Session Eleven: FUNDAMENTALS OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT

11.1 Objectives

By the end of this lecture, you should be able to:

i. Explain the meaning of Project Management

ii. Discuss the need for Project Management

iii. Explain the various types of projects

iv. Discuss Project Proposal Writing

11.2 Lecture Overview

Program management involves centrally managing and coordinating groups of related projects to meet the objectives of the program.

In some cases, Project Management is a subset of Program Management. The project manager may report to the program manager in such cases

What is a Project?

Project is a **temporary** endeavor undertaken to create a **unique** product or service.

- Projects are unique.

- Projects are temporary in nature and have a definite beginning and end date.

- Projects are completed when the project goals are achieved or it is determined the project is no longer viable.

- A successful project is one that meets or exceeds the expectations of your stakeholders.

How are projects Unique?

- Product characteristics are progressively elaborated.

- The product or service is different in some way from other product or services.

How are projects Temporary?

- It has a definite beginning and end. effort.

- It is not an ongoing effort such as in operations.

- It ceases when objective has been attained.

- The team is disbanded upon project completion.

Example

Building a road is an example of a project. The process of building a road takes a finite amount of time, and produces a unique product.

Operations, on the other hand, are repetitive. Generating bills every month, and broadcasting news everyday are examples of operations.

Subprojects are components of a project that often contracted out.

11.3 What is Project Management?

Project Management is the application of knowledge, skills, tools and techniques to project activities to meet project requirements.

Project management is accomplished through the use of the processes such as:

- Initiating

- Planning

- Executing

- Monitor and Controlling

- Closing

Project managers or the organization can divide projects into above phases to provide better management control with appropriate links to the ongoing operations of the performing organization. Collectively, these phases are known as the project life cycle.

Project managers deliver projects while balancing the following constraints:

- Scope

- Schedule/Time

- Quality

- Resources

- Customer Satisfaction

- Risk

These are so intertwined that a change in one will most often cause a change in at least one of the others.

For example:

- If time is extended, the cost of the project will increase.

- If time extended with the same cost, then quality of the product will reduce.

- If scope is extended, then cost and time will also extend.

Changes to any of these legs sets off a series of activities that are needed to integrate the change across the project.

What is Program Management?

A program consists of a group of related projects and Program management is the process of managing multiple ongoing projects. An example would be that of designing, manufacturing and providing support infrastructure for an automobile make.

11.4 Why do we need Project Management?

We need project management to manage projects effectively and drive them to success. Project Management starts with the decision to start a project upon weighing its need and viability. Once a project starts, it is crucial to watch the project progress at every step so as to ensure it delivers what all is required, in the stipulated time, within the allocated budget. Other drivers influencing the need of project management are:

- Exponential expansion of human knowledge

- Global demand for goods and services

- Global competition

- Team is required to meet the demand with quality and standard.

- Improved control over the project

- Improved performance

- Improved budget and quality

11.5 Project Management Skills:

Many of the tools and techniques for managing projects are specific to project management. However, effective project management requires that the project management team acquire the following three dimensions of project management competencies:

- **Project Management Knowledge Competency:** This refers to what the project management team knows about project management.

- **Project Management Performance Competency:** This refers to what the project management team is able to do or accomplish while applying their project management knowledge.

- **Personal Competency:** This refers to how the project management team behaves when performing the project or activity.

Interpersonal Skills Management:

The management of interpersonal relationships includes:

- **Effective communication:** The exchange of information

- **Influencing the organization:** The ability to "get things done"

- **Leadership:** Developing a vision and strategy, and motivating people to achieve that vision and strategy

- **Motivation:** Energizing people to achieve high levels of performance and to overcome barriers to change

- **Negotiation and conflict management:** Conferring with others to come to terms with them or to reach an agreement

- **Decision Making:** Ability to take decision independently.

- **Political and cultural awareness:** Important to handle various personal and professional issues.

- **Team Building:** Ability to create a productive team.

11.6 Types of projects

Project can be classified according to;
- Nature/ Purpose of the project
- Ownership/agent of the project
- Complexity/size of the project
- Sector under which it belongs, as in the examples below;

i. Nature/purpose
    Civil/engineering projects
    Manufacturing projects
    Extractive projects
    Management process
    Research projects
    Social projects
    Business projects

ii. Ownership /agent; -
    Government
    Private
    International
    Community
    Non-governmental etc

iii. Complexity/size
    Large projects
    Small projects
    Medium projects
    Micro projects etc

iv. Sectors; -
    Social projects
    Agricultural project
    Health project
    Education project etc

11.7 Project Proposal Writing

Executive Summary

A proposal is a request for financial assistance to implement a project. The proposal outlines the plan of the implementing organization about the project, giving extensive information about the intention for implementing it, the ways to manage it and the results to be delivered from it (FUNDS FOR NGOS 2010). The following guidelines are designed to help you prepare your full proposal. How well you plan the action is critical to the success of the project.

A project proposal is a detailed description of a series of activities aimed at solving a certain problem. In order to be successful, the document should: -
- provide a logical presentation of a research idea

- illustrate the significance of the idea

- show the idea's relationship to past actions

- articulate the activities for the proposed project

Designing a project is a process consisting of two elements, which are equally important and thus essential to forming a solid project proposal:
- project planning (formulation of project elements)

- proposal writing (converting the plan into a project document)

The project proposal should be a detailed and directed manifestation of the *project design*. It is a means of presenting the project to the outside world in a format that is immediately recognized and accepted.

11.8 Proposed Format (Layout) for a Full Project Proposal

(Adapted from NEBIU 2002)

A full proposal should have the following parts:

- Title page: A title page should appear on proposals longer than three to four pages. The title page should indicate the project title, the name of the *lead* organization (and potential partners, if any), the place and date of project preparation and the name of the donor agency to which the proposal is addressed.

- Project title: The project title should be short, concise, and preferably refer to a certain key project result or the leading project activity. Project titles that are too long or too general fail to give the reader an effective snapshot of what is inside.

- Abstract/Executive Summary: Many readers lack the time needed to read the whole project proposal. It is therefore useful to insert a short project summary, an abstract or executive summary. The abstract should include: the problem statement, the project's objectives, implementing organisations; key project activities; and potentially the total project budget. Theoretically, the abstract should be compiled after the relevant items already exist in their long form. For a small project the abstract may not be longer than 10 lines. Bigger projects often provide abstracts as long as two pages.

- Context: This part of the project describes the social, economic, political and cultural *background* from which the project is initiated. It should contain relevant data from research carried out in the project planning phase or collected from other sources.

- Project justification: A rationale should be provided for the project. Due to its importance, this section is sometimes divided into four or more sub-sections:

  o Problem statement: The problem statement provides a description of the specific problem(s) the project is trying to solve, in order to "make a case" for the project. Furthermore, the project proposal should point out why a certain issue is a problem for the community or society as a whole, i.e. what negative implications affect the target group. There should also be an explanation of the needs of the target group that appear as a direct consequence of the described problem.

  o Priority needs: The needs of the target group that have arisen as a direct negative impact of the problem should be prioritized. An explanation as to how this decision was reached must also be included.

  o The proposed approach (type of intervention): The project proposal should describe the *strategy* chosen for solving the problem and precisely how it will *lead* to improvement.

  o The implementing organization: This section should describe the capabilities of your organization by referring to its capacity and previous project record. Describe why exactly your organization is the most appropriate to run the project, its connection to the local community, the constituency behind the organization and what kind of expertise the organization can provide. If other partners are involved in implementation provide some information on their capacity as well.

  o Project aims: This information should be obtained from the Log frame Matrix, including the project goal (a general aim that should explain what the core problem is and why the project is important, i.e. what the long-term benefits to the target group are), project purpose (that should address the core problem in terms of the benefits to be received by the project beneficiaries or target group as a direct result

of the project) and the outputs (i.e. results describe the services or *products* to be delivered to the intended beneficiaries).

- Target group: define the target group and show how it will benefit from the project. The project should provide a detailed description of the size and characteristics of the target groups, and especially of direct project beneficiaries.

- Project implementation: The implementation plan should describe activities and resource allocation in as much detail as possible. It is exceptionally important to provide a good overview of *who* is going to implement the project's activities, as well as when and where. The implementation plan may be divided into two key elements: the activity plan and the resource plan. The activity plan should include specific information and explanations of each of the planned project activities. The duration of the project should be clearly stated, with considerable detail on the beginning and the end of the project. In general, two main formats are used to express the activity plan: a simple table (a simple table with columns for activities, sub-activities, tasks, timing and responsibility in a clear and readily understandable format) and the ***Gantt chart*** (a universal format for presenting activities in certain times frames, shows the dependence and sequence for each activity, see project management for more info. The resource plan should provide information on the means necessary to undertake the project. Cost categories are established at this stage in order to aggregate and summarize the cost information for budgeting.

- Budget: An itemized summary of an organization's expected income and expenses over a specified period of time.

- Monitoring and evaluation: The basis for *monitoring* is set when the *indicators* for results are set. The project proposal should indicate: how and when the project management team will conduct activities to monitor the project's progress; which methods will be used to monitor and evaluate; and *who* will do the evaluation.

- Reporting: The schedule of project progress and financial report could be set in the project proposal. Often these obligations are determined by the standard requirements of the donor agency. The project report may be compiled in different versions, with regard to the audience they are targeting.

- Management and personnel: A brief description should be given of the project personnel, the individual roles each one has assumed, and the communication mechanisms that exist between them. All the additional information (such as *CVs*) should be attached to the annexes.

Applicability

Proposals are prepared to apply for external funds for the implementation of a project. Most grant applications ask for the same information, but they often have different formats. Some will have a list of questions. Others will ask for a "narrative" — the story of your project.

Advantages

- A proposal is an essential marketing document that helps cultivate an initial professional relationship between an organization and a donor over a project to be implemented

- A proposal facilitates appropriate words for the conception of an idea

- The proposal has a framework that establishes ideas formally for a clear understanding of the project for the donor

- Successful proposals mean financial aid for the organization to grow for the replication of project and ideas

Disadvantages

- Planning problems: Although a good idea exists, yet when we try to plan it out extensively, we face many unexpected challenges

- There are often tight deadlines, and proposals may be rejected

11.9 Attachments/Appendices to project proposals

Depending on the donor you may be required to attach the following documents: -

- Certificate of registration

- Sketch map of the project area

- Latest audited financial report

- List of staff and board members/directors indicating their qualifications and experience

10.11 Self-Assessment Questions

i.   Reasons why project management is important

ii. Reasons why project proposal is important

10.12 Further Reading
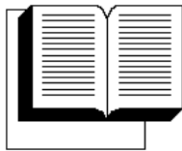
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