Resource Mobilization • STRUCTURE • Proposal Writing • SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT • Marketing/Public Relations • Fund Raising • Community Participation • Cost Sharing • SYSTEMS • Supervision • Objectives • Monitoring and Evaluation • SUSTAINABILITY •
Sustainability

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Introduction

Sustainability is a concept that is gaining currency. For NGOs, it generally encompasses a vital, desired outcome: namely, long-term maintenance of programs focused on community development and social services. However, few organizations or managers actually consider what sustainability means – including the practical implications of trying to achieve sustainability – in their own context. Increasingly, though, managers and Boards are asked to put forward step-by-step plans for achieving sustainability, or at least greater self-sufficiency, in the shortest possible time.

Sustainability has become an umbrella term for several program-related issues: quality of programs, client or customer satisfaction, staff competencies, efficiency, adequate infrastructure, responsiveness, innovation, growth or expansion, resource mobilization, and achieving tangible results. Donors often expect programs to establish benchmarks for measuring progress in moving towards sustainability\(^1\) so grant recipients are able to clearly demonstrate deliberate and effective efforts towards achieving sustainability.

Achieving sustainability is an ongoing process, not a single step or initiative. Steps towards achieving sustainability are unique to each organization: there is no right or wrong path. Program managers, Boards, and senior staff should not underestimate the difficulty of achieving sustainability, or even increasing revenue generation, while decreasing reliance on outside support. This is especially true for organizations or programs that have elected to concentrate on the most poor or disadvantaged communities or target groups. Moreover, sustainability initiatives are comprehensive and complex: they cover the full range of an organization's activities and should be complementary, addressing financial, human, community, and technical or service delivery resources simultaneously.

Sustainability mandates require the manager to examine not only an organization's internal environment (generally within a managers' control), but also the external environment (usually beyond a manager's control) in which the organization functions to determine whether it provides an enabling environment for sustained program or organizational growth and development. This module will enable a manager to:

- Understand and communicate the most important elements of sustainability to staff and Board members.
- Conduct an analysis of the organization's readiness and capability to undertake initiatives that will increase options for sustainability.
- Review the feasibility of practical initiatives for increasing revenue or support at all levels.
- Establish detailed plans to increase self-sufficiency or sustainability.

\(^1\) Analysts have devised an index for determining the extent to which an organization increased its sustainability. See, for example, Knight, Rodney J. and Tsui, Amy O. *Family Planning Sustainability at the Outcome and Program Levels*. The Evaluation Project, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC, USA. December, 1997. In this monograph, the authors propose an Outcome Sustainability Index (OSI) for family planning and reproductive health programs.
Prepare marketing or business plans, and conduct special events, to diversify resources available to an organization.

- Review and update internal management systems so that they can support sustainability initiatives.
- Incorporate communities in efforts to increase and mobilize resources.
- Institutionalize indicators and benchmarks to assist managers in measuring progress in moving towards sustainability.

**What is Sustainability?**

For the purposes of this module, a working definition of sustainability has been developed. Sustainability maybe divided into components such as organizational sustainability, financial sustainability, services or program sustainability (sometimes connoted as technical sustainability), or community sustainability. Others link activities at three levels: outcomes, programs, and organizational. Despite the fact that all these components bear upon an organization’s ability to achieve and demonstrate sustainability, a broad definition of sustainability is probably most useful.

**Remember**...

A working definition of sustainability:

“...The ability of an organization to secure and manage sufficient resources to enable it to fulfill its mission effectively and consistently over time without excessive dependence on any single funding source, including maintaining its ability to continue offering quality services and having an impact long after primary donor funding is withdrawn....”

When a program manager decides to tackle sustainability imperatives or mandates, he or she must make a careful – and honest – inventory of the organization’s strengths and weaknesses. As planning for sustainability unfolds, the manager should ensure that staff and stakeholders have systematic inputs into decision-making processes. He or she must create a planning process that considers the broad impact of decisions both within and outside the organization over the longer term. In most instances, having an agreed-upon organizational strategic plan is a critical foundation for sustainability planning. In fact, it is recommended that the strategic plan and the sustainability plan be developed in tandem or in sequence so that
priorities and activities are harmonized. Most strategic plans include institutional capacity building, services strengthening, or fund-raising initiatives. They fit neatly into a sustainability plan as these are the same elements that affect sustainability.

**Before You Begin...take stock of your organization’s assets, strengths, and weaknesses**

**Program Managers should:**

✔ Conduct a comprehensive assessment of the organization, highlighting systems effectiveness and ability to support segregation of costs, options for cross subsidization, and diversification. Be honest about needed improvements.

✔ Engage in strategic planning or revisions of the organization's existing strategic plan. Link the strategic objectives to sustainability plans or initiatives.

✔ Use the need to achieve greater self-sufficiency or sustainability as a basis for involving the community in formulating resource mobilization strategies. It might be useful to use PLA or other participatory processes to identify ongoing problems, their solutions, and how those solutions will be supported by the community.

✔ Ensure that key staff and stakeholders are systematically briefed and involved in decision-making about sustainability activities.

✔ Be imaginative in thinking about marketable assets (e.g., your organization's ability to offer training, technical assistance, and IEC/BCC materials, as well as fees for services).

✔ Think in innovative ways about ways of involving and coordinating current donors and attracting new ones, as well as ways of soliciting local and community resources. Is a donor roundtable or presentation in order? Have you taken donors to see the work they support? Think also about the benefits of in-kind donations.

✔ Deploy Board members and key staff to advocate for additional resource allocations, especially from the public sector. Are your programs potentially attractive to multiple sectors? Does your organization already work with several different ministries, agencies, or NGOs?
Elements of Sustainability

Many analysts divide sustainability into components, including organizational, financial, programmatic or technical, and even community sustainability. Almost all agree that each organization’s path to greater sustainability is unique and dependent on the organization’s current structure, track record, staff competencies, image, professionalism, and levels of community support. Also, it is clear that sustainability depends on the following beliefs among stakeholders: that the organization is providing beneficial, desired, and high quality services; that financial stability and growth are feasible; that leadership and management are excellent and motivated; and that sustainability initiatives are in harmony with stakeholder interests.

Food for Thought…Preconditions for Sustainability

Abt Associates, an international consulting group, has identified eight general characteristics that are necessary preconditions for moving towards sustainability. They are:

- Possessing and effectively articulating a clear vision, mission, and plan.
- Knowing the important issues, the consumers, and the related stakeholders.
- Acquiring an ability to reconcile the planning, organization, implementation, monitoring, and measurement of key processes and results with the organizational mission and vision.
- Creating an environment where all resources are put to their best use.
- Fostering an atmosphere that promotes creative thinking for program development and problem solving.
- Institutionalizing sound financial and operational information systems.
- Ensuring solid organizational structures, systems, policies, procedures, and techniques.
- Hiring, inspiring, and maintaining qualified staff by building a learning/team work environment within the organization while demonstrating integrity, enthusiasm, self-confidence, and an ability to delegate and empower staff.

In other words, in achieving sustainability, there must be a close link between organizational, programs and outcomes. Sustainable organizations contribute to sustainable programs,
and sustainable programs contribute to sustainable outcomes. The program manager or head of the organization is critical in this pursuit because of his or her role in articulating a vision that can be shared by staff and volunteers, and then involving them in its achievement. Because sustainability is often linked to profound changes in the ways in which organizations see themselves and function, leadership and successful management of change are important prerequisites to achieving sustainability.

Exercises: Assessing Your Organization’s Readiness for Sustainability Initiatives

These might be useful exercises to undertake with staff or a team assembled to develop a sustainability plan.

Exercise A: Brainstorming

Divide a piece of paper in half. On the left side, list some of the factors that affect your ability to achieve sustainability. On the right side of the paper, list what controls each factor and how it might be addressed. You may want to do this individually, and then use your own responses to contribute to a group discussion about the major impediments to, or prospects for, sustainability. Think about ranking the identified factors in priority order and coming up with solutions for impediments or strategies for building on prospects or opportunities that can become part of an organization-wide plan.

Exercise B: Determining Organizational Readiness

Use the format below to rate your organization’s readiness for embarking on sustainability, revenue generating, or fund-raising initiatives. Be honest about capability and capacity. Think creatively and deeply about solutions. Be prepared to resolve disagreements about priorities and remedial actions to be taken as your organization prepares to become more sustainable.

\[\text{Knight and Tsui, op cit, page 4.}\]
After using this exercise, the manager or team should identify areas requiring immediate attention and prioritize activities to address them. A mini work plan could be developed for the team or the organization and incorporated into ongoing organizational monitoring.

**Sustainability Rests on Good Management**

Elsewhere in this *Manual*, we have emphasized the importance of good management and skilled managers. These factors are key to an organization's ability to achieve sustainability. Sustainability initiatives – which often involve major changes or shifts in organizational focus and operations – require managers who can think strategically, articulate a clear mission and vision, and rally staff and volunteers to share both. The best managers are innovators, thinking
creatively about the future. This includes thinking about new services, new markets, new linkages or relationships, new sources of revenue, new ways of cutting costs, new ways of addressing changing trends and circumstances, and new ways of motivating and deploying staff. Organizational goals must be understood by all concerned (staff, volunteers, and stakeholders) and must guide efforts to find new ways of solving old problems and charting new courses that increase resources and sustain the organization. A manager must couple fiscal success with increased productivity to realize improved:

- income
- liquidity
- solvency

This places a heavy burden on the manager, but it is even more difficult to manage an organization that is static or lacking in adequate resources to fulfill its mission. Therefore, it is very important for managers to place efforts to achieve sustainability into a realistic context: it will not be simple, it will not be immediate, and often it will never be complete. That is, most organizations that are non-profit or non-governmental will never be completely sustainable. The idea is to increase and diversify resources in a systematic, creative way. Figure 1 below illustrates some of the major issues – and the cyclical nature for their consideration – in weighing options for increasing organizational sustainability.

*Figure 1: Process of Assessing Sustainability Options*
**Remember...A leader must**

- Understand the organization inside out.
- Know the issues, customers or clients, and stakeholders.
- Base decisions on reliable, complete data.
- Insist on good, consistent communication and information flow.
- Plan, organize, implement, monitor, and measure key processes and results.
- Insist on sound financial management and operational systems.
- Know the organization’s current capacity and have clear ideas about increasing and professionalizing it as needed.
- Ensure that supportive, solid policies, systems, procedures, and techniques are adopted at all levels and for all functions.
- Attract, reward, and retain qualified staff.
- Understand what adds value to the organization’s work.
- Harmonize sustainability initiatives with stakeholder interests.

As a reminder, managers should enhance different aspects of their organizations to facilitate sustainability initiatives. A checklist to reinforce these practices is found in Annex A. Several management tools and techniques contribute to stability and readiness to achieve sustainability. Strategic planning is key because it allows an organization to clarify its mission, define its niche or potential market, identify “cutting edge” initiatives or opportunities for technical leadership, and select effective strategies to create demand for and use of its services and products. As preconditions to achieving sustainability, it has also been noted that stable organizations must have the “flexibility, resilience, and willingness to respond to changing environments and new opportunities to expand their services.”

The following diagram sketches elements that influence organizational stability.

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Process Points...Identifying critical management tools and techniques

The following are some of the elements of good management that should be reviewed, and if needed, improved by program managers and staff.4

- **Planning**: Developing policies at all levels that reflect the organization’s mission and objectives, and developing reasonable targets and feasible work plans for achieving them.
- **Coordination**: Developing collaboration among different sectors, reducing competition for customers or clients among providers of the same services, and minimizing unnecessary services duplication.
- **Staffing**: Implementing programs that improve staff members’ technical skills, and instituting policies that reward good performance to retain experienced, committed staff.
- **Supervision**: Providing facilitative, supportive, and timely supervision to ensure quality, adherence to goals, effective problem solving, and appropriate feedback.
- **Management Information Systems (MIS)**: Generating and using timely, accurate, and complete data about performance, clients or customers, services, costs, and revenues as a foundation for planning and decision-making.
- **Finance**: Developing financial management systems and mechanisms that make it possible to identify cost centers (including **total** cost of services), generate new sources of revenue, decrease donor dependence, and maintain fidelity with key aspects of the organization’s mission, such as serving the hardest-to-reach, the poorest, and those at highest risk.
- **Governance**: Ensuring that members of the organization’s Board / volunteers who provide leadership or policy guidance clearly understand organizational policies, goals, and objectives and their roles and responsibilities. They should systematically sharpen their governance skills and consistently undertake tasks, such as advocacy and fund-raising, that advance the organization’s goals and enhance its influence, stature, and resource base.

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**Sustainability is All About Resources**

Despite theoretical underpinnings, achieving sustainability has very practical implications and components. What often happens is that managers are so overwhelmed by the difficulties of managing change or transformation – from a highly dependent organization to a more self-sufficient one – that the practicalities are often overlooked or relegated to a lower priority. The message is simple: as a manager, you can assist your organization in generating more resources, and in having more control over existing and new resources, than you might have imagined.

The following sections of this module will highlight some practical tips and tools that can be used in working towards greater sustainability for your organization. These include:

- Systems for asserting greater control over resources (such as cost containment).
- Boosting quality to increase demand for and use of services.
- Preparing marketing and business plans.
- Undertaking fund-raising from local and international donors.
- Conducting resource mobilization campaigns that draw on the imagination or local traditions and cultural forms of communities in which you work.

*Figure 2: Elements of Sustainable Organizations*

**Controlling Costs**

One of the first steps a manager can take towards sustainability is to control costs more effectively. This suggests that the organization must have an effective financial management system (usually linked to the MIS) that can:

- Segregate costs by function.
- Designate cost centers (i.e., recurring costs pursuant to major programs or functions) and monitor them.
Monitor budget categories and line items.

Project and monitor income or revenue over time and balance both against costs.

Provide early warning of under- or over-spending of budget line items or categories.

Identify areas for cost containment, cost recovery, cross-subsidization, and cost sharing, and partners or mechanisms that might facilitate savings.

Determine increases or decreases in costs.

Monitor currency, interest, regulatory requirements, and other fluctuations.

As a result of financial management or management information systems that can generate accurate data on these issues, an organization can streamline or reduce its costs. For example, an organization may be able to order supplies in bulk (with reduced per unit costs) and share these savings with other partners or comparable NGOs. Or, managers in an organization may be able to pinpoint wasteful practices, and take steps or set policies to curb them.

A good financial analysis based on reliable data may show how proceeds from one service or asset (e.g., a highly profitable laboratory or rental property that generates consistently high revenues) may be used to support another less profitable, but extremely important activity. This is called cross-subsidy. An example might be using a percentage of the laboratory profits to offer lower cost or free services to poorer clients or to support a start-up activity, such as a new training course. A good manager is always alert for opportunities to increase or broaden the organization’s resource base.

Remember...A good manager constantly seeks independent, diversified, and dependable revenue sources and adopts practices and policies to further this objective, including:

- Fund-raising from international and/or local donors and individuals systematically.
- Preparing the organization to compete successfully for tenders, contracts, and requests for proposals (RFPs) offered by public sector institutions.
- Instituting fee-for-services or co-payment schemes, membership fees, and soliciting voluntary contributions.
- Undertaking commercial ventures related to the organization’s primary mission (e.g., providing employer-paid health benefits if your organization manages a network of clinics).
- Diversifying services to include those that are “high demand” and for which higher fees can be charged.
- Subsidizing programs or specific services within programs.
- Selling training, technical assistance, educational and promotional materials, and consulting services provided by your organization’s staff.
- Seeking services or support from volunteers or para-professionals (e.g., having a volunteer accountant agree to do regular part-time bookkeeping as a donated service, or training nurses’ aides to perform routine
procedures in place of higher cost nurses).

- Weighing alternative options for offering services, using more appropriate technologies, to determine which are most cost-effective.
- Reducing staff turnover.

**Cost Recovery: Is Your Organization Ready?**

Recovering costs is one of the most sensitive, and difficult, challenges a manager may face. There are several reasons why this is so:

- A manager may not have accurate cost data, nor do the organization’s systems have the capacity to produce it.
- An organization has excess or unused capacity or unnecessary regulations or procedures that increase costs.
- An organization has not probed its operations to determine how it can become more efficient.
- Programs are operating in an environment where the government provides comparable services without charge.
- Programs that could be integrated remain vertical.
- Clients or customers have not been properly surveyed or included in decisions about whether, or what, to charge to increase satisfaction and support.
- Clients or customers do not perceive that they are receiving quality services for the fees they pay.

In addition, it is still generally unclear whether charging fees has an impact on demand (e.g., does charging for family planning or reproductive health services decrease demand?). Or, as some analysts have stated, is it true that even the poorest clients prefer to pay something for services because payment implies value or quality? These are some of the hypothetical issues facing an organization that is seeking to become more sustainable.

Therefore, before implementing cost recovery initiatives, it is important that managers and staff “do some homework.” Namely, data on recurring costs must be gathered; feedback from clients or customers must be collected and analyzed; the organization’s processes and regulations must be reviewed and revised to become more efficient; and systems must be institutionalized so that data on key cost centers involved in service delivery or achievement of the organization’s mission are regularly reported, analyzed, and used in decision-making.

As the section below indicates, cost recovery and quality assurance are interdependent and linked. Many managers are afraid to institute fees for services or other cost recovery measures because of potential client or customer resistance. Figure 3 shows that client satisfaction – along with attention to provider satisfaction and working conditions – often make a difference in the “bottom line.” Clients or customers who are happy with services, and convinced of their quality, are usually willing to pay. Moreover, efficient organizations often charge relatively low fees because they are controlling costs, thus offering what is perceived of as higher quality at lower costs.

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Food for Thought...How Do You Determine Cost Estimates?

The following example shows how one might improve cost estimates in the context of a family planning program. It can be adapted by organizations providing other services to make cost estimates and provide more useful data for making policy decisions, including compiling a list of fees for services. See if some of these guidelines make it easier for you and your team to recovery costs.

For family planning services, cost per couple years protection (CYP) estimates “could be improved if researchers and programs used a standard approach to measuring them.” These costs are the foundation for determining resource needs and setting fees. Cost estimates should include all costs of:

- Obtaining a method.
- Continuing or discontinuing use.
- Staff who provide the service. Associated labor costs, including productivity (or how staff-persons spend their time), are particularly critical since labor costs are often the largest single cost element. Under-utilization of staff may create excess cost and underutilized capacity, while overburdening of staff may reduce efficiency and lead to costly staff turnover.
- Any supplies used or commodities given (even if commodities are donated since the program would have to pay if the donations were withdrawn).
- The method itself.
- Maintaining the infrastructure (e.g., building, equipment, electricity, water, sanitation, spatial configuration) to provide the services.
- Following up clients and services provided.

If costing guidelines or fees for services are introduced, organizations should take the following five major actions to ensure that they are appropriately applied and remain effective:

- Assessing current practices so obstacles to quality assurance are identified and corrected.
- Creating a consensus about fees and guidelines through participatory processes, including means testing for the poor.

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- Instituting client and customer feedback mechanisms to maintain a relationship between costs and perceived quality.
- Training providers on the use of guidelines.
- Ensuring use and revision of guidelines as needed.

**Boosting Quality: Another Way to Increase Sustainability**

Some managers do not recognize the linkages between quality and sustainability. Yet, quality of services is often the critical ingredient in achieving sustainability. All organizations must adopt crosscutting quality assurance systems. Quality assurance can be defined as:

All programs, activities, and methods used to ensure compliance with established standards and procedures, to analyze the deficiencies discovered, and to take action to improve performance; and the measuring of quality once again to determine whether improvement has been achieved. It is a systematic, cyclic activity using clear, technically appropriate standards for measurement.

Quality assurance must involve every department, manager, and service provider or worker. It also requires strong leadership committed to strengthening performance and quality. In short, managers should strive to introduce and maintain a culture committed to quality at all levels.

**Figure 3: The Flowchart of Cost Recovery**
Commitment to quality within an organization must be matched by efforts to tap into or generate client or customer demand. Customer demand can often determine the limits of an organization’s ability to become more sustainable. It is now clear that client, customer, and community support can sustain services and organizations long after donor funding is withdrawn.

Customer demand is a function of many interrelated factors. One level relates directly to the quality of services and perceived value for money.

For example, as health services improve and service provider attitudes become more client-focused, clients will be more likely to use and spend money on health services. Moreover, as clients’ own awareness changes, and they learn, for example to seek treatment sooner rather than later and to insist on quality of care as a basic right, the demand for health care will increase. Similar assertions could be made about programs providing legal services to poor or disadvantaged persons. If clients or litigants are treated with respect and dignity as they seek to vindicate their rights – and if they are educated about their rights in the first place – they will use and support organizations providing legal services to a greater degree.

Therefore, organizations that provide services are vital to clients’ and customers’ perceptions of quality. Thus, where there is low utilization or significant criticism of services, program managers should work with providers and stakeholders or beneficiaries to help uncover the reasons for these problems and to embark on programs — including training and TA — to change attitudes and create more client-friendly services.

A good manager will embark on a two-pronged approach to quality improvement: assisting providers to achieve higher quality and stimulating greater demand among clients and customers. Providers should be motivated to assist in generating higher demand in at least five ways:

- **Receiving training** to improve interpersonal communication or counseling skills as well as to recognize their role in stimulating and satisfying customer demand and offering customer-oriented services.
- **Learning the value of managing workload** or service requirements more effectively.
- **Receiving recognition** or other incentives from managers and supervisors for excellent performance.
- **Providing self-assessment tools** and training in their use.
- **Linking service providers with community-based programs** and structures.

With regard to customers or clients, program managers must adopt a multi-faceted approach, informed by locally appropriate activities or initiatives in increasing demand, including:

- **Educating clients or customers about availability of services**, and the comparative advantages of the services offered by the organization (e.g., “one stop shopping or the cafeteria approach,” integrated services for greater client convenience, provision of high demand, unique services, superior providers and infrastructure).
- **Educating clients or customers about the elements of quality** they should suspect from an organization, such being treated with respect, and availability and provision of services and commodities. Clients should also be educated about the **benefits** of services. These may include improved health, protection of important civil or social rights, increased allocation of resources to meet critical needs, development of skills that can be applied to improve the quality of life for the individual and family, and creation of effective coalitions or collaborative actions.
> **Involving communities more systematically and effectively**, helping them to become empowered and thus assume greater “ownership” and responsibility. Use of participatory processes (such as Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) or Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA)) often motivate communities to identify problems and propose solutions, or to recognize the organizations working within the community that deserve support. Whether or not an external donor is funding programs or initiatives.

> **Sensitizing community or traditional leaders, policy makers, and other influentials** to recognize the linkages between the programs offered by the organization and upholding fundamental human rights or meeting critical needs. Their support may provide fertile ground for stimulating community control and implementing engaging, sustainable activities at the community level. They may also be key to advocating for allocation of additional resources to benefit community and organization alike.

**Tips and Tools...Measuring Your Organization’s “IQ” (Implementation of Quality)**

As a manager, you can use this checklist in your monitoring and supervision of quality assurance systems, practices, and attitudes; and indetermining their internal and external impacts. As you uncover items that you are not able to check off, use these items as the basis of discussion and planning for improvements with your staff. What is the real or underlying problem? What are the best, most cost-effective, or appropriate strategies for ensuring quality improvements? Who is must be engaged in addressing it? What is the proper timetable? Are all the resources needed available now, or should additional resources be mobilized?

- Have you set appropriate quality standards that are understood by staff and enforced by managers?
- Does your supervision and monitoring include benchmarks to gauge quality?
- Have you and your staff recognized that “perceptions” of the quality of your services are as important as achieving technical quality?
- Have you integrated mechanisms that provide systematic client, customer, or beneficiary feedback and recommendations? Do you review and act on them systematically?
- Have you instituted support and incentives for providers? Do you balance these incentives with holding providers, supervisors, and managers responsible for quality and performance standards?
- Have you marketed what your organization does or provides? Is what you are marketing responsive to and appropriate for local needs? Do your services provide choices that are perceived as useful or making a positive difference?
- Have you cultivated a reputation as a top-notch, highly professional, responsive, competitive, “cutting edge,” influential, innovative organization or group?
Practical Actions To Create Sustainability Options

Sustainability generally is not a theoretical undertaking. While its achievement does require some in-depth thinking and analysis, it ultimately rests on a series of concrete, practical activities designed to increase commitment to quality, resource mobilization, stakeholder support, and organizational influence. This section of the module will provide guidance to program managers in four different areas:

- Marketing the organization
- Conducting fund-raising
- Planning events
- Developing a sustainability plan

Related issues such as preparing fund-raising proposals, conducting feasibility studies, using checklists for events planning, and indicators for measuring progress in achieving sustainability are covered in the Annexes.

Marketing the Organization

Marketing is a familiar concept: it is all around us in commercials, giveaways, sponsorship of events, endorsements (especially by influential people), and brand name recognition. For NGOs, marketing is an essential process that helps you exchange something of value (namely the services your organization offers) for something you need (namely financial or other support so that your organization becomes sustainable). It has been stated that when a program manager thinks about marketing, it's not just about trying to raise money, it is also about increasing demand and improving supply as Figure 4 below illustrates. The bottom line is that a marketing plan is about obtaining resources: either money or in-kind support although marketing may have several other purposes and results. Therefore, in crafting your marketing plan, you are simultaneously also thinking about:

- Image building
- Fund raising (i.e., increasing the number of persons outside the organization that actively support it)
- Membership development
- Community relations
- Political activities
- Citizen education

**Elements of Marketing**

Marketing has several elements, aimed at:

- Getting the attention of potential clients or customers.
- Letting them know about your range of services.
- Making your services accessible or available in the right places at the right time.
- Ensuring that your services are attractive to clients or customers.
- Distinguishing your services from those offered by others.
- Setting appropriate fees that allow the organization to recover all or most costs with a margin to invest in improvements and expansion.

Most marketing programs have five key components including:

- Formative research.
- Strategy development.
- Message and media development for promotion.
- Monitoring and evaluation.
- Program management (the centerpiece for successful marketing).

Each component briefly described below. *Annex B* contains the outline for a model marketing plan.

**Formative Research**

Formative research revolves around research methods and understanding the market in which an organization is operating. As was stated earlier, sustainability is best linked to an organization’s strategic plan. Such a plan stipulates that the organization has a mission and program vision as well as selected communities and target groups with which to work. Its priorities are clear and shared; it has determined its unique competitive advantages and its internal strengths and weaknesses. The organization has also generally devised means of determining client or customer perceived needs, preferences, and satisfaction.

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8 Based on information contained in an unpublished manual by Abt Associates.
Against this background, programs should employ qualitative and quantitative research to gain a deeper understanding of consumer responses, motives, customs, attitudes, and behavior. This information will help an organization verify assumptions on which the marketing strategy is based and ensure that messages and approaches are appropriate.

**Tips and Tools...There are several aspects of formative research**

Among them are:

- **Literature review** using research findings of national or international institutions, including academic institutions, or national studies to offer insights into the domain in which you work, the groups or communities you have targeted, or the work of competitors or other organizations.

- **Surveys** including national or local reviews of the knowledge, attitudes and practices of clients, customers, beneficiaries, and other stakeholders. Sometimes surveys using local languages are more effective. Survey design and administration is extremely complicated and should usually be undertaken by a qualified person.

- **Interviews** to determine views of stakeholders, local leaders, providers, clients, customers, and beneficiaries. These often allow the interviewee to be more candid than is possible in an open forum or focus group discussion.

- **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)** to learn about the needs, preferences, and perceptions of potential target groups or beneficiaries, including their views about the competition. A trained, but neutral, interviewer should conduct FGDs in local languages if possible. You will often get important qualitative information that can guide your marketing not only by recording and analyzing what FGD participants say, but also by recording their non-verbal reactions such as body language.

- **Visits to your own and other organizations’ facilities** to ascertain the respective levels of quality, kinds of services offered, professionalism and provider attitudes, client load, infrastructure, image, fees charged, and efficiency. Do your facilities and services pale in comparison? If so, how can you make improvements before marketing them?

- **Reviewing opportunities for collaboration or cooperation** with organizations offering comparable programs or services. Would it help your marketing if you could advertise a broader network, or specialized facilities, or a larger market share due to collaboration? Could you reduce the cost of marketing by sharing it among several organizations?

- **Assessing media and other outlets for marketing purposes** such as radio, television, and print media. You should also include more traditional means of promoting and sharing messages that are prevalent in your area (e.g., folk media, drama, rites of passage, ceremonies or festivals, community or elders meetings such as Kenyan barazas, local newsletters, etc.). Endorsements from satisfied clients or influential leaders are also excellent ways of promoting your message and your organization.
Marketing Strategy Development

Like many strategic or sustainability initiatives, developing a marketing strategy requires deep, forward-looking consideration. As a manager, you must encourage your staff or planning team to be thoughtful and honest, but also imaginative. Keep in mind that it possible to make your organization and its services more attractive by implementing the following steps:

- Determine your comparative advantages and disadvantages.
- Decide on a feasible starting point.
- Outline a reasonable, achievable plan of action.
- Be clear about the opportunities and challenges you will face.

The bottom line is also important: will you be able to increase or strengthen your resource base?

It is useful to treat development of a marketing strategy somewhat like the preparation of a strategic, sustainability, or business plan. The following exercise could be conducted during a staff meeting or at a workshop to review and revise an existing strategic or sustainability plan.

Exercise...Preparing a Marketing Strategy

Use this chart to answer key questions and to outline strategy components. When you have answered all of the questions, review your answers and organize your plan according to the categories below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category/Key Questions</th>
<th>Answers to Questions</th>
<th>Implications for Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who is your organization trying to reach? What are the key target groups?</td>
<td>Where are these groups found?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How is your organization regarded? What is its image? What is its relative position among comparable organizations? Why do people use or not use, your services?</td>
<td>Are they easy to reach?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What are they most likely to respond to?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What are the best steps to position the organization?</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>What makes you unique?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>What assets do you have that can be promoted effectively?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How can your organization convince target groups that it can meet real/perceived needs?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category/Key Questions</td>
<td>Answers to Questions</td>
<td>Implications for Strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are your long-term marketing objectives? What are your more immediate or short-term objectives?</td>
<td>☐ Is the organization trying to expand coverage or attract new clients/customers?</td>
<td>☐ Is the organization trying to expand coverage or attract new clients/customers?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Is it trying to offer new services? Strengthen existing services?</td>
<td>☐ Is it trying to offer new services? Strengthen existing services?</td>
<td>☐ Is it trying to improve its image or influence?</td>
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<td>☐ Is it trying to improve its image or influence?</td>
<td>☐ Is it trying to improve its image or influence?</td>
<td>☐ Is it trying to improve its image or influence?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What are your best targets and tactics?</td>
<td>☐ Do you want to increase the number of communities covered or persons served? If so, by how many?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How will you monitor and measure results?</td>
<td>☐ Will you charge fees? Use logos or branding?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Will you train providers and managers or supervisors?</td>
<td>☐ Will you train providers and managers or supervisors?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Are you trying to inform more people and raise awareness?</td>
<td>☐ Are you trying to inform more people and raise awareness?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Will you use mass media, interpersonal communication, or a mixture of both?</td>
<td>☐ Will you use mass media, interpersonal communication, or a mixture of both?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Will you build a coalition?</td>
<td>☐ Will you build a coalition?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ What additional data will need to be collected to measure impact of the marketing plan?</td>
<td>☐ What additional data will need to be collected to measure impact of the marketing plan?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Can you create indicators and benchmarks to assist the organization to monitor?</td>
<td>☐ Can you create indicators and benchmarks to assist the organization to monitor?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ How can you train staff at all levels to be conscious of the marketing plan and its desired outcomes?</td>
<td>☐ How can you train staff at all levels to be conscious of the marketing plan and its desired outcomes?</td>
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<tr>
<td>☐ What feedback mechanisms will be instituted?</td>
<td>☐ What feedback mechanisms will be instituted?</td>
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<tr>
<td>☐ How will you review the effect of your messages and promotional activities?</td>
<td>☐ How will you review the effect of your messages and promotional activities?</td>
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<tr>
<td>☐ When, on what basis, and how will you revise or adjust your messages?</td>
<td>☐ When, on what basis, and how will you revise or adjust your messages?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Category/Key Questions</td>
<td>Answers to Questions</td>
<td>Implications for Strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>How will you <em>manage the marketing strategies or program</em>?</td>
<td></td>
<td>☐ <em>Who is responsible</em> for coordinating and monitoring marketing and promotion?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>☐ How can <em>board members/volunteers</em> be used?</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>☐ What kinds of <em>services can be donated</em> (e.g., air time, give-aways with promotional messages, TA, mentors, etc.)?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>☐ Have <em>issues of timing</em> been considered (e.g., harvest time, religious periods, community festivals, markets, elections) that may affect marketing positively/negatively?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Have you secured the services of <em>potential spokespersons</em> or endorsers (e.g., satisfied clients of members or their families, influential leaders, celebrities)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much will this <em>cost</em>? What are the projected revenues from all sources versus the costs (e.g., printing or producing multi-media materials, outreach, buying air time, staff time, improving services or training, expanding coverage, etc.)?</td>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Has a <em>realistic budget</em> been prepared?</td>
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<td>☐ Have systematic efforts to get <em>donated services</em> been undertaken?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>☐ Have all <em>staff costs</em> been factored in?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>☐ Has a <em>cost-benefit analysis</em> (i.e., do costs outweigh the benefits) been conducted?</td>
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Remember...**Effective marketing must be clearly understood before implementation. What are the key elements?**

- Know your potential customers or clients and their views.
- Are there key target groups such as men and adolescents who require **special approaches**? Have you arranged these approaches?
- Focus on satisfying these groups and gaining their **endorsement**.
- Let **everyone** know what you offer and why it's the best.

- Find innovative ways to get your message across and propel your image and your organization forward. Can you **enlist popular cultural icons or community leaders**? Can you create a locally appropriate symbol or catchy figure to publicize your organization?
- Use **local languages**, local traditions or structures, local events, and local norms to reinforce your marketing.
- **Think creatively about getting your message across** and ways of publicizing your program (e.g., billboards, tee shirts, hats, key chains, pens, or other personalized giveaways; leaflets, videos, radio or television call-in shows, soap operas, murals; health fairs or other community events; poster or drama contests) Can you put messages on the side of buses or taxis? Should you conduct special seminars on issues important to your program and follow them up with regular issue briefs or action alerts?
- **Don't generate demand without the ability to provide desired services** or programs.
- Create a **marketing plan that is linked to an organization’s strategic or sustainability plans**. The marketing plan must be responsive to changes in local or organizational conditions and structures so that it can address new problems or challenges.
- Think about how you can **involve communities** in helping to market your organization. Should you ask them to assist with promotions or special events? Should you help them to build advocacy skills? Can you create cost or profit sharing mechanisms to benefit the organization **and** the community?

**Fund-raising**

Fund-raising is one of the most important tasks of a senior manager. A good **strategic plan** will provide direction and outline priorities for organizational fund-raising. It will also identify organizational strengths or weaknesses that must be recognized or addressed, and opportunities that can be exploited to benefit the organization. Volunteers, or Board members, are also usually expected to contribute contacts and assist senior staff in mobilizing resources. Unfortunately, most organizations only think of fund-raising in two dimensions: approaching donors with prepared proposals or charging fees for services or membership.
There are several other avenues for resource mobilization, including conducting special events, this also helps promote the organization or the cause), soliciting in-kind donations, creating an endowment, and approaching wealthy individuals to make pledges. The module on Program Management (Series 2, module 1) describes how a good proposal should be written in great detail. Budget preparation is addressed in the module on Financial Management (Series 2, module 3). In approaching any donor, request written guidelines – if available – before preparing the proposal and budget.

It is important that a senior manager does the proper “homework” to identify potential donors and determine whether there is a good “fit” and how the organization can be presented in the most attractive or persuasive way. Compliance with guidelines and timely submission of proposals are also critical; many donors reject proposal immediately if they are not submitted on time or lack required information. In addition, for organizations with multiple donors, it is sometimes important to convene all the donors and try to coordinate their requirements, reporting, and disbursements. Donor coordination is a challenge for managers, but is often a good way to ensure that the organization is better able to comply with competing, but important, donor requirements.

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**Exercise ... Who is funding what, and why, and when?**

Most managers need to know the donors and their priorities before approaching donors for preliminary discussions or even preparing fund-raising proposals. This exercise will help you to answer some critical questions or, of equal importance, to indicate vital information to gather before preparing a fund-raising proposal or plan. In organizing your fund-raising, use this chart to determine key donors that support your type of activities and their requirements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donor (Previous Experience?)</th>
<th>Key Contact Person</th>
<th>Funding Focus (purpose, limits, location, size)</th>
<th>Deadlines</th>
<th>Multilateral,¹ bilateral, government, private</th>
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¹ Multilateral usually means UN Agencies, the EU, the Commonwealth, SADC, regional banks.
Learning from Failure...

Suppose your proposal is not funded. What should you learn and what should you do? First and foremost, you should request a meeting with, or a letter from, the donor so that you can understand fully why your proposal was not successful. Often the reasons for rejection are fairly clear:

- Inadequate explanation of need or justification for the program.
- Previous experience with the donor that has not been positive or an unexplained, and somewhat negative, organizational image.
- A poorly written proposal or one that does not comply with donor guidelines such as the timeframe for submission.
- Lack of demonstrated community involvement and support.
- Non-responsiveness to the donor’s identified priorities.
- Funds requested that are not related to proposed activities or are far in excess of the donor’s funding capacities.
- Failure to demonstrate organizational capacity to implement the proposed program or achieve the desired impact.
- Competitive proposals that were better articulated or more innovative.

Every proposal submission is a “teachable moment,” even those that are successful. Review your proposals with staff and determine how they can be improved. Outline those aspects of successful proposals that should be replicated – such as a capability statement or statement of comparative advantage or contributions to the community that is clear and compelling. You may also want to involve a professional editor or fund-raiser to help you prepare more attractive proposals in the future. Sometimes, your proposal may be so innovative or cutting edge that donors have either never considered the approach you are proposing or are anxious about embarking upon a radical departure from their usual procedures. Persevere and persuade! Equally important, ask the donor how the proposal can be improved and if and when it may be resubmitted for consideration.

Other Ideas for Mobilizing Resources

One of the areas that challenges, but perhaps motivates, program managers is pursuit of resources using innovative means. A manager needs to be cautious when thinking of
committing scarce institutional resources to both generate resources and promote the organization, but sometimes the risks are worth it. Most critically, these more risky or innovative approaches must be locally appropriate – that is, they must be in sync with local norms, values, institutions, and expectations.

**Bright Ideas...Check whether these ideas may increase your resource base or raise your profile within the community.**

The following are ideas for fund-raising. Some may be appropriate for your community. Some may be good promotional initiatives to be incorporated into your marketing plan. Some of these ideas may surprise you: they may be so successful that they become pillars of your organization’s sustainability or marketing plans.

✔ Raffles of gifts donated by corporate partners
✔ Community-based events such as “Walk-a-Thons” to publicize your program, organization, or cause
✔ Fund-raising or testimonial dinners (usually with donated entertainment and/or honoring a notable figure in the community)
✔ Radio or television call-in shows focusing on the organization or its mission and soliciting pledges of donations or support (sometimes called radiothons or telethons)
✔ Sporting events or tournaments
✔ Talent or fashion shows
✔ Auctions (not only furniture, artifacts, or jewelry, but also a “day with a notable person,” services, a donation to a cause in the name of the person who wins the auction, etc.)
✔ Issues or other conferences where important data, publications, and networking are shared
✔ Raffles (usually giving away donated products such as a car or trips)
✔ Food or health fairs (including health screening services)
✔ Music, drama, or film festivals
✔ Musical or theatrical presentations (plays, operas, dance, jazz, traditional art forms)
✔ Art exhibits
✔ Master classes
✔ Corporate or trade fairs
✔ “Adopt” a neighborhood, group, cause, issue
✔ Trips, study tours, exchange visits
✔ Poster contests
✔ Patrons or “Friends of the Organization” groups of consistent donors
✔ Seminars and continuing education
Pros & Cons of these Ideas...

- There are some advantages – and some disadvantages – to these suggestions. **First**, they are often time- and labor-intensive. Be sure you know what you are getting into, and that you have adequate resources (time, funding, volunteers, donors, marketing or advertising skill) before going forward. Always prepare a budget that clearly identifies not only the money but also the personnel or support services that are required.

- **Second**, some of these suggestions require a constituency. Are you sure that people will attend? Are there precedents for similar successful events in the community? Are the planned events locally appropriate, or can they be made more attractive locally with minor modifications? Can you communicate why support is important and what the resulting resources will be used for?

- **Third**, participation often builds with patient, annual effort. Is your organization capable of planning an annual fund-raising dinner, auction, or other event? If you need professional assistance, do you know where to find it? Can you persuade influential persons to participate, or donate their time and services?

- **Fourth**, some activities do not yield enough profits to be worth the time or money spent and aggravation they cause. Have you conducted a thorough cost-benefit analysis before undertaking an event? Have you canvassed or surveyed likely supporters to gauge their interest? Have you made the event so expensive that the number of persons who can participate is extremely small?

- **Finally**, sometimes an organization can become associated with a certain event. This can be positive or negative. On the positive side, association with an annual sports tournament, festival, or health fair is like “branding”: it provides advertising and association with a worthy cause. It promotes the organization and often makes persons curious about its mission and services. A successful event draws customers or clients because the assumption is that efficiency and professionalism in one area is probably a reflection of the organization’s overall efficiency and good management. On the other hand, if an event is poorly managed, unprofitable, or inappropriate to local norms, it can create image problems for the organization that will be hard to overcome.
In short:

- Know what you are getting into.
- Plan well, and project costs (time and money) accurately and completely.
- Be imaginative! But also, be appropriate!
- Make sure you can guarantee participation of notables. Nothing is more embarrassing than honoring someone who doesn’t turn up.
- Get everyone into the act. Make hosting an event a major activity for staff at all levels and for volunteers and Boards.
- Use committees effectively and integrate them by including staff and volunteers. You never know where the best ideas will come from.
- Learn from the successes and mistakes of others. Don’t be afraid to ask for advice even from organizations that are normally competitors or from top-flight professionals in events management.
- Find ways to involve key target groups especially if adolescents are concerned. Sometimes their significant involvement in an event such as a poster contest or a music festival can spell the difference between success and failure. Moreover, they can also acquire important leadership skills.
- Use checklists and be extremely organized. No detail is too small to monitor. Annex C contains several checklists that can be used to facilitate events planning. They should be modified to suit the event you are hosting to help you “professionalize.”
Preparing a Business Plan

Sometimes organizations determine that they should institute more profitable activities to supplement – and subsidize – their major mission. This is particularly true for organizations that have a charitable or public interest focus. The idea of preparing a business plan does not necessarily mean that the organization is changing its structure from a non-profit organization to a private business enterprise. Rather, it is a step that some organizations take to maximize the revenues generated by important assets, services, or technical competencies. Sometimes business plans and marketing plans overlap since marketing, promotion, and public relations are vital to the success of a business plan. Usually, the most successful business plan builds upon the core activities of the organization. Sometimes however an organization can perceive trends that suggest new directions. Perhaps caution that an organization should carefully investigate laws and regulation governing non-profit/NGO status before embarking on business venture. Sometimes it’s necessary to form a separate, but affiliated, organization “for profit ventures”.

Why write a business plan?

Like a marketing, strategic, or sustainability plan, a business plan is designed to fit in with an organization’s mission and priorities, and to assist it in generating increased revenues by promoting services, products, activities, or infrastructure. Annex D contains a more detailed description of the components of a business plan; it need not be too long but it must be clear. Your plan should contain compelling reasons why the product you are offering is essential, and why your organization is the best source for this product. Sometimes, a business plan is prepared to interest “investors” in providing start-up capital for a good idea. A business plan “sells” your product or service and your organization to a potential group of customers or clients. Your business plan must present a concrete plan of action that includes complete projections of per unit cost and potential income. More critically, as a manager you should encourage staff and volunteers to think clearly about the pros and cons of embarking on business ventures. Do you really have assets that people are willing to pay for? Are your services of a caliber that you can attract paying customers? Are you able to cover the costs of doing business (not just the direct costs, but also the hidden costs of promotion, modernization, hiring more skilled technical workers, etc.)?

Note: Before embarking on a business plan, make sure you understand the laws governing non-profits or charities in your country. Seek legal advice to achieve your objectives without affecting your tax or regulatory status.
Thus, a business plan should serve as a basis for:

- Attracting capital.
- Encouraging persons with technical skills to join the organization.
- Convincing important suppliers to provide credit or services.
- Presentations about the organization’s capabilities.
- Forming strategic alliances.
- Preparing a brochure to describe the organization and its services.
- Outlining the operational and financial aspects of the services or products provided.
- Providing benchmarks for measuring break-even points and progress toward profitability.
- Linking business propositions to organizational strategic and sustainability priorities.

More Bright Ideas... Here are some products or services that NGOs have developed business plans to promote and expand. Can you think of others?

- Establishing a training center (with hostel attached) to provide in-depth classroom and practical training using the organization’s clinics
- Preparing and marketing multi-media (printed, video, audio) materials aimed at specific target groups or issues
- Providing high demand, high quality services that are not readily available (e.g., laboratories, scans, sonograms, infertility treatment, cancer screening and follow-up)
- Instituting voluntary counseling and testing centers for HIV/AIDS
- Creating counseling centers for unique issues (substance abuse, family, couples, academic problems, victims of domestic or sexual violence)
- Offering pre-paid insurance schemes that provide comprehensive health or legal services to employees through an NGOs facilities
- Providing consulting services, customized on-site training for other organizations’ workforces, and in-depth analysis of organizational problems with follow-on technical assistance (TA)
- Engaging in systems design (including software applications and web sites)
- Undertaking events management and planning, including study tours, internships, or exchange visits
- Developing real estate (apartments, office buildings, industrial parks, clinics)
- Franchising (i.e., development of standardized services, supplies, infrastructure, staffing, with a logo or brand name to symbolize comparable quality)
Developing a Formal Financial Sustainability Plan

A good manager will link the sustainability plan to the organization’s strategic, marketing, or business plans. This will enable the organization to build a coherent focus, shared vision, and blueprint of how it has chosen to achieve its objectives, improve its performance, and increase and diversify its resources over the longer term.

But it is clear that sustainability is not just about money. In fact, planning for financial sustainability is just one part of a good manager’s overall plan for institutionalization and growth. It lets you concentrate on the organization’s real purpose, whether that purpose is helping children live healthier lives, improving reproductive health status, vindicating fundamental human or political rights, or addressing environmental problems. In other words, working towards sustainability allows a manager and his or her team to “do more mission.”

A manager may ask what a plan for financial sustainability should include. A plan’s contents should be practical and common sense. Annex E contains some worksheets that an organization can use in determining what resources are required. These worksheets help you to list:

- All items and needs of the organization’s primary projects and programs.
- Amounts required to sustain each.
- Current resources.
- Required resources.
- Potential matching funding and donor organizations or individuals.
- The amount that will be requested from each potential funding source.
- How it will be requested, by whom, and by when.

Of course, any financial sustainability plan includes specific objectives, strategies, and action steps to acquire and keep resources. Moreover, as an organization begins a new program, project, or direction, measures to ensure financial sustainability should be incorporated at the inception. If you have a plan, amend it to include the new initiatives. If you don’t have a plan, prepare one through this activity.

Step by Step...Preparing a Financial Sustainability Plan

Some of these steps are comparable to those used in any good organizational planning process. However, they bear repeating.

STEP 1: Decide who will develop the plan. This may be the same team that prepared the strategic plan, a working group, or an ad-hoc committee. Try to make the team inclusive, asking volunteers and finance staff to join with program staff. If your organization is particularly complex (e.g., a national or multi-site organization), you may want to hire a professional facilitator or consultant.

11 Adapted from The Community Tool Box, Chapter 28. op cit.
STEP 2: Build consensus by letting everyone know what you are doing. Often, staff persons, or Board members, volunteers, and stakeholders are not fully informed about the purposes and the decisions that serve as the basis for strategic or sustainability priorities. Get everyone involved! You never know where a good idea may come from. Keeping everyone “in the loop” reduces suspicion and misinformation while building trust and mutual respect.

STEP 3: Conduct an internal audit to determine your organization’s current resources. You need to know:

- How much money the organization has.
- The current annual budget.
- How much money is expected in the coming year or two and the most reliable sources.
- How will the money be allocated (e.g., to programs, staff, training, maintaining infrastructure, materials production, etc.).
- How much debt the organization has (if any).

Use the worksheets in Annex D to record this information. Ensure that the information entered is accurate.

STEP 4: Determine how much money your organization needs. This is an important strategic step. It requires some candor and some imagination. Are some of your current activities under-funded? Have you been unable to conduct key activities (including program support such as facilitative supervision) because of inadequate funds? Are your staff underpaid? Have you been unable to maintain the organization’s infrastructure and equipment?

STEP 5: Determine how much money your organization wants. This is the time to dream or to review the long-term vision of success in your strategic plan. Does the organization want to embark on new programs, expand or increase coverage, offer new services, and conduct marketing or promotion? Is the organization interested in conducting systematic staff development activities? Are you becoming a member of an advocacy coalition or campaign? Determining how much money your organization wants can tell you two things: which donors should be approached and how much achieving your strategic objectives may cost (i.e., costing your strategic plan).

STEP 6: Compare the totals in Steps 3, 4, and 5. How far off are you from your goals? How much money do you need – in the aggregate – for the next three years? What are the cost implications of your list of priorities? What are the most likely sources of these funds? Can the organization generate a large percentage of them on its own?

STEP 7: Compare the list and costs in front of you with the organization’s strategic plan (if there is one). Are the lists approximately the same? Are any of the priorities beyond the organization’s ability to raise money or generate funds? Should some items move up – or down – on the priority list? Whatever you do, decide how much you plan to raise and set concrete objectives for raising it. Indicate your annual targets and include assumptions that make you and your team consider the fund-raising or resource mobilization targets realistic. This is the basis of your financial sustainability plan.

STEP 8: Think tactically and weigh alternatives for mobilizing resources. This is best done by brainstorming and choosing the most feasible ideas. Challenges should also be reviewed and, where daunting, used to eliminate some of the ideas or suggestions. A list of
potential fund-raising ideas is found earlier in this module. That list should be reviewed as a way of stimulating creative thinking. Alternatives that may assist an organization in becoming more sustainable are:

✔ Investigating the establishment of an endowment fund for the organization. Sometimes endowments are also linked to capital campaigns or solicitations of donations from wealthy individuals.
✔ Becoming a line item in an existing budget of a larger or public sector organization (e.g., providing government subsidized mobile or community-based RH services with referral linkages to public sector clinics or facilities).
✔ Soliciting in-kind support. The more of this you receive the less money you have to spend. In-kind support can be goods or services.
✔ Soliciting blocked assets from corporations working in countries without convertible currency. For example, the Ethiopia Birr is non-convertible. Thus, multi-national corporations doing business within the country often cannot repatriate all of their profits. However, some countries will give a tax credit to these corporations for large charitable contributions. It takes some negotiation but is often worth it.
✔ Marketing your organization’s technical skills and services.
✔ Developing joint projects with similar organizations and local implementing partners or leveraging shared positions and resources.

STEP 9: Decide which ideas you will follow up on. This is your financial sustainability planning team’s final step in setting priorities and organizing your plan. It relies mainly on common sense. Questions the team needs to ask may sound simple, but they often catalyze fierce debate about the way forward. These include:

- What will be easiest for us to do?
- What proposed activities hold the highest likelihood of success?
- What would we enjoy doing?
- How would any of these funding strategies change what we do?
- What is most in keeping with our mission?

STEP 10: Develop a draft plan, including objectives, timelines, action plans, resources needed, persons responsible, and how the sustainability plan will be monitored. Circulate the plan to staff, the Board, and volunteers, and receive feedback before finalizing it. As a manager, be prepared to fully explain the plan and its assumptions.

CAUTION!! Be careful not to stretch your organization’s mandate so far to obtain funding that its mission, objectives, and principles become distorted beyond recognition. In other words, money for sustainability of the organization and its workers is not necessarily an end in itself. You can find ways to become more self-sufficient while retaining fidelity to the organization’s purpose.

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Monitoring Sustainability Initiatives

Monitoring progress towards achieving sustainability or greater self-sufficiency is not easy. Successful measurement and monitoring begin with a set of institutional systems and structures that support sustainability initiatives. For example, as Figure 5 below illustrates, an efficient, effective organization must be able to monitor all indicators of institutional capacity. Among

Figure 5: Sustainability Conceptual Framework

Figure 6: Results Framework Model
them is the information system which is key to tracking services and financial data. The second framework (Figure 6) is more focused on sustaining health systems or services and demand. These two major parts of the conceptual framework have significant bearing on an organization’s bottom line and prospects for long-term survival whether an organization is working in health or any other sector.

A good manager will incorporate monitoring of these internal aspects of an organization’s work – and the external influences upon it – as part of overall planning and decision-making. The manager should also develop and institutionalize a simple set of indicators – largely financial – to provide consistent information about the organization’s fiscal health and how close it is to achieving its sustainability objectives.

**Tips and Tools...Selected indicators to monitor financial sustainability**

These indicators should be reported and analyzed on a quarterly and annual basis. It is also helpful to use these data to prepare graphs or charts representing organizational trends.

- Percentage of income by source
- Percentage of income generated from fees for services or products provided
- Percentage increase/decrease of income generated from fees each year
- Percentage of persons served paying fees for services
- Actual and Percentage increase or decrease in operating costs
- Percentage of operating costs covered by budget
- Percentage of budget covered by income generated
- Percentage of budget covered by grants from donors
- Percentage of budget covered by funds from local or other sources (specify the source)
- Percentage of budget expended and balance on hand by budget category
- Actual costs of promotion, advertising, marketing
- Percentage of revenue attributable to promotion, advertising, marketing, special events
- Increase, decrease in the number of donors and grants received
- Increase, decrease in cost effectiveness (total expenses divided by unit of program output, e.g., CYPs, printed brochures, or trainee)
- Increase, decrease in liquidity or working capital (reserves divided by total daily expenses times 100). Note: The rule of thumb is that an organization should have enough in reserve to function for at least one quarter or 90 days if all external funding were to cease immediately

---

13 Institutional and sustainability frameworks are taken from USAID Office of Sustainable Development, Bureau for Africa. *Health and Family Planning Indicators: Measuring Sustainability, Volume II.* Subhi Mehdi. 1999
Depending upon your organization’s mission, you may wish to monitor additional indicators. For example, you may wish to monitor the increase or decrease in giving by individuals; or the increase or decrease in giving by “cause”. If your income streams and cost centers are fairly routine and recurrent, you may want to track how cross-subsidies are working within your organization.

The most important point to remember is that monitoring sustainability is as vital as trying to attain it. The data that you gather and analyze can tell you whether sustainability is within your organizations grasp or if major directional or strategic changes are called for.

**Food for Thought...However you define it sustainability provides a framework for thinking and acting strategically.**

“In order to evaluate sustainability, it is necessary to have a clear definition of the concept before starting, but there is no one definition which satisfies the needs of every organization or project... The definition of sustainability which an organization uses is the basis for developing an evaluation plan or framework and the indicators needed... No matter what definition is used, most experts now agree that sustainability should not be viewed as a purely financial concept. It includes administrative, programmatic, and political aspects as well. Although financial components of sustainability cannot be denied, it is also important to consider what it is (e.g., programs, the institutional mission, services, staff, alliances) that needs to be sustained.

*Source: Sustainability Matters. IPPF. Vol 2/No. 2, November, 1996*

Good managers should also not miss the point that people – not just money – truly make an organization sustainable. This means that a manager must make special efforts to ensure that all staff members, at all levels, find the working environment a pleasant, dynamic, fulfilling one that calls forth the best efforts towards achieving the organizational goals and mission that they can contribute. In short, staff members must find the work environment a sustainable environment.
This touches on various elements, many of which are discussed in other modules, including: structure; decision-making; inclusivity; challenging work; procedures for handling conflict; adequate pay, clear roles; fair terms and conditions; recognition and rewards; facilitative supervision; informal, but collective, get-togethers (lunches, parties, retreats); and leadership styles that are not arbitrary, and that assist or promote work rather than hinder it. Even the physical environment (i.e., ventilation, lighting, comfortable seating and computer set-ups, a degree of privacy, etc.) create a healthy and effective workplace, but also encourage staff members to want to return day after day, year after year. Many NGO managers come to the conclusion – often, unfortunately, too late – that worker burnout is one of the main threats to organizational sustainability.

The challenge for a good manager, therefore, is to be adroit and strategic in moving towards sustainability. The manager must balance organizational, financial, stakeholder, and workers’ concerns in achieving dynamic, sustainable growth and development for many years to come. There is no one path to achieve sustainability, but a good manager will be able to determine the best, most prudent, and most productive approach for his or her organization, using some of the tools and tips outlined in this module.
Make a strategic plan for the organization.
Articulate clear organizational mission and definite strategies.
Develop innovative leadership.
Recruit qualified and talented staff and reward them for excellent job performance.
Understand the client.
Provide a quality service.
Market services effectively.
Develop a financial management system that provides information to monitor revenues earned, the cost of services, and revenues not collected.
Develop policies that allow managers the flexibility to manipulate fixed costs
- Personnel: job categories, performance, hours, skills.
- Contraceptives and commodities: price, source, type, quantity.
Provide rapid and accurate feedback to clinic and program managers on financial performance.
Find a balance of service and financial goals that achieves the organization’s mission.
Institute incentive compensation systems that motivate practitioners and support personnel to provide quality services and contain costs.
Hire reliable and respected service providers at the community level.
Develop mechanisms for using revenues at the sites where they are generated.
Develop strategies for cost-containment.
Develop new strategies for generating revenue.
Develop joint public and private ventures and community participation to reach the poorest and high-risk populations.
Create cross subsidies of products and services to support the poor, the hardest-to-reach, and the high-risk groups.
Annex B
Model Marketing Plan
MARKETING OBJECTIVE:

Increase annual revenue from user fees by 15% through increased use of family planning and reproductive health services by couples and their adolescent or young adult children.

STRATEGY:

Focus on male heads of families and young men and women of martial age. Introduce reproductive health as a family health issue. Introduce prepayment family plan with incentives for family enrollment. Arrange with local health district and individual private practitioners for referrals for screening, and for certain services the clinic is not equipped to provide. Cooperate with local public health campaigns to distribute materials, provide speakers.

NEW EXPANDED SERVICES:

HIV/AIDS and STD screening and treatment; male counseling; sale of family planning commodities and drugs; expand women’s club activities to enable the women to help with counseling and prevention for youth; counseling for families with an HIV-infected member; transportation to referral sites; round-the-clock ambulance deliveries; visiting specialist, such as a urologist, on a periodic basis.

FEE:

Institute family discounts including grandparents, parents, and children; for first three months, provide extra discount to any married patient who brings their spouse to the clinic for a service; test pre-payment plan to include basic package of services including safe delivery (ante, newborn, and post-natal care); pregnancy, STD and HIV/AIDS screening; family planning commodities and medicines, in addition to other standard services. Offer alternative payment schedules due to seasonal fluctuations in income.

DELIVERY:

Institute appointment system to allow those who work to come at convenient or low-traffic times such as evenings after work; arrange transportation to referral sites and ambulance service for deliveries for plan members. Cooperate with government-sponsored programs on HIV/AIDS awareness, particularly at secondary schools and universities; recruit student volunteers to test telephone hotline concept; ensure that all staff understands and respects the patient's right to privacy; train staff in counseling approaches and techniques for adult males and unmarried youth; ensure the facility’s examination or counseling rooms are sufficiently soundproof to guarantee a patient’s privacy.
PROMOTION:

Messages need to emphasize safety and privacy.

Two tracks:
- one appeals to males as fathers and heads of households, and
- the second appeals to young men and women.

Promotional Activities:
- You may wish to host a launch or premiere event to promote your service, message, or product. For example, you could organize family health fair at the clinic with door prizes, and hold games like domino that the men favor. Use the occasion to publicize new services and distribute educational flyers. Target young women by opening a booth with information on skincare, and introduce them at the same time to information on nutrition and reproductive health fair at the same time as the annual immunization campaign or religious festival.
- Distribute pens, bags or pocket mirrors with the name and location of the clinic on it (to be distribute year round).
- Prepare a billboard advertisement near the central market and bus station.
- Prepare with the clinic’s women’s club and staff volunteers periodic radio spots to raise awareness of different health risks and publicize the related services offered by the clinic. Make sure to broadcast when sports news is broadcast or before, during, and after soccer games (1 per month, repeated once weekly).
- Get the local TV station to broadcast videos prepared by international organizations or set up a TV in the clinic waiting room and broadcast entertaining, educational spots and videos (ongoing)
- Visit local community, religious, and sports leaders and enlist their support (Q2).
- Have a local sports hero record various health messages for the radio and appear on a local talk show. Have a female new personality host a broadcast on the topic of reproductive health and seek support from a commercial sponsor of feminine hygiene products (Q3).
- Organize a soccer match to raise funds for the clinic and distribute educational material at the match.
➢ Arrange local radio and press interviews for representatives of families who have members who suffered the consequences of HIV infection or unwanted pregnancy. (This is important to encourage people not to fear the stigma and avoid seeking care)(Q4).

**MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING**

The clinic's social worker is responsible for overall management of marketing activities. Two teams composed of a clinician and a male community volunteer each are responsible for in-clinic educational activities and for publicity and outreach. The Clinic Director reviews their efforts in a quarterly report that has a pre-established format to collect data on utilization, expenses, revenue and patient satisfaction from exit and household interviews. New patients will be interviewed on their awareness of distinct media and outreach efforts. Repeating clients will be interviewed on quality and satisfaction with staff, services, and operations.

Two students from the university who are studying business and marketing will conduct exit interviews with patients. A team of surveyors from the local public health office will share relevant data from household interviews with the clinic. The questionnaire for the exit interviews with the clinic. The questionnaire for the exit interviews was developed with the help of a private consultant who will also conduct annual reviews of the marketing effort and conduct focus groups.

**BUDGET**

**Budget for Marketing Activities**

**Expenses**

- [ ] Staff time allotted to marketing
- [ ] Volunteer transportation expenses
- [ ] Printing
- [ ] Distribution
- [ ] Billboard advertisement
- [ ] Special events: Clinic fair (refreshments, publicity, supplies)
- [ ] Consultant
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenue</th>
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<tr>
<td>User fees</td>
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<td>Prepayment plan enrollments</td>
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<td>Drugs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commodities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cash donations</td>
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<td>In-kind donations</td>
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</table>
# SAMPLE MONITORING AND EVALUATION WORKSHEET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective and Activities</th>
<th>Indicators (direct and indirect)</th>
<th>Information source</th>
<th>Baseline needed</th>
<th>Who is involved</th>
<th>Tools/Methods</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective:</strong> Increase number of male patients</td>
<td>No. of males examined for first time</td>
<td>Medical record</td>
<td>No. of male patients prior to campaign; HH survey data</td>
<td>Reception/nurse</td>
<td>Computer tally or manual review of records</td>
<td>Quarterly</td>
<td>Revise medical records for appropriate details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activities:</strong> Billboard Religious center talk Flyer Sports events, radio</td>
<td>Awareness indicated and source of information</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Objective:</strong> Awareness of HIV/AIDS Prevention among non-married females 16-20</td>
<td>No. of target group tested</td>
<td>Medical Record</td>
<td>No. of females tested prior to campaign No. attending mother/daughter days</td>
<td>Reception/nurse</td>
<td>Counseling</td>
<td>Quarterly Report</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activities:</strong> Radio talk show</td>
<td>No. in attendance at women’s club session</td>
<td>Sign up sheet</td>
<td>“Don’t know” or incorrect responses</td>
<td>Social worker</td>
<td></td>
<td>Quarterly Report</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flyers</td>
<td>Correct Responses from exit interviews</td>
<td>Baseline exit interview results; focus group responses</td>
<td></td>
<td>Surveyor</td>
<td>Responses from focus groups; exit interview; Anecdotal indicating source of information</td>
<td>Quarterly; Semi-annual; Annual focus groups</td>
<td>Consultant</td>
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Annex C
Checklists for Events Management
<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>PRE-REGISTRATION FORM</strong></th>
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<td><em>(Please PRINT Clearly)</em></td>
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</table>

Please tick as appropriate and return this from by fax, or send the required information by email to the address below before November 15, 1998.

- [ ] I will attend the ________________________________
  *(Name of Event)*

Last Name __________________ Other Names ________________________

Job Title _________________________________________________

Organization _______________________________________________

Mailing Address: __________________________ Street Address or P.O. Box

City ___________ Country ___________ Postal Code/Zone________

Office Telephone ______________ Fax No ________________________

Home Telephone ______________ Email address __________________

Passport No ___________ Expires _______ Date and Place of Issue __________

- [ ] I would like to attend the conference but will need sponsorship or financial support

- [ ] I will be unable to attend the Conference

Please return this form by fax, or send the required information by email to the conference logistical organizer:

[Place contact person’s name, title, address here.]

Telephone Nos.

Fax Nos.

Email:

Copy to:
## CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS DATA SHEET/MASTER LIST

<table>
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<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>TITLE/ORG.CONTACTS ADDRESS</th>
<th>ATTENDING</th>
<th>PER DIEM DUE</th>
<th>FLIGHT DETAILS</th>
<th>PTA DATE SENT</th>
<th>ROOM ASSIGNMENT</th>
<th>VIP</th>
<th>COMMENTS (e.g., facilitator, moderator, PI staff, additional contacts, etc.)</th>
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<td>ISSUE/FUNCTION</td>
<td>PERSON RESPONSIBLE</td>
<td>DELIVERABLES</td>
<td>DATE DUE</td>
<td>✔️ AS DONE</td>
<td>COMMENTS</td>
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</table>
VIP PROTOCOL CHECKLIST

VIP Name: ____________________________________________________________

VIP Title: _____________________________________________________________

Form of Address (e.g., “Your Excellency,” “Your Worship,” “Mr./Madam Minister,” “Ambassador,” etc.): __________________________________________________________

Date/Time of Arrival: __________________________________________________

Flowers   Yes    No

Gift Presentation   Yes ____________________________   No

Person assigned to meet/escort: ____________________________________________

Liaison with security detail required □ Yes   □ No

If yes, contact details: Name of contact ______________________________________
Telephone ______________________________________________________________

Principal Aide Name: _____________________________________________________

Contact _________________________________________________________________

Accompanying □ Yes   □ No

Special event role (e.g., remarks, moderator, introduction) __________________________

Accommodations:   □ Yes    □ No

Details _________________________________________________________________

Special Dietary Requirements _____________________________________________

Amenities   □ Flowers   □ Conference Package   □ Meeting with _________

   □ Wine   □ Briefing

Interview Requested   □ Yes   □ No

Interview Granted   □ Yes    □ No

Date, Time, Place _________________________________________________________

□ No

Additional Comments: _____________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________
FINANCES/PER DIEM

PERSON COMPLETING THIS FORM: _____________________________________________

DATE: ___________________________  FUNDING SOURCE: ____________________

A.    Financial Requirements

Please check the appropriate categories below as needed:

____ Travel (Complete Part B)
____ Per Diem (Complete Part C)
____ Hotel/Conference Venue Deposit
____ Materials/Purchased Services (Complete “Materials/Purchased Services Checklist”)
____ US Costs
____ Tuition, Entry Fees
____ Consultancy Agreement (Specify with Whom Below)

_______________________________________
_______________________________________

____ Other (Specify) _____________________________

B.    Travel (Use other pages as needed or attach Master List)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRAVELLER</th>
<th>MODE/ITINERARY</th>
<th>SOURCE</th>
<th>COST</th>
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</table>
REGISTRATION CHECKLIST

[This is a simple checklist to confirm that all items needed for registration are present and tasks completed.]

BEFORE CONFERENCE WORKSHOP:

____ Alphabetical Participants List Developed
    _____ Adapted as sign-in sheet, or sign-in sheets prepared

____ Name Tags (for VIP and others as required)

____ List of Participant (master list) Receiving Travel/Per Diem
    _____ Individual Vouchers for Signature Prepared

____ Logistics Memo (pick-ups, times of arrival as required)

____ “Policy” Memo Prepared (“Dos and Don’ts”)

____ Site for Registration Form/Process Prepared

____ Packets Prepared
    _____ Transported to site on __________ (date)

____ “Protocol”/VIP Procedures Memo Prepared

____ Signs Prepared (“Alphabetical,” “Registration/Sign-In,” “Finance,” “Special Announcements,” etc.)

____ On-site Registration Team Identified (names below)

________________________________________________________________________
                                                                                   
________________________________________________________________________

____ Hotel Contact ________________________________

____ Hours of Registration __________________________

____ Press release prepared and distributed (attached press list)
    Time for Team at Hotel on Day One: __________

____ Box of “Extras” Assembled (pens, pencils, tape, envelopes, scissors, paper clips, stapler, ruler, etc.)
ON SITE:

____ Table Set-up acceptable
    ____ Sign-in sheets/registration formats in place

____ All packets received
    ____ Registration supplies received
    ____ Financial forms (travel/per diem) received

    If required:
        ____ Separate process/location for financial transactions established
        ____ Appropriate security for case in place
        ____ Expedited VIP procedures in place (see attached VIP check list

____ Team Members Have Name Tags
    ____ Principals
    ____ Focal Persons
    ____ Country Rep/PI Team
    ____ Other VIPs

____ Folders for Completed Forms in Place

____ Room Assignment List Available (if required)

____ Copy(s) of Conference/Workshop Agenda Available

____ Press relations logistics determined

____ Interviews requested

____ Other Tasks Completed (Please Specify)

________________________________
________________________________
________________________________

Person in charge of press relations _____________________________________________

Interviews requested ____________________________________________________________

Granted: if yes, give person, date, time, and place (attach additional sheets as needed)

☐ Yes  ☐ No  ________________________________________________________________

☐ Yes  ☐ No  ________________________________________________________________

☐ Yes  ☐ No  ________________________________________________________________

☐ Yes  ☐ No  ________________________________________________________________

☐ Yes  ☐ No  ________________________________________________________________

☐ Yes  ☐ No  ________________________________________________________________
## CONFERENCE MATERIALS/PURCHASED SERVICES

### PERSON PREPARING CHECKLIST: __________________________

**A. Basic Workshop Supplies**

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<th>ITEM</th>
<th># NEEDED</th>
<th>SOURCE</th>
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<td>Date Delivered: ___________</td>
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Funds Available/Source: ___________________________________________

LPO Needed? ____ Yes  ____ No
PER DIEM (Use other pages as needed or attach master list)

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Annex D
Business Plan Outline
Annex D: Outline of a Business Plan

Many organizations decide to prepare a business plan - either to promote a new service or product or to commence operations of a “for profit” arm - to subsidize less profitable activities that are consistent with the organizational mission. A business plan is generally for external use only; that is, a business plan is written to interest potential investors or donors. Those preparing business plans should also seek legal advice to determine legal requirements applying to, or limiting, options for NGOs conducting business.

Therefore, it is important that managers, or the team preparing the plan, take an extremely business-like approach. A key question should be: “If I were using my own personal resources, would this plan persuade me to invest in this proposition?” Often, elements of the business plan correspond with those of marketing or sustainability plans. In any case, you should thoroughly investigate whether there is an interest in, or market for, your services or products. You should also determine, before embarking on developing a business plan, whether the costs of moving forward outweigh the likely benefits or profits.

The following is an outline of a comprehensive business plan. Some sections may be irrelevant to the business you are proposing and can be eliminated, but you must describe the products and services, explain your pricing structure, show that there is an available market, and how the organization will finance the business proposition.

Remember...Always begin with a cover letter that clearly and succinctly introduces the organization, the business plan, and its advantages.

1. **A non-disclosure statement.** This requests an agreement from the reader not to disclose the plan’s contents with outside parties.

2. **Title page.**

3. **Table of contents.**

4. **Executive summary** (Very important for busy readers who may not read further unless the summary stimulates their interest).

5. **Organizational direction** (Outlines the organization’s mission, vision, and strategic directions).

6. **Organizational overview** (Structure, current stage of development, track record, funding sources, qualifications for undertaking proposed business, key personnel, etc.).
7. **Products and services.** In this section outline:
   - Detailed description of the products/services to be offered
   - Rationale for selecting these products/services (E.g., determined a need in the community for which there is limited or no sources, technical expertise of organization, unique or marketable product, determination of the organization to become more sustainable, comparative advantages, etc.).
   - How the products/services will be developed or made.
   - Pricing and delivery (How were prices set? what was the organization's pricing strategy? was the organization able to come up with cost savings to make the costs more competitive? can the organization demonstrate production efficiencies? common determinants of price include: price being charged by the competition, the organization's costs, prices of comparable products and services, value added, etc.).
   - Delivery mechanisms (After demonstrating capacity and efficiency in production, need to state clearly how the product or services will be shipped, packaged for safety, given warranty, and maintained; with services, answer questions regarding how they will be advertised, with what frequency, by whom, where they will be offered, and how they will be validated or certified (if relevant).

8. **Market Analysis** (Educating the potential investor that your organization understands the market and its competition, has appropriately targeted the customers, consumers, or clients, and is keenly aware of the risks involved). In this section:
   - Define and clearly describe or characterize the market, explaining how you selected it and providing data to support the organization's decision.
   - Outline targeted market segments (e.g., age, geographic location, gender, income, profession, family status, preferences, benefits sought), strengths and weaknesses (both of the market and of your organization), and unexploited opportunities.
   - Review any critical research about the proposed market.
   - Analyze the potential customers and the competition.
   - Detail your organization's competitive advantage.
9. **Marketing Plan.** In this section, describe:
   ♦ How you will create awareness, interest and demand.
   ♦ Selling methodologies (e.g., selling to everyone, selling to differentiated groups, selling to concentrated groups) and why the organization chose its proposed methodology.
   ♦ Distribution channels. Will you market directly to the customer or will you establish specific sites where the products or services can be acquired (e.g., in-house sales teams, indirect sales such as distributors or retail outlets)?
   ♦ Advertising (how you will use the media, what are your key messages?).
   ♦ Promotion (that is, short-term programs or events used to stimulate or increase demand including give-aways, support of events, contests, premiums, etc.).
   ♦ Public relations (e.g., press relations, media events and coverage, newsletters, endorsements, etc.).

10. **Financial Plan**
   ♦ Current financial picture of the organization.
   ♦Projected profitability (projected income and expenditure or profit and loss statements over a period of years) of the proposed venture.
   ♦ Budget for business proposition (resources required by category and timeline).
   ♦ Estimated "break even" point.

11. **Supporting documentation from the organization such as product brochures, Annual Reports, audited financial statements, endorsement letters, short graphic presentations about the market and the need for the product/service, etc.**
Annex E
Financial Sustainability Plan Worksheets
## ANNEX E:

### Internal Audit Sheet

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**Total Personnel Costs (list title and %FTE)***

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**Total Program Costs***

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- Equipment
- Supplies
- Printing
- Media/Publicity
- Phone/fax
- Postage
- Miscellaneous
- Rent/housing
- Utilities
- Amount paid on debt

**Total of all expenses**

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All worksheets courtesy of *The Community Tool Box* op. Cit.

- For personnel costs, include salary and the cost of fringe benefits. FTE = full time employment.
- ** Remember to take personnel costs out of program costs, as they are listed separately.
TIMELINE WORKSHEET

For each financial goal, use a separate cell to write out the action steps that need to occur, who will do them, and by when. This chart can then be used as a reminder.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Action steps to meet the objective</th>
<th>By whom</th>
<th>By when</th>
<th>Mark when completed</th>
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SUSTAINABILITY PLANNING CHECKLIST

Innovation Network, Inc. (http://www/inetwork.org/) is a 501©(3) nonprofit organization founded in 1993 to meet the critical information and evaluation needs of nonprofit and public organizations. InnoNet’s mission is to help agencies better plan, executive and evaluate their structures, organizations, and services. Their web page will walk you through an interactive page to help you develop a strategic funding plan. The service is free, but you will need to register.

Checklist

Here, you’ll find a checklist summarizing major points

_____ You understand that a plan for financial sustainability is a tool used to help the organization or initiative and its goals thrive over the long term.

_____ You understand the advantages of a plan for financial sustainability:

- Financial security
- An increased focus on your real work
- Becoming more competitive in your field
- Easier transitions
- Following guidelines

_____ You understand that such a plan should be developed early and revised often. Planning for financial sustainability:

_____ You have decided who will develop the plan.

_____ You have let everyone know what you are doing.

_____ You have conducted an internal audit.

_____ You have determined how much money you need.
You have decided how much money you want.

You have compared how much money you have, need, and want.

You have set objectives.

You have considered the available possibilities.

You have decided which funding possibilities you will follow up on.

You have strategized how to get what you want.