Program Development and Management for International Organizations
Design for Success and Prepare for What Can Go Wrong

PADM.GA.2211 – Autumn 2011 – Draft – Friday Workshop Structure

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Meetings: Friday: 0900 to 1300 on Sept 9, 16 and 30; Oct 7, 21 and 28; and Nov 4
Office hours: After class and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

Managers of international public service organizations, be they large or small, governmental or non-governmental, are accountable to a governing body or board that sets policy objectives and in some sense is responsible to a population meant to benefit from their activities. It is up to the managers to develop programs and projects that translate these broad objectives into concrete action plans, to implement these activities, and to report on progress. This progress should in turn be assessed against the respective plan and the results against the program objectives, leading to such adjustments as may be appropriate.

To do this effectively requires an amalgam of the skills and knowledge addressed in various other courses at the Wagner School: strategic planning to develop the necessary responsiveness to political and socio-economic realities; multicultural studies to build broad partnerships that will bring the program to life; human resources to ensure that the right people will be at the right place at the right time; financial management to obtain and allocate resources judiciously; procurement to satisfy the material needs of the program; monitoring and evaluation to track progress in relation to goals; data management to provide the best possible information for decision-making; and communications to keep public perceptions on track.

In this course, we will be examining the inner workings of projects, and try our hand on the design of one or more. We will study the characteristics of effective programs, which bring together a series of projects for mutually supportive and concerted action. We will pay particular attention to programs selected from the areas where international public sector entities are most active, particularly post-conflict relief and development, and we will review case studies to gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between policy and management of implementation. We will do this from the perspective of the program manager who must make decisions and manage project resources to achieve results in an imperfect world.

Upon completion of the course, participants will be able to design a program of action based on clear policy directives, to draft a comprehensive project document, and to monitor and evaluate the implementation of an ongoing program with a view to recommending corrective action. Students will have greater awareness of the many unplanned problems that may arise while they manage their projects and will have developed a toolkit of materials which will assist them to effectively address project design and management challenges.

TEACHING METHOD AND GRADING

This is a collaborative course, where all the participants are partners and resources in a joint learning venture, and all are expected to take an active role. Classes include time for discussion and participants are encouraged to bring in material from their own work environment that could be relevant for the course. The course will be conducted during an intensive cycle encompassing roughly the first half of the semester, with extended meetings on seven Fridays. Advance preparation is essential to fully participate in and benefit from each class. Attendance is required.
Grading will be determined largely by completion of three written assignments and a final paper.

- A project design logframe assignment (session #1), a lessons learned assignment regarding accountability and effectiveness (session #3), and a priority setting exercise (session #5) will together account for two-thirds of the final course grade. Students are expected to come to each class fully prepared for the respective assignment, which will be developed in work groups during the class session and due by 9pm the following Wednesday. Grades will be given to each group.
- Each participant’s submission at the end of the course of a final project proposal or grant application – meeting course specifications – will account for one-third of the course grade.
- Strong participation in class discussions throughout the semester, and optional class presentation of relevant material, will each provide opportunity for extra credit to be factored into the calculation of the final grade.

REQUIRED READING

Course readings will be drawn primarily from actual documents used by the organizations whose work we will examine to consider the issues of concern to the course. Materials are on Blackboard; required sections of documents are often contained in full documents that students may wish to read, and are accompanied by other documents that may serve as elements of student “toolkits” for future work. Students are invited to submit additional case materials from their own experience, which also will be made available on Blackboard. Additionally, the following required text, used in the course and a useful long term reference, is available at the NYU Professional Bookstore and the TI guide is available for download:


The following recommended books are also available at the NYU Bookstore:

COURSE OUTLINE (Precise schedule may change and will be announced)

SESSION #1 – FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 9

Introduction

Introduction of the participants. Overview of the course. The management challenge: from policy to programs to projects to results. Expectations and goals for the semester.

Materials:
- Course syllabus
- World Bank, Project Cycle
- UNDP, RBM in UNDP: Technical Note

- Exercise: Course expectations

Topic I – Logical Framework Approach to Design and Management

Concepts of program and project design, management, monitoring and assessment: Logical Framework Approach (logframe) to results-based design and implementation of major development agencies. Analysis of specific agency project documents to determine how clearly each was designed.

Materials:
- CARE, Logframe “Rosetta Stone” (http://www.mande.co.uk/docs/RosettaStone.doc)
- Gosling, Toolkits, pgs 68-91, 222-234
- Agency project management guides (read one carefully; skim one for comparison)
  - ECHO Manual – Project Cycle Management, pgs 1-18
  - UNDP Guidelines for Project Formulation, pgs 6-18
- Sample agency project documents (read two)
  - Trickle-Up, Irian Jaya Project Proposal for USAID
  - UNDP Liberia – Community Based Support in Reintegration and Recovery
  - UNICEF Senegal – Women’s Empowerment (note page #212 out of order)
  - GFATM - Angola HIV/AIDS - Round 4 (especially pages 20 and onward)
  - Students invited to contribute projects for review in later sessions

Toolkit #1 – Agency guides to project design:
- Agency project design websites
- Bond Guidance Notes #4 – Logical Framework
- DFID – Guidelines for Applicants to the Civil Society Challenge Fund
- Innovation Network – Logic Model Workbook
- OECD – Glossary of Key Terms and Results Based Management Terminology
- World Bank, Log Frame Handbook
- UN Guide to Results-Based Budgeting
- DFID, Tools for Development
- IFAD, Annotated Example of a logframe matrix
- Kellogg, Logic Model Development Guide
- USAID, Introduction to Managing for Results
- USAID TIPS, Building a Results Framework

Assignment #1: Read two agency guides for project design, one thoroughly and the other for comparison
Read two agency project documents and come to the first class prepared to develop project logframe for one of them in class

- Exercise: Logframe exercise set available for review during the week; session #2 discussion
SESSION #2 – FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 16

Topic I con’t – Logframe Approach to Design and Management

The Heads of State assembled for the opening session of the 2005-2006 UN General Assembly called for specific UN efforts to develop democracy, and the UN Democracy Fund became operational in early 2006. How well were the broad goals translated into a specific program? What are the major risks to the effectiveness of the UN Democracy Fund as initially established and how can they be minimized? Does the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights define meaningful outcomes and outputs to enable management for results?

Materials:
- UN Democracy Fund documents: Governance Arrangements; Project Proposal Guidelines; Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Guidelines
- Incorporating NGOs in UN Humanitarian programmes: lessons learned from Sudan CHF/ FMU
- Transparency International, Preventing Corruption in Humanitarian Operations, pgs VIII-XIII, 7-20

Documents for further background:
- UNDEF Portfolio of Projects
- Sudan Common Humanitarian Fund website
- OCHA CHF Guidelines

Toolkit #2 references: Monitoring and evaluation indicators
- MDG Goals and Indicators
- Human Development Project (http://humandevelopment.bu.edu/index.cfm)
- GFATM, Top 10 Indicators for HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria
- GFATM 2006, Monitoring and Evaluation Toolkit
- Kusek and Rist 2004, 10 Steps to a Results-Based M&E System. World Bank.
- UNDP 2007/8, Human Development Report
- UNDP 2005, Governance Indicators: A User’s Guide
- UNDP 2005, Gender-sensitive and Pro-poor Indicators of Good Governance
- UNDP 2006, Indicators for Human Rights Based Approach to Development
- World Bank, Performance Monitoring Indicators Handbook, pp. 32-46
- World Bank, Governance Matters (www.govindicators.org)
- Decentralization and Human Rights Checklist
- Monitoring and Evaluation website: (http://www.mande.co.uk)

Optional Presentation: Student presentation of past projects for review of logframe structure

Assignment for next session: Students identify project topic for final proposal via email by Wednesday (28)

Exercise: Review “lograme exercise set” before class, for discussion in groups.

[No class on Friday 23 September]
SESSION #3 – FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 30

Topic II – Design of Program Management for Effectiveness and Accountability

Longstanding concerns with accountability in use of development funds were heightened with the review of the UN Oil-for-Food program, with strong echoes in assessments of the US development efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan. What were the problems identified? Do efforts to ensure accountability necessarily run counter to operational effectiveness? What lessons can be learned from the OFFP review to improve the management of future multi-agency programs?

Materials:
- MDTF Guidelines for organization and accountability

Documents for further background:
- Independent Inquiry Committee documents: http://www.iic-offp.org/documents.htm
- Report on implementation of US assistance to Iraq
- Report on UNDP/UNOPS implementation of USAID QIPs in Afghanistan
- TI, “Curbing Corruption in Tsunami Relief Operations”
- UNDEF programme documents

Assignment #2: Lessons learned regarding design for accountability and effectiveness of new multi-agency programs – bullet points due by email 28 September; come prepared to develop group memo in class

Final Assignment: Submit your tentative topic by 28 September by email and come to discuss

Optional Presentation: Dilemmas of capacity development (or other topic)

SESSION #4 – FRIDAY OCTOBER 7

Topic II, con’t – Design of Program Management for Effectiveness and Accountability

The United Nations has sought to increase its own effectiveness through focus on results. First, through Results Based Budgeting and currently Results Based Management. What is the difference? How is this carried out by agencies, and how could it be strengthened?

Materials:
- UN Strategic Framework, 2012-2013
- USG Compact – OHCHR
- USG Compact – OCHA
- Student examples of organizational results frameworks

Documents for further background:
- ACABQ and GA documents
- OIOS/IAD programme performance management study

Optional Presentation: Managing for results in my organization: strengths and weaknesses (or other)

[No class on Friday October 14]
SESSION #5 – FRIDAY OCTOBER 21

Topic III – Planning and Operational Priority Setting for Program Impact

Setting operational priorities is one of the most important management decisions. Information is key to implementing international policies, allocating funds among programs, and deciding how to best use project assets. The Global Landmine Survey was initiated in 1998 by a group of NGOs working with the UN and key donors seeking to better understand the extent of the global landmine crisis, to enable donors to better allocate funds to countries with greater need, to assist mine action programs to work where they would have the greatest impact and to be able to measure their progress. The Landmine Impact Surveys have had both more and less effect than their advocates expected. We will consider the results of the surveys and implications of alternative priority setting criteria when applied to an actual landmine survey database. We will also consider the implications of releasing previously suspect land based on improved information.

Materials:
- UNOPS – Priority Setting for Mine Action Programme Impact
- VVAF, Decision Support for Mine Action – Kosovo
- Transparency International, Preventing Corruption in Humanitarian Operations, 119-122, 131-134

Toolkit resources #3:
- SAC – Impact Scoring and Community Classification
- SAC – LIS Explorer
- Database for priority setting exercise

Assignment: Group priority setting exercise: draft DUE 19 October by email; final due 26 October
Discussion of student projects

Optional presentation: Strengths and weaknesses of community based rapid assessment approaches
(participatory rapid assessment and planning techniques – rapid rural appraisal descendents)
SESSION #6 – FRIDAY OCTOBER 28

Topic IV – Managing Project Resources: Procurement of Goods and Services

Donors have sought to harmonize their approaches to project management and to rely increasingly on national systems and procedures, in order to simplify and lower costs to beneficiary governments and to increase the effectiveness of capacity building efforts. What are the principles and focus of these harmonization efforts? What is “national capacity,” how is it assessed and how can it be developed? What are the implications of using national systems for procurement?

No matter how well or poorly designed a project, the critical test comes with implementation – management of the resources to achieve the goals of the project. How can they ensure or limit achievement of the project goals? What are the risks of corruption and how can they be managed? What practical steps must be taken? Building on projects introduced earlier, we will focus on implementation through procurement of goods and services.

Materials:
- Rome and Paris High Level Meeting declarations and websites
- Principles of Public Procurement, pgs 1-27, skim remainder carefully
- Transparency International, Curbing Corruption in Public Procurement, pgs 13-52
- Transparency International, "Programme Support Functions", in Preventing Corruption in Humanitarian Operations, pgs 63-74 (procurement), 89-98 (HRM), 99-114 (financial management)

Toolkit #4 references – Procurement procedures and issues
- Transparency International, Curbing Corruption in Public Procurement, 2006
- OECD/DAC, Joint Procurement Policy
- UNDP, Financial and procurement rules and procedures
- UNDP Programming Manual – Management of Inputs and Finances, pgs 14-34
- UNOPS, Contracting Process
- World Bank, Deterring Corruption and Improving Governance in the Electricity Sector

Optional presentation: Corruption risks in humanitarian and development operations [or other]

Toolkit #5 references – Partner assessment and strengthening:
- UNFPA, Assessment of National Execution Capacity – A Methodology
- UNDP, Capacity for Programme and Project Management – Key Considerations
- UNDP, Guide to Capacity Assessment of Civil Society Organizations
- HACT assessment instrument adopted by United Nations Development Group
- UNICEF, Guidelines for Assessment of NGOs as Partners
- Interamerican Development Bank, Institutional Capacity Assessment Tool
- PACT Organizational Assessment Tool
- GFATM, Principal Recipient Assessment Tools
- GFATM, M&E Systems Strengthening Tool
- Transparency International, Preventing Corruption in Humanitarian Operations, (123-130)

SESSION #7 – FRIDAY NOVEMBER 4; 0900 to 1100 – Final Project due 2 Nov

Final Session – What Have We Learned: Evaluation and Summing Up

Classroom discussion on the main themes and issues addressed during the semester; review of goals identified at the beginning of the course. Please complete written evaluation on-line.

Materials:
- Course expectations and goals from first session
- Your final thoughts

Assignment: Final project due by Wednesday 2 November.