Writing Proposals

with a logical framework

Welcome

This is a course on writing effective project proposals.

You should have already learnt about pre-planning and logical frameworks.

What is a proposal?

- Your **proposal** is an important document

- Donors will decide to finance your project or not from what they read.

- Any proposal should show **thoughtful planning**

Identify the project idea

- Do your Pre-Planning and Stakeholders Analysis

- Look at possible funding and local resources

- What you learn from this will point you in the direction of the best way to help – the 'project approach' and 'project logic'

Identify the project idea

- Your preplanning should have pointed to an approach that fits into this model:

Community demand
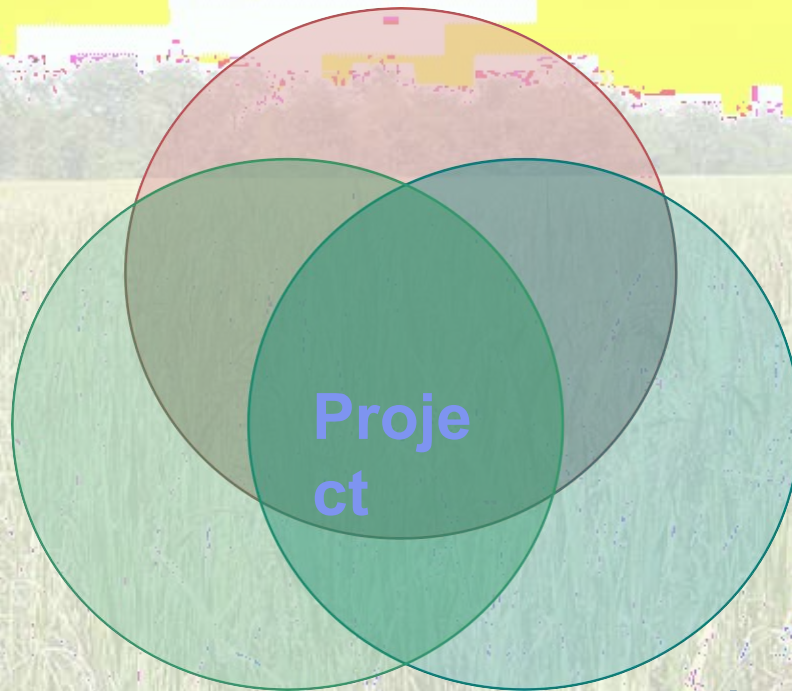
Proje ct

Needs identified by experts

Available resources

Good ideas

1. Make sure there is a genuine problem and that you can face it.

2. **Two-step approach:**
   o First define your project thoroughly and using a participatory approach,
   o Then adapt your project proposal according to the targeted donor.

3. Use the logical framework - a **tool** to

Writing A Project Proposal

Find the right funding source

- Which donor has a target compatible with your project ?

  e.g. Humanitarian aid or development   - ECHO, EuropeAid Refugees - Austcare
  HIV, Malaria - Global Fund

- What are your potential donors preferences?

  e.g. Mines victims - Irish Aid
  Institutional strengthening - AusAID

- How does each donor evaluate project proposals? Are you likely to be selected?
  - Is there an evaluation grid ?
  - Do they require a partnership? Gender equity?

Rememb er

o Your **Proposal** is often the only way for the donor to choose or reject your project

o Write a proposal only when your **project idea**
is already well thought out

o Fit to the donor's guidelines

Package your project into an attractive proposal (1)

- **Follow a logical thread:**
  Background
  $\Rightarrow$ Problem
  $\Rightarrow$ Solution
  $\Rightarrow$ Sustainability

- **Ensure match-up** between:
  Problem – Outcomes – Means
  (this is called internal coherence)

- Many donors want the **Logical Framework Approach**

Package your project into an attractive proposal (2)

Logic checklist

- Don't leave a problem unsolved
- Don't identify outcomes that do not correspond to a problem
- Don't identify outcomes for which you don't have a solution
- Don't propose activities that are not related to problems and outcomes
- Don't list human resources that don't match the outcomes you aim to achieve

Package your project into an attractive proposal (3) Editing and layout

- **Pay attention to the language**:

  - Use simple language

  - Use future tenses

  - Be concise and logical

  - Avoid spelling mistakes

  - Find a catchy title

- **Pay attention to the layout / presentation**:

  - Use your organization's logo on the first page

Proposal structure

1. Executive Summary
2. Organisation description
3. Project background
4. Problem statement
5. Goal and objectives
6. Beneficiaries
7. Proposed methodology:

8. Budget
9. Monitoring and Evaluation
10. Sustainability
11. Annexes

Partners
Project implementation
Activities
Risks and assumptions
Means

1. Executive Summary

Why is it important:

- It is the **first** part that is read

- Sometimes the **only** part that is read…

- It can be used by the donor to **communicate** to others about your project

1. Executive Summary

Summary

- What do you propose to do?
- Where?
- Why?
- For whom?
- With whom?
- For how long?

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1. Executive Summary

DO :

- Write it last
- Do it carefully
- Keep it short

DON'T :

- Cut and paste

2. Presentation of the organisation

1. Executive summary
2. **Presentation of the organisation**
3. Project background
4. Problem statement
5. Goal and objectives
6. Beneficiaries
7. Proposed methodology
8. Budget
9. Monitoring and evaluation
10. Sustainability
11. Annexes

Why is it important?

- <u>Purpose</u>: to establish credibility and image of a well-managed organization that meets critical needs in its area of work

Tips

- Should not be too long
- If you are approaching a new donor, attach in appendix an organisation brochure and the last annual report

2. Presentation of the organisation

1. Executive summary
2. **Presentation of the organisation**
3. Project background
4. Problem statement
5. Goal and objectives
6. Beneficiaries
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Contents

- Who are you?
- Philosophy / mandate?
- History and significant interventions / track record
- Expertise in addressing the problem or need
- Organisational structure
- Major sources of support
- Affiliations / accreditations / linkages

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3. Project Background

Contents

- Who took the initiative?
- Does the project fit into an existing development plan or programme?
- Is this the first phase of the project, or continues an activity already started?
- If continuing, what have been the main results of the previous phase?
- What studies have been done to prepare the project?
- Who else operates in this field?

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3. Project Background

1. Executive summary
2. Presentation of the organisation
3. **Project background**
4. Problem statement
5. Goal and objectives
6. Beneficiaries
7. Proposed methodology
8. Budget
9. Monitoring and

Tips

You need to demonstrate that :

- The project arises from the beneficiaries and/or the local partners
- You know the local context very well
- You have the experience needed to run the project successfully
- You have been successful before

4. Problem Statement

Why is it important?

Unless donors are convinced that there is a <u>real problem</u>, they will not agree to pay for our project!

Tips

A "good" problem should:
- concern people
- be concrete and demonstrated
- be solvable
- come from a demand
- be an emergency or priority

4. Problem Statement

Contents

- Describe the scope and size of the problem
- What are the immediate causes?
- What are the underlying causes?
- What are the effects?
- How does it affect people?
- Why does it have to be addressed?
- Why now and not later?

5. Goal and Objectives

1. Executive summary
2. Presentation of the organisation
3. Project background
4. Problem statement
5. **Goal and objectives**
6. Beneficiaries
7. Proposed methodology
8. Budget
9. Monitoring and evaluation
10. Sustainability
11. Annexes

Goals (or overall objectives): Describes the long-term goals your project will contribute to.

Project Purpose or Specific Objective: Describes the objective of your project in response to the core problem.

Expected Results: Describes the outputs (or outcomes) - the concrete results of your project.

5. Goal and Objectives

Objectives should be **SMART**:

- **Specific** = they must meet the needs (problems) identified
- **Measurable** = they should be measured by concrete indicators which should reflect the extent to which they have been attained
  - **Acceptable** = by all involved partners
- **Relevant** = they must be adequate to the project socio-cultural environment
- **Timely** = must be reached by the end of the project

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6. Beneficiaries

Contents

- **Clearly identify <u>direct</u> and <u>indirect</u> beneficiaries**:
  - Direct support to target group
  - Indirect benefits to others
  - How many?
  - Where?
  - Characteristics?

- **Specify how** and at what stage **they will be involved** in the project

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7. Proposed Methodology

Contents

- Partners
- Project implementation
- Activities
- Risks and assumptions
- Means

Why is it important?

- Shows how objectives will be achieved

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7. Proposed Methodology

Partners:

- Clearly divide main partners and other partners

- Provide background information:
  - Goals/philosophy?
  - Area of intervention?
  - Relationship with beneficiaries?

- Cooperation track-record?

- Type of partnership you set up

- Specify each partner's role

7. Proposed Methodology

Project implementation:

- Rationale for selecting this methodology
- Project implementation structure: roles and responsibilities of all the project stakeholders

Tip
Use a chart to show the project implementation structure

7. Proposed Methodology

Activities:

- What will be done?
- How?
- By whom?
- Where?
- By when?

Tips

- Be as precise as possible
- Cluster activities by expected result
- Use a work plan to summarise

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7. Proposed Methodology

Example:

Training:

- How many persons?
- For how long? Starting when?
- Which methodology will be used (seminars, in-house training, ad hoc courses, etc.)
- Why is the training necessary?
- Which new skills will the trainees acquire?

Year	Year 1						
Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Activity 1	■	■					
Activity 2		■					
Activity 3		■	■	■			
Activity 4			■	■	■	■	■

7. Proposed Methodology

Risks/Assumptions:

- **Risks** are external factors that could potentially jeopardise your project and are beyond your control

- **Assumptions** are things you are expecting to be a certain way

Why is it important?

- It helps assess the factors which could jeopardise your project

- It helps examining the project for completeness and consistency

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7. Proposed methodology

Means:

- **Human resources**:
  - Explain the responsibilities and tasks of each key person in the project.
  - Justify the need for expatriate personnel

- **Material resources**:
  - Give an explanation of the most important budget lines
  - Justify vehicles

8. Budget

Contents

- Budget spreadsheet
- Budget explanations and justifications

Tips

- Prepare it using your action plan
- Don't inflate the budget
- Carefully follow donor's requirements
- Divide your budget into years

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9. Monitoring & Evaluation

Why is it important?

- <u>Monitoring</u>: to assess whether your project activities are on track
- <u>Evaluation</u>: to assess whether your project is effective, efficient, has an impact, is relevant and sustainable

Contents

- What will be monitored and why?
- By whom?
- How often?
- Using which tools and methods?

10. Sustainability

Contents

- Institutional sustainability
- Technical sustainability
- Socio-cultural sustainability
- Financial sustainability

Why is it important?

Because donors want to be sure that their investment will not be lost at the end of the project and that you are already planning the phasing out of the project.

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11. Annexes / Appendices

1. Executive summary
2. Presentation of the organisation
3. Project background
4. Problem statement
5. Goal and objectives
6. Beneficiaries
7. Proposed methodology
8. Budget
9. Monitoring and evaluation
10. Sustainability
11. **Annexes**

Contents

- Glossary
- Maps
- Statistics/ policy documents
- Proof of registration and tax benefits for donors
- Financial statement
- Composition of Board of Directors
- List of major donors
- Annual report, brochures & publications
- Specific studies or evaluation reports
- Memorandum of agreement with partners
- Letters of support
- Pictures, case studies
- Other...

11. Appendices / Annexes

1. Executive summary
2. Presentation of the organisation
3. Project background
4. Problem statement
5. Goal and objectives
6. Beneficiaries
7. Proposed methodology
8. Budget
9. Monitoring and evaluation
10. Sustainability
11. **Annexes**

Tips
- Refer to the appendices in the proposal *(see appendix a)*, but....
  - If something is crucially important, write it <u>in</u> the proposal!
- Add a table of contents for the appendices
  - Put the appendix number on the top of each page *"appendix nº xy"*
- Separate each appendix by a coloured page

BRE AK

Back in 60 minutes

Proposal package

1. **Cover letter**
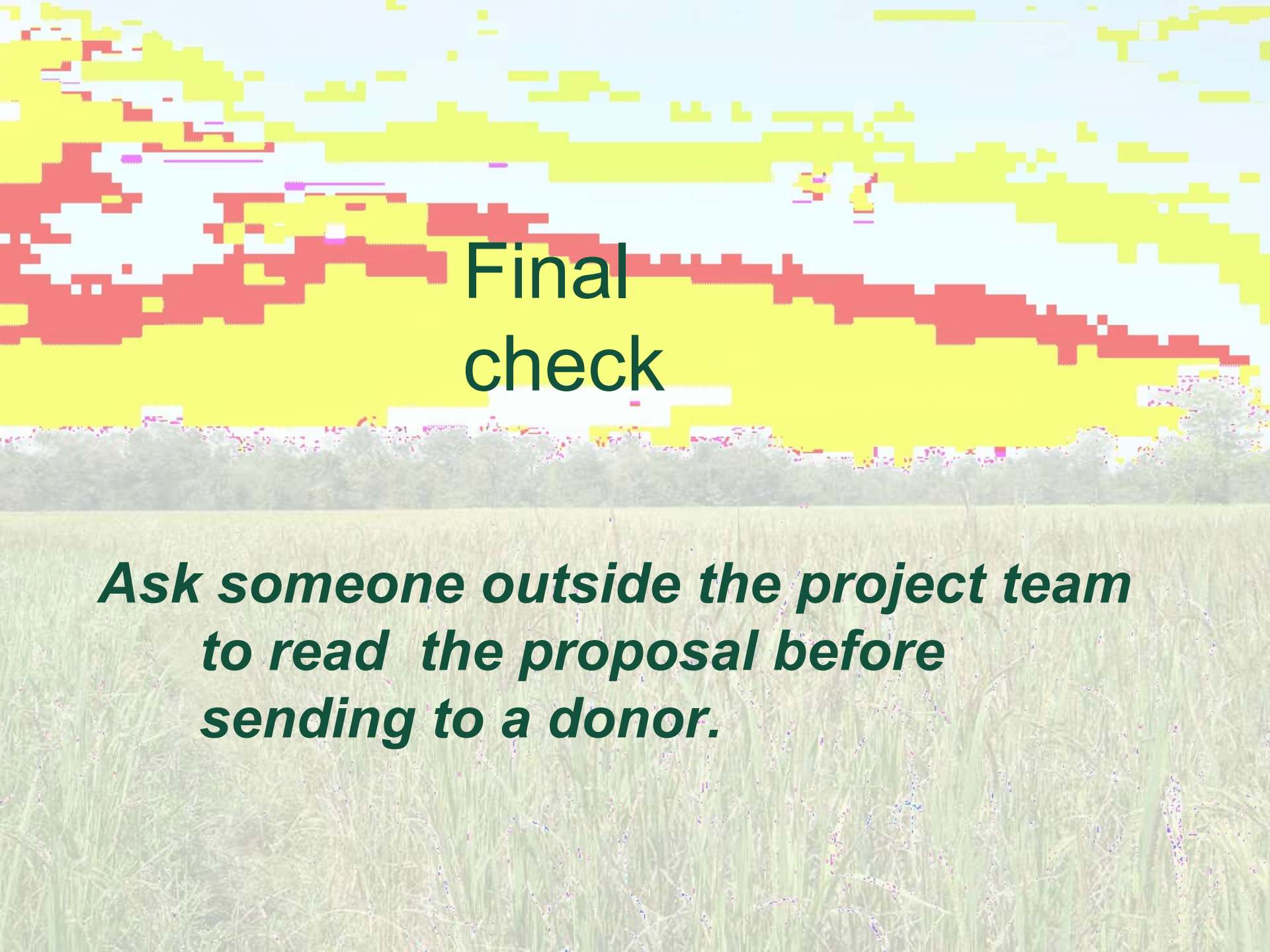
   Use letterhead, mention project title, purpose, amount requested, contact person and list of attached documents

2. **Project proposal:**

   - Title page with logo
   - Table of contents
   - Executive summary
   - Detailed proposal
   - Annexes

3. **Requested attachments**

   Include all documents requested by the donor (which

Final check

Ask someone outside the project team to read the proposal before sending to a donor.

CASE STUDY

Handicap International

Case study: Laos project

- Targeted donor: ECHO (European Community Humanitarian Office)
  - ECHO mandate: humanitarian and emergency actions

- Context: Need of gap funding between two contracts with EuropeAid (budget line B7-661 « mines »)
  - EuropeAid mandate: long-term development oriented

- Project rationale: training of

Version !

what would you change/improve ?

1. <u>GENERAL INFORMATION</u>

Title of operation: Technical support for the maintenance of Lao National Unexploded Ordnance (UXO LAO) activities in Savannakhet. Province of Lao PDR while preparing the consolidation of a 24 month final phase of the project.

Start-up date: March 2002.

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VERSION II:

What was written in the final version

- **VERSION 2**

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Title of operation: Maintenance of Handicap International Technical Assistance to UXO Clearance Operations in Savannakhet Province, Lao PDR

Start-up date: 1st March 2002

Version 4!

what would you change/improve ?

1. **Over all objective(s)**

Phase 4 – Transfer of knowledge, skills and capacities to UXOLAO Savannakhet in respect of the application of comprehensive national procedure across all aspects of the programme leading to the complete withdrawal of HI technical assistance.

2. **Project purpose/ Specific objective**

To provide reduced technical support to UXO LAO Savannakhet for UXO area clearance and disposal in order to allow UXO LAO to maintain limited activities to national standards.

This is an interim arrangement of six months that will allow limited continuity of operations for UXO LAO in Savannakhet until implementing partner funding becomes available. This will allow UXO LAO Savannakhet to conduct full range activities (community awareness, survey, roving and area clearance) to supervision of Handicap International technical advisors as described in the phase four financing proposal

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VERSION II:

What was written in the final version

- **4.1. Overall objectives:**

  The populations of Phine, Xepon, Vilabuly, Nong, Atsaphanthong, Phalan Xai and Atsaphone of Savannakhet Province, Lao PDR live in a safer environment.

- **4.2. Project purpose/ Specific objective:**

  The negative impacts of UXOs in the districts of Phine, Xepon, Vilabuly, Nong, Atsaphanthong, Phalan Xai and Atsaphone of Savannakhet Province, Lao PDR are reduced.

Version

what would you change/improve ?

- **VERSION 1 :Number of direct beneficiaries:**

UXO Lao staff in Savannakhet Province. Currently UXO Lao assisted by HI have 160 deminers, surveyors, community awareness (CA) members and supporting staff in the province.

The general population on the four most UXO affected districts of Savannakhet Province will also directly benefit of the clearance operations undertaken by UXO Lao.

The quantitative outputs of UXO LAO Savannakhet in the key activities since the HI project started are:

Area Clearance: Agriculture land cleared:2,534,935m^2 (58% of the total land cleared)

Roving Tasks: Villages visited: 939

Community Awareness: Villages visited: 561 out of more than 625

VERSION II:

What was written in the final version

Number of direct beneficiaries:

The general population on the seven most UXO affected districts of Savannakhet Province will directly benefit of the clearance operations and awareness activities undertaken by UXO Lao. The direct beneficiaries are more specifically, the populations of the districts of Phine, Xepon, Vilabuly, Nong, Atsaphanthong, Phalan Xai and Atsaphone. The number of direct beneficiaries is estimated at over 22,000 people. The vast majority of the beneficiaries are subsistence farmers from ethnic minority groups in remote areas. Through activities undertaken in this programme, the local population will benefit from improved land accessibility, improved land availability, a safer working and living environment and an improved ability to avoid accidents caused by unexploded ordnance.

Equally, UXO LAO staff in Savannakhet Province are direct beneficiaries of this programme. Currently UXO Lao staff assisted by HI includes de-miners, surveyors, community awareness (CA) workers and support staff in the province. The number of beneficiaries equals 160 employees of UXO LAO. Through activities undertaken in this programme, UXO LAO employees will benefit from training aimed at safer, more efficient and more diverse

VERSION III:
Keep it short…

<u>Number of direct beneficiaries:</u>

The general population of the seven most UXO affected districts of Savannakhet Province, estimated at over 22,000 people, will directly benefit from the clearance and awareness activities of UXO Lao.

Most beneficiaries are subsistence farmers from ethnic minorities in remote areas who will benefit from improved land accessibility and availability and a safer living and working environment.

UXO Lao staff in Savannakhet Province who are also direct beneficiaries include de-miners, surveyors, community awareness (CA) workers and support staff, totalling 160 employees.

Staff will benefit from training aimed at safer, more efficient and more diverse unexploded ordinance identification, removal and destruction.

Checklist: all the good questions to bear in mind when
drafting a project proposal

1. **Before writing the proposal:**

- Is the stakeholder analysis done and complete?

- Have I established a coherent problem tree and a concrete
problem ?

- Have objectives, results and activities been discussed with all partners and accepted ?

- Do I know the donor to whom I will send my proposal (e.g.
mandate, criteria, specific format, etc.)?

- Is there an internal organisation that has been

Checklist: all the good questions to bear in mind when
drafting a project proposal

2. <u>**When drafting the proposal:**</u>

- Is my proposal coherent:- identified problem suggested activities   proposed outcome?

- Is my proposal precise enough (e.g. explanation of expected results and intended activities, definition of SMART indicators)?

- Is my proposal understandable by everybody (not too many technical terms, theories explained, etc.)?

- Have I really respected the donor's criteria ?

- Have I put the information in the correct place ?

- Have I corrected all the spelling mistakes ?

Thankyou

Adapted for Health Poverty Action by Tony Hobbs
from original material and case study by Handicap
International