of documents and information. Some of those may include:

- Project concept/idea;
- Terms of Reference from a request for proposal;
- Lessons Learned from previous, similar Projects;
- Program Theory of Change.

Processes

- ✓ **Definition of Needs**: The process of identifying and defining a project should begin with the project team collecting data and information that identifies community needs in the potential intervention area. Some of the factors that need to be considered may be:
 - Current services provided in the area (whether by the community itself or other organizations).
 - Stakeholders who may be involved in the project.
 - Community strengths and assets.
 - National or sector-level goals, objectives, and strategies.

One of the challenges when collecting data is that the process can be highly subjective.

- ✓ **Collecting Data**: The data that you collect during this phase will not be limited to the needs and priorities of the targeted community or beneficiaries. There will be other information that you should obtain at this point which might include:
 - Legal and regulatory environment.
 - Social and cultural conditions and norms.
 - Infrastructure available and required.
 - Community strengths, opportunities, and vision.
 - Biological/physical environment.
 - Organizational networks.
 - Successes and capacity.

There are a multitude of ways in which you can gather this data keeping in mind that at this point you probably don't have a whole lot of resources to work with. Before the data collection process can begin, a plan should be developed that states:

- The purpose of the data collection.
- The resources available for conducting the data collection.
- The human resources required.
- The timeframe available for conducting the data collection/needs assessment.

A table can be drawn up determining what information and data needs to be collected for the needs assessment with columns as follows:

- What do we need to know?
- Who/where can we get the information?
- What kind of human resources will be required?
- What kind of budget will be required?
- What kind of timeframe will be required?

✓ **Types of Data**

Secondary Data: Information available through published and unpublished sources, including literature reviews, surveys, evaluations, assessments, reports from NGOs, UN agencies, international organizations and government offices.

Primary Quantitative Data: In situations in which secondary sources do not provide sufficient information, or if the information is simply not available, organizations can collect data via quantitative assessment approaches (surveys, questionnaires, tests, standardized observation instruments) that focus on information that can be counted and subjected to statistical analysis.

Primary Qualitative Data: In contrast to quantitative data approaches, qualitative approaches seek to capture participants' experiences using words, pictures and objects.

The strengths and weaknesses of each method need to be weighed against the time and resources you have available at this point in the project.

✓ **Triangulating Data**

An approach to limit the subjectivity of problem definition and to work through differing perspectives of “real” needs is through using **data triangulation**. Triangulation is a powerful technique that facilitates data validation through cross verification from more than two sources. At its core, triangulating data increases the confidence and validity of the study results. By combining multiple perspectives and methods, researchers can hope to overcome the weakness or biases and the problems that come from single method or a single observer perspective – thereby increasing the credibility and validity of results.

One way to triangulate the process of needs identification is to use an approach introduced by American sociologist, Jonathan Bradshaw, who believed that needs assessments should explore four types of need in a community and that the presence of all types of needs would indicate a “real” need.



Bradshaw's 4 categories of Social Needs include:

- *Felt needs* focus on the thoughts and dreams of the community itself;
- *Expressed needs* are done by observation of the community's actions;
- *Normative needs* compare the current situation to a set of professional or expert standards;
- *Comparative needs* compare the current situation with the situation of others.

✓ **Needs Analysis:** When identifying and defining the needs for the project, you will want to organize your needs analysis into two categories: current and future state analysis.

- *Current State Analysis:* Where we are now. Explore the stakeholders and their power and influence in the project and to identify or detail the problem that will be addressed by the project. A useful tool to use here is the **problem tree**.

- **Stakeholder Analysis:** In the Current State Analysis you should identify the stakeholders and understand their power and influence in the project.
 - Step1 - Identification: Brainstorm the stakeholders into categories which may overlap (and change) - Users, Governance, Providers, Influencers, Dependents, Sustainers.
 - Step 2 – Analysis: Explore stakeholder interests and map their influence. Build a matrix of stakeholders, and update this at points throughout the project such as decision gates. There are examples of this in the full guide.
- **Future State Analysis:** The future state analysis looks at how the project will improve the livelihoods, ecosystems or institutions of the project participants. A useful tool to use here is the objective tree.

For a problem-focused approach to defining needs, you can develop a **problem tree**. A “starter problem” is identified and the tree is built by identifying causes and effects of the starter problem. The next step is to develop an **objectives tree** that begins to identify the potential interventions that could take place to fix what is broken in the problem tree. It can then be decided which elements of objectives tree will be included in or excluded from the scope of the project. See the full guide to Project DPro for examples of a problem tree and an objective tree.

- ✓ **Project Intervention Logic:** Once you have identified the intervention you will pursue, it is time to outline how what you are doing will lead to the outcomes you desire. For this we develop a **logical framework matrix** or **Log Frame**. The logical framework matrix identifies and communicates the logical relationships in a project by tracking the vertical and horizontal reasoning that connects the levels of the matrix. The relationship between the elements on each level of the logical framework illustrates the vertical logic that will result in the achievement of the project’s ultimate goal. While there are many versions of project logical frameworks, the Project DPro subscribes to a four-level logical framework model making up the vertical part of the matrix:

1. **Activities** are actions taken through which inputs (financial, human, technical, material and time resources) are mobilized to produce the deliverables (training, constructing, etc.) of a project.
2. **Outputs** are tangible deliverables resulting from project activities.
3. **Outcomes** are what the project expects to accomplish at the beneficiary level.
4. **Goals** are the highest-level desired end results or impacts to which the project contributes.

The vertical and horizontal logic of the Log Frame are shown below.

	Project Description	Indicators	Means of Verification	Assumptions
Goal		If the OUTCOMES occur; Then this should contribute to the overall GOAL		
Outcome(s)		If the OUTPUTS are produced; Then the OUTCOMES can occur		
Outputs		If the ACTIVITIES are conducted; Then OUTPUTS can be produced		
Activities		If adequate RESOURCES / INPUTS are provided; Then the ACTIVITIES can be conducted		

	Project Description	Indicators	Means of Verification	Assumptions
Goal				If the horizontal logic is followed AND assumptions hold true, then the project will likely succeed.
Outcome(s)				
Outputs				
Activities				

When developing indicators, the norm is to use **SMART** criteria to guide performance indicator conceptualization. SMART is an acronym with the following meaning:

- **Specific** – Indicators must be specific and focus on the change that is expected at each level. What or who is changing?
 - **Measurable** – The indicator must be quantifiable and measurable.
 - **Achievable** – Indicators must be attainable within the constraints of the project triangle (budget/resources, time/budget, and scope/quality).
 - **Relevant** – Indicators must accurately measure the change the project aspires to generate.
 - **Time-bound** – The indicator should identify a specific time and date. By when will the indicator be achieved? Can the indicator be achieved within the established timeframe?
- ✓ **High-Level Analyses (Estimations):** During the Identification and Definition phase, it will be beneficial to include high-level (estimations) analyses to support the definition of the intervention as well as to help in the proposal writing process (if that is required). You should involve a variety of stakeholders in the process to better ensure a more robust analysis.
- *Risk Analysis* explores the potential risks associated with your project in these categories: Strategic/Commercial; Economic/financial/market; Legal & regulatory; Organizational/management/human factors; Political; Environmental; Technical/operational/infrastructure; Project Management Risk.
 - *Human Resource Analysis* assesses the requirements for the project team, their roles & responsibilities, and the project team capacity requirements.
 - *Supply Chain Analysis* examines how you will plan and manage procurement, logistics and assets.
 - *Financial Analysis*: Developing a high-level budget based upon the information that is available, useful if you are requested to write a proposal to obtain funding.
 - *Sustainability Analysis* examines what will take place after the completion of your project and how the product or service will be continued after the project has ended.

- *Theory of Change*: The project manager and team should be aware of how their project fits into the bigger picture through their organization's or Program's Theory of Change.
- *Draft Project Charter*: As you move through this phase, you can start to outline the Project Charter, which is a 3 to 5-page document that has the basic information about the project such as budget estimations, scope estimations, tolerances, information on the team, and so on. The Charter will be finalized during the project Set Up phase.
- *Project Proposal (Project Design Documents)*: The result of all of the processes is often a project proposal. The proposal will require that you investigate the information needed to comply with all of the components as outlined by the funder or donor. It is really important to make this process as participatory as possible so that the proposal can better reflect the reality in the project and on the ground.

Phase 2: Project Set Up

Introduction

The purpose of the project Set Up phase is to prepare the project team members and stakeholders for planning, implementation, and good project governance.

Key Outputs

- ✓ **Project Charter** is a “living” document that provides a high-level description of the project and which is signed and approved by the project governance.
- ✓ **Comprehensive Risk Register**: Risk identification began in the Identification and Definition phase but will be further analyzed during this phase, establishing a clear-cut strategy for each risk.
- ✓ **Stakeholder Engagement Strategy**: Information on stakeholders is further detailed, building on what was done in the Identification & Definition Phase, and a strategy for engaging stakeholders is completed.
- ✓ **Project Launch**: The launch of the project occurs at the end of this phase, ensuring that all stakeholders are aware that the project will begin (and when it will end) and also have a high-level understanding of the scope of work and timeline for the project.

Who is Involved in this Phase

- ✓ **Project Governance**: Whether a project board, sponsor, or steering committee, input from the project governance will be essential in establishing tolerances and providing feedback on components such as risk, stakeholder engagement, the planning framework, and monitoring and evaluation.
- ✓ **Project Team**: Including the people who will be doing the work of the project will enhance the analyses that are conducted in this phase. Don't forget to include project support staff (human resources, finance, and supply chain) as well.
- ✓ **Project Partners, Vendors, and Contractors**: Again, more comprehensive analyses will take place when the people doing the work are involved. If partners, vendors, and contractors have been identified at this point, it would be beneficial to get their input into components such as the risk assessment.
- ✓ **Program Manager**: If the project is under the umbrella of a program, the Program Manager should be involved in this phase to ensure that there is consistency and clarity with all projects across the program, and can give valuable advice.
- ✓ **Project Beneficiaries**: Hopefully beneficiaries have already been involved and consulted in the Identification and Definition phase. Their engagement should continue in the Set Up phase and provides valuable input about the justification of the project design.

What this Means in Practice

Project Set Up builds upon the Identification and Definition phase allowing the project team and stakeholders to prepare the project for the rest of the project.

- *Decision Gates* at intervals ensure that the right project is still being done the right way.
- *Stage mapping and planning* is an iterative, adaptive process that provides a framework for planning for the remainder of the project.
- *Internal Controls* include the processes through which an organization's resources are directed, monitored, and measured.
- *Stakeholder Engagement* provides essential feedback on the project.

Inputs

Building off the work done in Identification and Definition, the project team will further detail the project components during this phase. During this phase, you will probably need:

- Initial Risk Assessment
- Initial Stakeholder Assessment
- Project Concept Note and/or Proposal
- High-Level Project Team Capacity Assessment
- High-Level Resource (Human, Budget, and Supply-Chain) Assessment
- Project Logical Frame (Log Frame)

Remember that according to the Project DPro Phase Model, the phases often overlap so some of these inputs may be under development as you reach the Set Up phase. That is ok!

Processes

- ✓ **Risk Analysis** is about considering the probability of events occurring during the project and their impact. Note that *every* project has risks – you cannot eliminate them – and risks are not all negative (i.e. they can be positive and provide an opportunity).
- ✓ **Risk Assessment** prioritises the risks on probability and impact, and sets a risk tolerance.
- ✓ **Risk Response** for each risk if it exceeds the tolerance. If a project accepts a risk the response strategies can be Avoidance, Transference, Reduction/Mitigation and Acceptance. You should develop a risk management plan within the project plan.
- ✓ **Risk Monitoring and Control** at specific points in the project at which risks will be revisited and re-analyzed. See the Implementation Phase.
- ✓ **Stakeholder Engagement:** Establishing a stakeholder engagement strategy during this phase provides the project manager with clarity on how stakeholders will be involved in various project activities and what their involvement and engagement will be.
- ✓ **Project Governance Structure:** In the context of project management, governance defines the management framework within which project decisions are made. A robust governance structure clarifies:
 - *Authority:* Who has power to make decisions and within what tolerance levels.
 - *Accountability:* Who is accountable for the success of the project? With no clear accountability for project success, there's no one driving the effort to resolve issues.
 - *Project Changes:* Decisions on changes that extend beyond the agreed tolerances.
 - *Oversight:* Oversees the direction of the project, provides insight, and monitors the viability and validity of the project, making decision to terminate the project if necessary. Also ensure that different stakeholder perspectives are heard.
 - *Supports and Advocates:* Provides support and resources for the project as well as advises the project manager on the management aspects of the project, especially those that are beyond the control of the project manager.

- ✓ **Planning Framework** is about planning for a plan. How will you approach the planning process for the project? Who will be involved? What tools will be used? Some things to keep in mind are:
 - *Project Length*. A long project probably needs stage planning.
 - *Tools & Processes*. Which tools and processes are you going to use?
 - *Cross-Cutting Components* should be included early in the project. For example, include gender and protection.
 - *Ability (Disability)*, ensuring access to all.
- ✓ **MEAL Framework**: Monitoring should take place throughout the entire life of the project, providing essential feedback for the project manager and team about the project—is it on time? Scope? Quality? A framework for each component of MEAL should be developed – Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability & Learning, and Knowledge Management.
- ✓ **Project Charter** is a “living document” that provides a high-level description of the project and a shared understanding covering project purpose, deliverables, high-level project estimates, risks, tolerances, and change control. It should record the approval of the project by the governing body.
- ✓ **Project Launch** formally announces the beginning of the project. Key stakeholders should have a consistent understanding of the project. Sharing the Project Charter with the larger community of stakeholders at this point can be an effective communication practice and a way to promote transparency and accountability in the project.

Phase 3: Project Planning

Introduction

Usually by the time a project officially enters the Planning Phase, the project team has already developed a number of documents from the Identification and Definition and Set Up phases (i.e. the project logical framework, the project proposal, the project charter etc.) that contain an extensive level of detail. You are now ready to construct a comprehensive and integrated project implementation plan.

Key Output

- ✓ **Project Implementation Plan** is intended to guide the project team through the implementation of activities to achieve the outputs, outcomes, and contribute to the goal. It will clearly outline what will take place, when and by whom within the time, cost, and scope of intervention. It could include the following:
 - *Schedule Plan* details how you will build the project schedule.
 - *Risk Plan* which was first developed in the Set Up phase is revisited to check that the risks are still relevant and they have owners and response strategies.
 - *MEAL Plan* should be finalized in collaboration with the Schedule Plan in coordination with the MEAL team.
 - *Communication & Stakeholder Engagement Plans* will be further developed based on the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy created in the Set Up phase.
 - *RACI Chart* outlines those **R**esponsible, **A**ccountable, **C**onsulted, **I**nformed for project activities and tasks.
 - *Supply Chain Plan* builds on the high-level estimates done in previous phases, covering assets, procurement and logistical components of the project.
 - *Human Resource Plan* also builds on previous high-level estimates, covering who will be required, their expertise and when they will be needed, and how they will be managed.

Who is Involved in this Phase

A participatory approach involving the right stakeholders at the right time in the planning process will provide you with buy-in and with more accurate estimates of the resources, budget, and time required to complete your activities and achieve your outputs.

What this Means in Practice

Inputs from the Identification and Definition and Set Up phases which will feed into the planning processes and produce the final output, the Implementation Plan. As you move through the planning process, make sure that you consider the following elements to ensure that you are still doing the right project in the right way:

- ✓ **Accountability**
 - *Transparency* is accomplished by establishing systems to make project information accessible to stakeholders.
 - *Data & Information Protection* by secure storage prevents confidential information getting into the wrong hands.
 - *Stakeholders Participation* ensuring the right stakeholders are involved at the right time during the project, with feedback mechanisms put in place.
 - *Cross-Cutting Themes Accountability* considering gender, protection, dealing with vulnerable populations, people of all abilities.
- ✓ **Control Mechanisms.** We need to check if we have the quality and internal control mechanisms in place to measure and ensure that we are delivering the highest quality products and services possible.
 - *Internal Controls* to promote the responsible use of resources and protects against fraudulent activities.
 - *Change Control* process to manage any changes in the project and establishing tolerances.
 - *Quality Control* to ensure that the product or service you deliver is of the highest possible quality.
- ✓ **Rolling Wave Planning** is an iterative process to provide increasing levels of detail to the project implementation plan over time, in which there is more flexibility to accommodate change.
- ✓ **Decision Gates Process & Plan** helps to ensure that you are doing the right project in the right way. Emergency Decision Gates can be used when any major changes occur.

Inputs

Documents from the Identification & Definition and Set Up phases are used as a launching point for your plan:

- ✓ Logical Framework
- ✓ Project Proposal
- ✓ Project Charter
- ✓ Comprehensive Risk Register
- ✓ Stakeholder Analysis and Engagement Strategy
- ✓ Stage Map

Processes

Your detailed Implementation Plan will be the result of a variety of processes and analyses, providing a balanced and comprehensive picture of how the project will be implemented with the participation of as many relevant stakeholders in the process as possible.

- ✓ **Schedule Planning** is directly related to the **triple constraint triangle**. It is realized by first looking at the scope and constraints & risks, and then applying a **five-step process**. This provides the opportunity for the project manager, team, and stakeholders involved in the planning process to examine the different components that will make up the schedule in a structured way.
 - *Scope of Work* has two parts: **product scope**, the required deliverables of the project to meet the agreed specification; and **project scope**, all of the work required to deliver the product scope.
 - *Constraints & Risks*: Will the risks you have already identified impact on the schedule and Scope of Work? Are there any constraints on the project?
 - *Step 1: Activity Definition*: Using a **Work Breakdown Structure (WBS)** to define and detail the project and product scope.
 - *Step 2: Activity Sequencing*: Using a **Network Diagram** to put all activities in the sequence they need to happen.
 - *Step 3: Activity Resource Estimating*: Collaboratively develop estimates for all resources including budget, materials/supplies, human resources, vendors and contractors.
 - *Step 4: Activity Duration Estimating*: Revisit the Network Diagram and add the duration estimates to all the activities. From this you can identify the **Critical Path**, the series of tasks that determines the minimum amount of time required to complete project activities. This will show what **project float** or **slack** you have.
 - *Step 5: Schedule Development*: Develop the **Gantt Chart** based upon the outputs of the previous 4 steps.

Use of the planning tools referred to above are covered in detail in the full guide.

- ✓ **MEAL Planning**
 - *Monitoring* tracks the operational work of the project against the plan.
 - *Evaluation* tends to focus on tracking progress at the higher levels of the logical framework – i.e. project outcomes.
 - *Accountability and Learning* ensure that there are mechanisms in place to request and receive feedback from stakeholders during the project, learn from that feedback, and use it as a tool for iterative project planning.
 - The *MEAL Plan* should consist of:
 - Indicator Performance Tracking Table
 - Performance Monitoring Plan
 - Feedback and Accountability Mechanisms
 - Evaluation Plan and Statements of Work (Terms of Reference)
 - Accountability Mechanisms
 - Learning Plan
- ✓ **Internal Controls** are developed by organizations to promote effectiveness and efficiency, increase reliability of project outcomes, promote compliance, protect organizational resources, and reduce risk of fraud and corruption.
- ✓ **Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Planning**. A communications plan will identify what needs to be communicated to whom, how, and when. A Stakeholder Engagement Strategy was developed during the Set Up phase. You should revisit it to make sure it aligns with the Implementation Plan.
- ✓ **Roles and Responsibilities Planning (RACI)** identifies stakeholders **Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, Informed** for project activities and tasks collaboratively.
- ✓ **Supply Chain Planning** builds on the high-level estimates done in previous phases, covering procurement, logistics and project assets.

- ✓ **Human Resources Planning** also builds on previous high-level estimates, covering who will be required, their expertise and when they will be needed, and how they will be managed. People make projects.
- ✓ **Stage Plans** allow for more adaptability in the Implementation Plan by establishing high-level deliverables for each stage and developing Detailed Implementation Plans for each stage as they approach.
- ✓ **Sustainability Planning** is about what will take place after the completion of your project and how the product or service will be continued after the project has ended. See the **Transition Planning Matrix** tool in the full guide.
- ✓ **Closure Planning**. A project closure plan describes how a project intends to evolve upon completion of the project and the resources it needs to do this. It should cover evaluations, reporting requirements, closure activities (e.g. contracts) and handover.

Phase 4: Project Implementation

Introduction

The Implementation phase of a project is usually the most intense, requiring that the project manager oversees all elements of the project to make sure that it is delivered on-time, on budget, within scope, and with the highest quality product or service possible.

Key Outputs

- ✓ **Issue Log** is the tool to track all project issues that could affect project delivery.
- ✓ **Monitoring Reports** provide the project manager with essential information about the project and whether it will achieve its targets.
- ✓ **Evaluations** can be conducted to ensure that the right project is being done in the right way to achieve the outputs and outcomes at the end of the project.
- ✓ **Narrative & Financial Reports** for the program manager and donor, if required.
- ✓ **Stage Plans** will be detailed as the project proceeds.
- ✓ **Updated Risk Plan** at each decision gate at least.

Who is Involved in this Phase

Well, EVERYONE!

What this Means in Practice

- ✓ **Rolling-Wave Planning** is the iterative process of adding more detail to Implementation plan as the project goes through the Implementation Phase.
- ✓ **Decision Gates** provide the opportunity for project team members and stakeholders to review and justify that the project should move forward as it is, if changes need to be made, or if the project needs to be stopped altogether. These should take place as regular scheduled review meetings.

Inputs

- ✓ Implementation Plan, with the first stage detailed.
- ✓ Comprehensive Risk Plan.
- ✓ MEAL Plan.
- ✓ Human Resource and Management Plan.
- ✓ Stakeholder Engagement and Communications Plan.
- ✓ Any other subsidiary plans that will be useful.

Processes

- ✓ **Managing People:** Project managers work in teams and often are only able to achieve their goals as a result of the commitment, cooperation, and contributions of the people on the project team. The competencies required for people management:
 - *Developing the Project Team* to have the right skills, build capacity and provide incentives to stay with the project.
 - *Conducting Performance Assessments*.
 - *Maintaining Team Communication Norms* by developing a culture of communication.
- ✓ **Managing the Project Schedule:** Project managers should monitor their schedules, according to what was detailed in the implementation plan, regularly to ensure the project schedule remains on track. If the project schedule begins to move, deadlines can be adjusted or the scope reduced by agreement with stakeholders. But, if schedules are fixed and the cope cannot be changed there are two techniques that can be used:
 - *“Fast tracking”* a project schedule involves taking activities that would normally be completed in sequence and instead completing them in parallel.
 - *“Crashing”* the schedule means adding additional resources to the critical path to accelerate progress, without necessarily getting the highest level of efficiency.
- ✓ **Managing the Budget.** the project manager will need to develop skills in these 3 areas:
 - Developing Budgets
 - Identifying Cost Estimates
 - Monitoring Budgets and Expenditures

There are 6 areas of coordination and collaboration in finance especially critical:

- Compiling project expenditure information
 - Gathering information and understanding and budget variances
 - Managing payments
 - Authorizing expenditures
 - Managing cash flow, spending, forecasting, and expenditures
 - Overseeing purchasing procedures
- ✓ **Managing Risks.** During the Implementation phase, you will be continually monitoring risks to identify any change in their status, or if they turn into an issue. It is best to hold regular risk reviews throughout this phase to identify actions outstanding, risk probability and impact, remove risks that have passed, and identify **new** risks.
 - ✓ **Managing Issues** is best done through an issues log, which summarizes the issues, describes their current status and identifies who is responsible for addressing the issue.
 - ✓ **Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL)** activities during Implementation are vital to maintaining and managing the triple constraint triangle. The project manager needs to work closely with the MEAL team (or focal point) to provide timely and relevant information on the progress of the project as well as incorporate mechanisms that will give stakeholders the opportunity to provide feedback and ensure there are intentional learning processes included into the project.
 - *Monitoring* will be used to inform decision making during Implementation. Indicators from the Logical Framework (Log Frame) will be used to measure progress towards targets.
 - *Evaluation* in real-time provides the project manager, Team and Stakeholders with an overall examination of the project for improvement and learning so that adjustments can be made to the project if necessary.

- *Accountability* encompasses four primary components: transparency, standardization, responsiveness, and participation. It aims to commit to, respond to, and balance the needs of stakeholders in a project.
 - *Learning* should be done throughout the project intentionally. Lessons Learned should be fed up to the program and portfolio levels.
- ✓ **Managing Change** should be done through a formal change management process.
 - ✓ **Managing the Supply Chain** can be challenging in development projects. Project DPro defines three components in supply chain management.
 - *Procurement Management* is the complete process of obtaining goods and services from preparation and processing of a requisition through to receipt and approval of the invoice for payment.
 - *Logistics Management* – Planning, implementing and controlling the flow of materials in a timely manner and maintaining a project inventory.
 - *Asset Management* – Procured items are recorded, labelled, monitored, maintained and safeguarded.
 - ✓ **Project Sustainability Plan** should be revisited and justified at Decision Gates during the Implementation Phase. The following questions should be asked:
 - Is the way in which we plan to transition out of the project still valid and appropriate?
 - If we will hand the project over, are we providing support and capacity to the entity that will take over?
 - Has the context changed? Is the sustainability plan still viable?

If using stage plans, the decision gates that are present at the end of each stage are good points to continuously check the viability and relevance of the sustainability plan. If stage plans are not used, the project manager will need to establish points in the implementation of the project in which the sustainability plan is reviewed and adjusted as necessary.

Phase 5: Project Closure

Introduction

The temporary nature of projects differentiates them from normal business operations of an organization (or on-going ‘business as usual’). Comprehensive project plans need to include a project closure plan which describes how a project intends to evolve upon completion of the project, while ensuring that progress towards outcomes and goals will continue. Note that the end of a project in the development sector is often more accurately characterized as a transition phase rather than as a strictly defined project closure. There are several scenarios that could happen at the end of a project:

- *Closure*: The project is formally ended and all project closure activities completed.
- *Handover*: The continuation of the product or service from the project is handed over to a local partner (local NGO, community, government entity).
- *Extension*: Negotiation of added time to finish the project (could be at additional or ‘no’ cost).
- *Expansion*: Identifications of elements for replication with a new target area or population.
- *Redesign*: Continuation via a new phase with modified interventions or activities.

Key Outputs

- ✓ A **Sustainability Plan** is developed from the earliest phases of the project, providing higher levels of detail and specific action points for the organization, entity, or public institution that will take over after the project has been closed.
- ✓ Final **Reports** are almost always a requirement at the end of a project. These can include narrative, endline, and financial reports that are provided to the INGO, partner, donor, and/or other stakeholders at the close of a project.
- ✓ A **Final Project Evaluation** may be done internally by the project or the program, or externally.
- ✓ **Lessons Learned** should be gathered throughout the entire project, but a comprehensive and participatory lessons learned should be conducted at the end of the project by the project team and relevant stakeholders.

Who is Involved in this Phase

There should be strategic involvement of stakeholders in the Closure phase - the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy developed during the Set Up Phase is a great tool to use here. Some stakeholders to consider involving during this phase may be:

- Project Team
- Operations/Support Teams (HR, Supply Chain, and Finance)
- Project Governance
- Program Manager
- Suppliers, Vendors, and Contractors,
- Program Team-INGO Partner
- Beneficiary Community
- Partners

It is likely that stakeholders will be less focused during the end of the project, with their attention on new phases or new interventions, so keeping their regular involvement should help to mitigate this challenge.

What this Means in Practice

Project Closure can be challenging for project teams if proper planning has not been done to ensure that all components are accounted for during the closing. All five **Principles** play a role during this phase:

- **Participatory** ensures that stakeholders are included in the closure processes, procedures, after-action reviews, and lessons learned;
- **Comprehensive** project closure dictates that all activities (including closure activities) are planned for and completed;
- A **Well-Governed** closure engages the governance structure in this phase, complying with all requirements and getting formal acceptance on the project deliverables, outputs, and outcomes.
- All closure procedures have been **Integrated** into the plan for the project, stakeholders have been informed that it will be closing, and information from the project is compiled into a final report.
- The closure includes elements of the **Adaptive** principle by conducting lessons learned, information from the MEAL reports/data, and resolution of the issues to use to inform future project and program design.

Inputs

To successfully close a project, you need to have the following inputs:

- Detailed Implementation and Stage Plan
- MEAL Reports (Including any lessons learned that have been documented during the project)
- Narrative and Financial Reports
- Issue Log
- Updated Risk Register

Processes

- ✓ **Sustainability Plan and Handover:** This ensures that all elements are in place so that the partner organization, government institution, or community can continue the work you have done once the project is closed. Here's a checklist:
 - *Resources:* Estimate the human and non-human resources required to continue the products or services once the project is complete.
 - *Capacity:* Check that the community or organization you are handing the project over to have the knowledge and skills to be able to sustain the product or service.
 - *Risk & Response:* Explore potential risks and possible responses during the handover process.
 - *Stakeholders:* Engage with the stakeholders who will be sustaining the results of an intervention.
 - *Processes & Networks:* Check that appropriate systems are in place to ensure that the product or service can be sustained. Do we need to facilitate networks to promote the sustainability of the product or service?
 - *Motivation:* Ensure that community or organization have the motivation to continue the work. This can be achieved by their regular involvement during the project to build awareness around the importance and value of continuing the product or service.
- ✓ **Reporting:** Although perceived as a chore, reports are important - if it isn't reported, it didn't happen! These are the standard reports required, sometimes combined into a single document:
 - *Final narrative report* is a detailed summary of what took place on the project and can include: a project summary, project results (targets achieved), challenges & issues, lessons learned, and assets and inventory summary/return/disposal.
 - *Final financial report* summarizes the allocation of financial resources, including any and all supporting documents required.
 - *Endline report.* Often, the MEAL team will conduct a project endline report that is then matched against the baseline report to determine to what extent the targets and indicators were met.
- ✓ **Project Closure Procedures:** Do systems exist to ensure that the administrative, financial and contractual elements of project closure are complete? These systems are critical not only because they help avoid problems with project audits, but they also reduce the risk that there will be disputes with suppliers, employees, and donors regarding the status of accounts. Systems should be identified to assist with each of the following three activity areas:
 - *Contract Closure:* Working with the project support teams (HR, procurement, finance) all contracts need to be officially closed before a project can close. The donor needs to review and accept the project deliverables.

- *Financial Closure*: The finance department focal point should work closely with the project manager to make sure that all compliance and requirements have been closed in the project. This includes any supporting documentation as well as reports. It's also advisable to consider:
 - Has all permitted funding been received from the donor?
 - Have all receivables (project advances, travel advances, and advances to suppliers) been liquidated or transferred to another project number or accounting code?
 - Have all payees been paid?
 - *Administrative Closure* includes personnel, assets, and reporting compliance requirements.
 - Have project personnel been released or reassigned?
 - Has the project equipment, vehicles, offices been reallocated? Sold? Transferred?
 - Are project reports and closure documents complete?
 - Are project archives and/or files up to date?
- ✓ **Project Evaluations**: Final evaluations are not always conducted at the project level. However, if they are required it should have been planned for from the beginning of the project, with an outline of the purpose and desired key evaluation questions to be answered by the evaluation team or evaluator. The evaluator and team will work closely with the MEAL and project teams to develop a methodology, work plan, and tools for the evaluation. An **ex-post evaluation** may take place several years after closure.
- ✓ **Lessons Learned** are the organization's memory bank. Ideally, the project team will develop a lessons learned log that track lessons learned as they occur, or at least at major evaluation points or milestones throughout the project. They should be made available in the organization to help inform future project design and to ensure that issues aren't repeated in other projects taking place. A great tool to use in the lessons learned process is the Issue Log. Issues often result in changes or provide explanation as to why something did or did not occur, how it was resolved and what was learned. Another great tool that can be used for end of project learning is an **After Action Review**. See the full Guide for more details.

SECTION 3. PROJECT DPRO PRINCIPLES

Principles guide the way we manage projects in the different project phases. The Project DPro outlines **five Principles of Project Management** - Well-Governed, Participatory, Comprehensive, Integrated, and Adaptive - and how they are applied in each project phase.

Principle: Well-Governed

What the Well-Governed Principle is and Why it Matters

A Well-Governed project will have clear lines and authorities in place for the project manager ensuring that decisions are made within a specific framework outlined in the governance structure. Well-Governed also provides a network of much needed support for the project manager throughout the life of the project.

Well-Governed and Identification and Definition

Sponsor, Board, Steering Committee: It is during the Identification & Definition phase that the project team, in collaboration with stakeholders, begins to examine what kind of governance structure would be most appropriate given the resources and context the project will be operating in.

Alignment with Program, Portfolio Structure: A project must align with the strategy outlined at the program and portfolio levels.

Well-Governed and Set Up

Governance Structures: During the Set Up phase a formal governance structure is put in place and documented in the Project Charter.

Project Tolerances: Also, in the Set Up phase tolerances should be established to identify the parameters within which project delivery will be acceptable - the overall project tolerance levels. Otherwise the project manager will have to seek approval for every change to the project however small.

Well-Governed and Planning

Communication: A communication plan is developed in the Planning phase that outlines who should be communicating what, to whom, and when. This should be tailored to the size of the project.

Decision Gates: During the Planning phase formal Decision Gates are set up to ensure that the right project is still being done in the right way. In a Well-Governed project, many stakeholder perspectives will be involved in the Decision Gate process.

Risk Planning is critical to the risk management process. Risk tolerances should be established during the Planning phase so that the project manager has clearly outlined authority levels for different risks and their responses.

Well-Governed and Implementation

Issue and Risk Management: Part of issue management requires that tolerances are set for the decision making about risks if they should become an issue, and what the response or escalation procedure should be.

Change Control: In a Well-Governed project, any changes will be assessed for their impact on the *Triple Constraint Triangle* and the various stakeholders in the project, and communicated.

Well-Governed and Closure

The project manager needs to ensure that there is a pre-planned systemized process taken for closing out the project, which should include guidance and collaboration with the governance structure.

Lessons Learning & After-Action Review: Conducting and disseminating lessons learned is standard in a Well-Governed project. These lessons become part of the institutional memory and can be useful for future project design. Lessons learned and After-Action Reviews can also include the project sponsor, board, or steering committee as participants. Because the governance has a bird's-eye view of the project, they may be able to provide a different perspective in these sessions and contribute to a richer analysis of the project.

Authorized Project Charter: As the project closes, the governance structure should receive the updated project charter and sign-off on it as well as any other remaining documents that are relevant.

Principle: Participatory

What Participatory is and Why it Matters

Working closely with stakeholders throughout the entire life of the project builds trust and establishes a common vision that all can work toward. The ability to listen, to take account of diverse perspectives and display sensitivity to cultural issues helps to manage expectations and get a successful outcome.

Participatory and Identification and Definition

The Project Identification and Design Definition provides an opportunity, early in life of the project, to begin creating the culture of participation by building relationships. The ultimate project design will be stronger and it will increase the sense of ownership amongst stakeholders and project team members.

For **Data Collection, Needs, and Problem Analysis** the project manager should be able to identify and engage stakeholders at appropriate times throughout the project. **High-Level Estimates** are developed during this phase, primarily as a launching point for the project proposal and to gain a better understanding of what will be required during the project. For this to be done well, stakeholders and team members should be involved, and the Program Manager if you have one.

Participatory and Set Up

The Set Up phase provides the opportunity to further engage stakeholders and use a participatory approach. During this phase, the governance structure is determined, risks are identified, the project charter developed, and the project is officially launched.

Risk Identification & assessment will be detailed in the Set Up Phase, ready to be incorporated into the Planning Phase. A participatory approach with all involved in the project helps to capture the risks and determine appropriate risk response strategies. The **Project Launch** is an opportunity to bring all stakeholders together to make sure there's clarity, to manage expectations and to promote buy-in. The launch could also be an opportunity to share the **Project Charter**, which provides a description of the project in a concise form.

Participatory and Planning

Schedule Planning: The **Work Breakdown Structure** (WBS) is the tool used to define project and product scope and can only be done properly by participation of stakeholders and team members to identify project activities.

Sustainability Planning: A lot of emphasis is put on the sustainability of interventions.

Taking a participatory approach to sustainability planning will:

- Make the plans more relevant and accurate;
- Help identify any gaps that need to be addressed before the project closes;
- Promote stakeholder buy-in and motivate them to sustain the outcomes, products or services;
- Build capacity of stakeholders who may be taking over the activity, outcomes, service, product, etc. once the project closes.

Participatory and Implementation

Implementation is a dynamic time in the project, with multiple stakeholders involved and a lot of activities taking place. The iterative process of planning and implementing is the time when project managers must ensure full and complete participation by all stakeholders.

Project Change Control: The project manager will rely on information obtained through the MEAL process and issues management, among others, to determine if any changes need to be made during the implementation of the project. Part of change control is assessing what kind of impact the change will have on the project and triple constraint triangle and the impact on stakeholders. **Decision Gates** are optimal points in the project in which stakeholders can be engaged and participate in project decision making. For example, a Decision Gate might occur at the end of a stage.

Participatory and Closure

Project Closure must be participatory, particularly when handing over products and services. Participation by stakeholders in the **Lessons Learned and After-Action Review** provides insight that can be used in future project design. The **Project Closure Meeting/Event** acknowledges the closure and highlights what was achieved by whom.

Principle: Comprehensive

What is Comprehensive is and Why it Matters

Comprehensive project management involves applying equal rigor and attention to each phase of the project, ensuring that all project components (direct and indirect) are delivered and documented effectively, and that learning from each stage is transferred to the next. Comprehensive project management is a juggling act that requires the project manager to be forward thinking and agile in their approach, ensuring that ‘no balls are dropped’ in the process.

Comprehensive and Identification and Definition

The principles of Comprehensive and Participatory work hand-in-hand during this phase as the identification of needs is determined through a consultative process with stakeholders and triangulated data collection process.

It is essential that a project **Stakeholder Identification and Analysis** is carried out, assessing their power and influence. A comprehensive **Needs Analysis** should incorporate elements from the external environment, internal organizational and programmatic priorities, as well as the capacity of the team.

Comprehensive and Set Up

Risk Analysis and Planning: As a project manager, you will need to develop comprehensive systems and processes to identify, analyze, monitor, and manage all risks associated with the project and establish tolerance levels. This should be included in the Project Charter, which is an output of the Set Up phase. The project manager should also identify points in the project in which the risks will be re-assessed to determine if new risks have emerged, risk impact and probability have changed, and response strategies are still valid and feasible. Determining this process in the Set Up phase allows for the risk planning to be incorporated into the planning process.

Comprehensive and Planning

Before the actual work of the project begins, the project manager needs to confirm that the scope of the project is comprehensive and detailed. Care should be taken to ensure that information about the indirect work of the project is included in the scope, for example, details related to procurement, coordination, communications, human resources, reporting, and risk management.

Comprehensive and Implementation

Managing Project Components: The project manager must create an environment within the project that in which all aspects of the project are accounted for and managed appropriately without distraction.

Risk Monitoring, Review, and Updating: The project manager needs to continually and comprehensively survey the risks which have the potential to threaten project success and actively manage these threats throughout the life of the project.

Comprehensive and Closure

Making time and planning for closure activities is important will reduce the chaos and stress associated with this phase and are part of comprehensively managing a project. This will also help to maintain the organization's reputation.

Principle: Integrated

What Integrated is and Why it Matters

Integration is the process by which a number of separate elements are combined and coordinated to achieve a harmonious whole.

Integrated and Identification and Definition

Team Integration: It is important that the project manager along with the project support staff (i.e. finance, HR, IT, MEAL and supply chain) and their managers are closely aligned and integrated. As the project is defined, the appropriate support staff should be involved in establishing high-level budget parameters, identifying skills and specifying supply needs.

Integrated and Set Up

Risk Integration: During Set Up a comprehensive risk analysis should be completed so that it can be integrated into the project planning process.

Integrated and Planning

As a project enters the Planning phase, the support staff can be especially helpful in working on project components, such as planning budgets, supply chain requirements, recruitment and skills development. Integration during Planning will also consider the relationship between the scope, time, budget, and quality elements of the project to develop an accurate implementation plan using the **The Triple Constraint Triangle**.

Integrated and Implementation

During Implementation, the project team will be critical to ensuring that project stays on track by close interaction with the other teams involved, such as MEAL.

Integrated and Closure

The **Sustainability Plan** should be validated. **Lessons Learned and Evaluations** should be integrated into the programmatic and institutional memory.

Principle: Adaptive

What Adaptive is and Why it Matters

The term “adaptive” within the context of project management means the ability of the project manager, team, and stakeholders to analyze the project environment and respond as necessary. To do this, the project manager needs to be aware of the way in which tools can be used to ensure the project is more adaptive.

Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning: Information and data from monitoring and feedback from stakeholders provide insight for the project manager as to what extent the activities and outputs are being achieved. This aids planning (particularly iterative planning) and is a learning opportunity for future project design and management.

Change happens, but it needs to be controlled. **Integrated Change Control** provides a process to ensure that only authorized and required changes are made which are:

- *Managed* through a formal change management process identifying how decisions are taken and who makes them;
- *Analyzed* to ensure that implications of those changes are thoroughly considered at the project and the program level;
- *Documented* to illustrate their complete impact on all the integrated elements of the program;
- *Communicated* to key project stakeholders.

Decision Gates provide formal and informal opportunities for the project manager, team members, and stakeholders to review the project and determine if changes need to be made, if the project should continue as planned, or if it should be stopped altogether. We want to ensure that our decisions, changes, and flexibility in the project are driven by data, information, and analysis which is why many of the tools and documents in the Project DPro are considered “living” documents.

Adaptive and Identification and Definition

Development and humanitarian projects are responding to a need, which may be different depending on the stakeholders consulted. The need may also change - which is particularly the case for humanitarian projects. Some adaptation may be required.

Adaptive and Set Up

The MEAL framework, governance structure, and risk analysis are all relevant adaptive tools that are developed in this phase ensuring that the management of the project is responsive to changing contexts and issues.

Adaptive and Planning

Iterative planning is an agile and adaptive approach that establishes the project plan in stages rather than trying to plan for the entire project all at once. In relationship to the Adaptive principle, this provides the opportunity for **Decision Gates** to be built in after (and sometimes within) each of the stages so that an analysis can be done that explores what needs to happen during the next stage of the project.

Adaptive and Implementation

It is during the Implementation phase when agility and adaptive management becomes paramount, responding to changing needs and evolving environments.

At **Decision Gates** the project justification is reviewed. Data and information from the

monitoring and accountability systems should be fed into the Decision Gate process. The environment might change such that the project no longer viable and an **Emergency Decision Gate** is required.

Issues & Change: Issues lead to change, and the response must be adaptive to the context, often considering the root cause to prevent it happening again.

Lessons Learned are best considered at scheduled Decision Gates when a reflective learning process can be conducted with project team members and stakeholders.

Adaptive and Closure

Evaluation and lessons learned provides the project manager and team with an assessment about the project and if the outcomes were achieved.

- Were changes made when and where appropriate, driven by information and data?
- Were lessons learned incorporated throughout the entire life of the project?
- How was the information from MEAL incorporated into the project change/decision gate process?

SECTION 4. ADAPTING THE PROJECT DPRO

This section looks at how to adapt various tools and techniques that have been presented in order to get them to work for the project manager and project implementation team.

Fundamentals of Adapting

Simply applying tools and techniques without thinking about context, resources, relationships and challenges will, at best, contribute to a robotic and “template-driven” project. Implementing Project DPro should involve assessing available tools and techniques, deciding which will be most useful in a particular situation, thinking through how these tools can be integrated into organizational processes and systems, and engaging with their organizations.

Factors to consider when adapting Project DPro

No project exists in a vacuum. Projects “live” within programs and portfolios. In addition, projects are managed within the context of organizational systems and donor structures. In one sense, these are the broader operating environments for projects. As a result, since all these factors impact the performance of projects, they should be taken into consideration when adapting the Project DPro to projects.

- **Program considerations** - As stated earlier in this Guide, programs consist of a group of related projects that are managed in a coordinated way to obtain benefits and control not available through managing them individually. Program timescales are longer and the outcomes are usually more complex with each individual project designed to contribute to goals. Clearly, in a well-managed program, there will be consistency of tools, methods and approaches. Some NGOs have a Program Management Unit or Office (PMU or PMO) whose role is to ensure consistency of approaches, standards, capacity building, toolkits, and operating manuals. In such situations, project managers and their teams need to align with program unit guidelines, tools and approaches.
- **Systems considerations** - A project manager rarely gets the opportunity to influence the choice of organizational systems. Regardless, the project manager must make sure that the flow of information from and to the organization meets the needs of the project team – for example in financial reporting and currency policy.
- **Size, Complexity and Risk considerations** – These factors are too often given insufficient attention particularly in risk planning and management, and project governance.

- **Learning and Competency considerations** - While the project manager is responsible for ensuring that staff members and implementing partners have the right competencies, including knowledge, attitudes and skills, the manager shouldn't expect to build capacities to address all weaknesses right away. A key part of adapting the Project DPro will be assessing the current level of staff and implementing partner competencies and then promoting learning to increase capacities where gaps are identified. To help with this the PM4NGOs website has a useful **Competency Assessment Tool**.
- **Performance considerations** - The project manager is not only responsible for ensuring that project staff become increasingly competent but, of ultimate importance, that on-the-job performance contributes to the organization's targeted impacts. A Project DPro course must not be seen as a "one-off" event but should be the start of a dynamic process that transfers learning into improved performance and, most importantly, contributes to continuous project improvement.

In Summary

Adapting Project DPro, as detailed above, is indeed essential. However, one warning must be heeded: A project manager's job should NOT be reduced to a set of rigid rules that are applied thoughtlessly across each and every project, program or portfolio. Remember, as stated earlier in this Guide, that project management is as much an 'art' as a 'science'. There will be circumstances where a PM tool or technique could be used but, for any number or good reasons, might NOT be the smartest choice. In other words, being too enthusiastic in requiring mandatory and uniform adoption of PM tools and techniques across all projects, programs or portfolios could be a huge mistake. Each and every project manager must learn to be disciplined and thoughtful -- becoming proficient at analyzing each individual project before carefully and collaboratively selecting and adopting the best from Program DPro.

SECTION 5. CHANGES TO THE PROJECT DPRO GUIDE

The Project DPro Guide 2nd Edition incorporates learning from local and international organizations, from learners and trainers, and, most importantly, from practitioners. The guide has kept most of the 1st edition concepts, definitions and processes, but many improvements have been made:

- Since PM4NGOs has launched the Program DPro Guide, the Project DPro is now more focused in the activity and output levels.
- The Project Lifecycle has changed not only in number of phases, but also how it is presented, its principles, and the MEAL representation.
- Monitoring and Evaluation has incorporated Learning and Accountability and it is not considered a phase – it is a cross-cutting theme that you will see through all phases, principles, and chapters of this new edition.
- Disciplines (and their tools) have been incorporated into the phases, allowing readers to a more straight-forward learning process.
- Project Management Principles are now aligned with the Program DPro. They are also more detailed and comprehensive when compared to the first edition.

FINALLY,

We hope you now have a good understanding of the basics of project management for development professionals. If you are an experienced or aspiring project manager you should now study the full Guide to the Project DPro. It provides important detail with lots of practical advice of how to run development projects in the real world. It's an essential guide and reference document for project managers, downloadable for free from the PM4NGOs website at <https://www.pm4ngos.org/>.

