CONCEPT

NGO Project Management: Development Project Cycle, Logframe and Donor Delivery

18 – 22 January 2027
Paris - Right Bank business hotel



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Introduction:

NGO project management often fails before delivery starts: proposals are written around a funding call rather than a verified community problem, logframes are filled in to satisfy a template, and workplans and budgets do not match the promised outputs. Field teams then struggle with partners, safeguarding incidents and donor queries. This Core Concept course follows the development project cycle from identification and participatory needs assessment through problem trees, theory of change and the logical framework to workplans, donor budgets, partner delivery, adaptive management and exit. Participants build a Donor-Ready Project Design Pack for a case project.

Course Objectives:

- Identify and justify a development project from participatory needs assessment and stakeholder analysis rather than from a funding call
- Convert a problem tree into an objective tree, a theory of change and a logframe with coherent vertical and horizontal logic
- Plan activities, inputs and a donor-funded project budget that trace directly to logframe outputs
- Organise delivery with implementing partners, local field teams and community structures, including safeguarding and complaints handling
- Adjust a running project through progress tracking, risk review and donor reporting, and plan transition and exit
- Produce a Donor-Ready Project Design Pack with logframe, workplan and budget for a case project

Target Audience:

- Project officers who draft proposals and coordinate field activities for non-profit organisations
- Project managers accountable for delivering donor-funded development projects on scope, time and budget
- Programme coordinators overseeing several community projects run through implementing partners
- Foundation programme staff who design or co-design projects with grantee organisations
- Field team leaders responsible for community engagement, local staff and activity delivery

Course Outline:

Day 1: Development Project Context, Identification and Needs Assessment

- Development Project Cycle Phases: Programming, Identification, Formulation, Implementation and Close-Out
- Development Practice Principles: Local Ownership, Participation and Do No Harm
- Community Needs Assessment with Household Surveys, Key Informant Interviews and Secondary Data
- Participatory Appraisal Tools: Community Mapping, Seasonal Calendars and Venn Diagrams
- Stakeholder Analysis Matrix for Beneficiaries, Local Authorities, Implementing Partners and Donors

Day 2: Problem Analysis, Theory of Change and the Logical Framework Approach

- Problem Tree Analysis: Core Problem, Root Causes and Effects
- Objective Tree Conversion and Intervention Strategy Selection
- Theory of Change Outcomes Pathway: Preconditions, Assumptions and Plausibility Test
- Logframe Vertical Logic: Goal, Purpose, Outputs and Activities
- Logframe Horizontal Logic: Objectively Verifiable Indicators, Means of Verification and Assumptions

Day 3: Activity Planning, Donor Budgets and Partner Delivery

- Activity Schedule and Gantt Workplan Linked to Logframe Outputs
- Input and Resource Plan: Field Staff, Supplies, Vehicles and Community Contributions
- Donor-Funded Project Budget Lines: Personnel, Programme Activities, Equipment and Indirect Costs
- Implementing Partner Agreement: Roles, Sub-Award Terms and Partner Capacity Assessment
- Community Participation Mechanisms: Project Committees, Beneficiary Selection Criteria and Feedback Channels

Day 4: Field Risk, Safeguarding, Adaptive Management and Exit

- Field Risk Register: Security, Access, Currency Movement and Partner Failure
- Safeguarding Policy, Staff Code of Conduct and Beneficiary Complaints Handling
- Progress Tracking and Adaptive Management: Activity Trackers, Field Visit Reports and Budget Reallocation
- Donor Progress Reports: Narrative Structure, Variance Explanations and No-Cost Extension Requests
- Transition and Exit Strategy: Asset Handover, Close-Out Checklist and Sustainability Plan

Day 5: Case Donor-Funded Project: Logframe, Workplan and Budget

- Case Project Data Pack: Rural Water, Youth Livelihoods and Girls' Education Scenarios
- Case Logframe Build and Assumption Stress-Test
- Case Workplan and Responsibility Chart for Partner and Field Teams
- Case Project Budget with Budget Notes and Cost-Share Contributions
- Design Pack Defence Before a Mock Donor Review Panel

Skills You Will Gain:

- Participatory Needs Assessment
- Problem and Objective Tree Analysis
- Logframe Design
- Development Project Budgeting
- Implementing Partner Coordination
- Community Safeguarding
- Adaptive Project Management
- Exit and Sustainability Planning

Why Attend This Course:

- Leave with a Donor-Ready Project Design Pack for a case project, reviewed by a mock donor panel
- Write proposals whose activities, outputs and budget lines tell one consistent story to a reviewer
- Handle partner delays, safeguarding concerns and context changes with a clear escalation and adjustment route
- Compare development project practice with peers from charities, foundations and donor-funded programmes in several sectors

Conclusion:

Development projects earn community trust and repeat funding when their design starts from a verified problem and their plans, budgets and partners stay aligned to it. The course moves from the project cycle, needs assessment and stakeholder analysis, through problem trees, theory of change and the logframe, to workplans, donor budgets and partner delivery, then field risk, safeguarding, adaptive management, reporting and exit. The final day turns that material into a Donor-Ready Project Design Pack with logframe, workplan and budget for a case project.