Training of HIV/AIDS Committees at Local Government Authorities

PROPOSAL WRITING AND ASSESSMENT
Cover Picture:
Stakeholders reviewing different proposals.
PROPOSAL WRITING AND ASSESSMENT

Overall Objective

To update the CMACs and WACs with knowledge and skills in proposal writing and assessment

Specific Objectives

At the end of the module, the participants should be able to:
► Identify the key components of a good proposal
► Formulate problems pertaining to HIV/AIDS for which resources need to be committed to assess and make decisions on good proposals
► Facilitate the preparation of realistic budget proposals

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<th>Minutes</th>
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Training Methodology

► Short lectures and discussion
► Discussion groups

Training Materials

► Overhead Projector
► Transparencies
► Flip charts (or chalkboard)
► Masking tape or cello-tape
► Marker pens (or chalk)
► Pieces of paper
► Handout of a proposal as example

Assessment

Questions and result of the group work
**Topic 1**

**Title, Table of Contents, Executive Summary, Terms of Reference and Appendices**

**Time frame:** 30 minutes

**Topic Objectives**

At the end of the topic participants should be able to:

- Describe title and table of contents
- Describe an executive summary and appendices and where they appear in a report
- Describe terms of reference of a proposal and how to interpret them

**Content**

- Title
- Table of contents
- Executive summary and its contents
- Appendices and its importance
- Terms of Reference and its interpretation

**Specific Activities**

1. Introduce the topic  
   **5 min.**  
   
2. Give a lecture on different chapters of a proposal namely on the meaning of a proposal,  
   - the Terms of Reference (TORs)  
   - the title  
   - the table of contents  
   - the executive summary  
   - the appendices  
   **25 min.**

3. Allow participants to ask questions and respond to them accordingly  
   **25 min.**
**FN 1  Introduction**

Before writing a proposal one should have a problem that needs to be solved in a particular area or locality. One of the roles of CMACs will be to assist Wards AIDS Committees (WACs), Village AIDS Committees (VACs), CBOs, FBOs and NGOs to write project proposals for HIV/AIDS interventions in their localities. Likewise, CMACs will also be required to assess proposals submitted to them from various organizations. It is imperative therefore that the CMACs be equipped with the basics of proposal writing so that they can be able to assist their subordinate bodies to write good proposals and at the same time CMACs members build their own capacity to assess and decide on the suitability of various proposals submitted to them. This module therefore introduces and gives basic concepts and techniques on proposal writing.

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**FN 2  Meaning of a proposal**

A proposal is a plan or an outline of what the project applicant intends to do, how to do it, and the purpose and significance of doing it. Sometimes before writing a full project proposal one may first be required to show an “Expression of Interest.” A proposal may require the applicant to do research or undertake some interventional activities.
Two types of proposals can be distinguished:

1. Self generated proposals whereby one designs a project proposal and submits it to relevant funding agencies for approval and funding respectively.

2. Response Proposal: When proposal is invited from the public or specific group e.g. NGOs, FBOs, academic institutions etc. Sometimes, the format and Terms of Reference (TORs) of the project proposal may be given by the client.

**FN 3 Terms of Reference (TORs)**

In all technical proposals the client usually stipulates the terms of reference to be adhered to by the applicant in developing a proposal. The terms of reference are the guidelines, which the project applicant is required to follow when writing the proposal so that he/she can achieve the objectives of the project. It is important that the project applicant interprets clearly the terms of reference before writing the full proposal. Failure to interpret the terms of reference will lead to writing a bad/wrong proposal. [A case study will be provided to participants].

**FN 4 Title**

The title of a project proposal usually appears on the cover page. The title is usually a clear heading of the area of interest or a problem to be solved by the project applicant so that appropriate interventions can be instituted. The title of the proposal should be short, clear and unambiguous. The following are examples of possible titles of project proposals:
Example: 1

PROJECT PROPOSAL
The prevalence and Impact of Corruption on Health Services in Tanzania: A Case of Selected Municipalities

Example: 2

PROJECT PROPOSAL
Assessment on Sustainability of Community Based NGOs Supported Projects: A Case of Magu District Council

Example: 3

PROJECT PROPOSAL
Capacity Building in a Multisectoral Response against HIV/AIDS involving different sectors in Tanzania

Example: 4

PROJECT PROPOSAL
Instituting Community Response to the HIV/AIDS Epidemic Using Theatre Arts: A Case of selected District Councils
**FN 5  Table of Contents**

The table of contents shows all the items indicated in the project proposal and the page numbers on which they appear. The following is an example of the table of contents:

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<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
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<td>Introduction</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>Statement of the Problem</td>
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<td>3.0</td>
<td>Objective of the Study/Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Significance of the Study/Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Specific objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etc</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*It is important that the structure of headings and subheadings is self-explanatory. Give subheadings only if you have a minimum of two different points, e.g. 2.1. and 2.2.*

**FN 6  Executive Summary**

An executive summary provides a summary of the entire project proposal. An executive summary will explain the essential components of the project proposal in brief. The summary includes the problem to be investigated and its justification, project area, strategies, methods to be used and a summary of the major expected outcome of the project. The Executive Summary is a very important part of the proposal. It is the only part that will be read by those who want a quick overview. It is the last part of the proposal to be written.
The Executive Summary is the most important part of the Proposal.

**FN 7 Appendices**

Appendices are normally attached at the end of the project proposal and include all the relevant materials that may assist the reviewer or client to get background information. It may include the list of participants CVs of all who were involved in the preparation of the proposal or who will be involved in the project or study implementation. Include a capability statement of the respective institution or any other materials, which may help the client to arrive at a decision.
Topic 2

Statement of the Problem, Goals and Objectives, and Strategies

Time frame: 85 minutes

Topic Objectives

At the end of the topic participants should be able to:
• Explain the essence and contents of the statement of the problem
• Explain goals and objectives, and how they are formulated
• Explain project implementation strategies and their types

Content

• Essence and contents of the statement of the problem
• Goals and objectives, and their formulation
• Project implementation, strategies and their types

Specific Activities

1. Divide participants in 4 groups: Assign one group to discuss and describe the essence and contents of “statement of the problem” and to come up with a definition and also an example

2. Assign two groups to describe and discuss “goals and objectives” Ask them to give examples.

3. Assign another group to describe and discuss “implementation strategies”

4. Group work 20 minutes. Allow each group to present for five minutes and discussion for each presentation 5 minutes 65 min.

5. After presentations and comments on the first group, summarise the discussions and present the model answer 10 min.

6. After presentations and comments on the second and third group summarise the discussions and present the model answer 10 min.
**FN 1 Statement of the Problem**

The statement of the problem involves a presentation of known and suspected facts, and an explanation of the existing information, which may have some bearing on the problem. Here we justify the need for the project or the proposed initiative. This is normally divided into two sections. Section one should contain the problem including its background. Here you should write a comprehensive problem statement or the need to be addressed by the proposed project or initiative. The problem should describe the following:

- Extent, scope or severity of the problem
- Analysis of the cause of the problem
- Effects of the problem

The statement of the problem should be short and concise and refer to a defined geographical area and/or to a well-defined population.

**FN 2 Goals and Objectives**

**Goal**

An overall goal describes the long-term changes, which are expected to be achieved as a result of a project. Thus a goal describes the proposed long-range benefits accruing to the target population.

For example, the Kinondoni Municipal Council Project proposal for the Improvement of HIV/AIDS/STI Prevention, Care, Support and Impact Mitigation programs of January 2003 has the following project goal was:

“To reduce the prevalence of HIV/AIDS/STIs by carrying out prevention, education, mitigation, care and support programs in the Municipality”.

**Objective**

For any goal that you develop, there should be several SMART objectives. The objectives are related to the problem statement and they describe anticipated results that represent for example changes in knowledge, attitudes and or behaviour/practice of the beneficiaries.

**SMART objectives are:**

- **Specific**: succinct to avoid differing interpretations
- **Measurable**: to allow for monitoring and evaluation
- **Achievable**: to the problem, goals and strategies
- **Realistic**: achievable, challenging, and meaningful
- **Time bound**: with specific time period for achieving them
FN 3 Strategies/Methodologies

Strategies are the approaches that will be used in the implementation of the planned activities so that the desired goal(s) can be achieved. The strategies should clearly indicate the methodology or approaches that will be used. For example, the Kinondoni Municipal Council Project proposal mentioned earlier, adopted the Multisectoral approach of combating HIV/AIDS/STIs formulated by the National AIDS Control Program (NACP) during its Medium Term Plan III (MTP-III) of 1998-2002. Through this approach the Municipality expected to achieve the following in the area of care and support:

- Improved access and quality medical care for PLHA.
- Improved and increased home based care services for PLHA.
- Improved management of opportunistic infections and STIs.
- Accessibility to ARVs for PLHA.
- Improved orphan care and support in the Municipality.

The multisectoral planning was the method that had been opted for by the Kinondoni Municipal Council involving different actors/sectors in planning for HIV/AIDS and STIs interventions in the Municipality. This involved the local leaders such as WEOs, Councillors, mitaa, village leaders (influential leaders), NGOs, CBOs, and faith-based groups in the participatory planning that was conducted in the Municipality.

Selecting different approaches involving others in the implementation.
**Topic 3**

**Implementation Plan, Monitoring and Evaluation, and Timeframe**

**Time frame:** 105 minutes

**Topic Objectives**

At the end of the topic participants should be able to:
- Explain the project implementation plan / plan of action
- Essence of monitoring and evaluation in a project proposal
- Explain mechanisms and forms of monitoring and evaluation of a project proposal
- Show/determine monitoring and evaluation schedule
- Explain the importance of timeframe in the context of project proposal

**Content**

- Implementation plan/plan of action
- Important aspects of an implementation plan (e.g. activities, responsible persons, place, time and duration; resources required; output indicators and means of verification)
- Meaning of monitoring and evaluation
- Importance of monitoring and evaluation
- Tools and forms of monitoring and evaluation (emphasis: participatory monitoring, internal versus external monitoring and evaluation)
- Monitoring and evaluation periods (emphasis: on-going and end)
- Timeframe in the context of project proposal

**Specific Activities**

1. Divide the participants into 4 groups
2. Two groups to discuss: What is an implementation plan and its various aspects? 15 min.
3. Two other groups to discuss: What is monitoring and evaluation? How, why, and When to monitor and evaluate? Group work 20 minutes. Allow each group to present for 5 minutes and discussion for each presentation 5 minutes 60 min.
4. After presentations and comments on the first two groups, summarise the discussions and present the model answer 15 min. FN 1
5. After presentation and comment on the last two presentations, summarise the discussions and present the model answer 15 min. FN 2-3
FN 1 Implementation Plan

A good project proposal should have an implementation plan. An implementation plan indicates the approach and strategies that will be used in the implementation of all the activities of the project. If the implementation of the planned activities will be multisectoral as is the case with CMACs, then all the sectors that will be involved and their roles should clearly be spelt out. The coordinators of the project should be known and their roles should be indicated. All the resources required and their sources should also be identified. For example, the Kinondoni Municipal Council project proposal for the improvement of HIV/AIDS/STIs preventive care, support and impact mitigation program, indicated that the approach will be multisectoral. The proposal was developed through involvement of people from different sectors in the Municipality, namely, education, planning, community development, health, culture and youth development.

Conducting an evaluation to follow up the implementation of a program at district level.
**FN 2 Monitoring and Evaluation**

Before the implementation of a project starts, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should be instituted. The essence of monitoring and evaluation is to ensure that the planned activities are implemented properly in accordance with the timeframe, budget and to the quality needed. During the monitoring and evaluation process bottlenecks that impinge on the smooth implementation of the activities can be identified and solutions sought to remove them. Certain projects have an inbuilt monitoring and evaluation program and indicate clearly when and who should monitor and evaluate. The monitoring and evaluation processes should also ensure that the purpose and expected outputs of the project are being achieved using the tools that have been developed to monitor and evaluate the program activities.

- These records are useless for monitoring and evaluation.

For a discussion of monitoring and evaluation and the tools used, please refer to the Monitoring and Evaluation module.
**FN 3 Timeframe**

The timeframe indicates the duration that it will take to implement the project and each activity. However, each activity planned will also have its own timeframe, that is, the time it will take to implement that planned activity. The timeframe is usually indicated in weeks or months or trimesters.

In certain cases projects may be implemented in phases. In such circumstances the phases should be indicated in the project proposal with the timeframe for each phase.

It should be emphasized that failure to implement the project according to the timeframe may lead to devastating effects. For example, suspension of funding by donor, overlapping of the project with other activities in the community, e.g. drawing on the same human resources.
Topic 4

Proposed Budget and its Justification

Timeframe: 30 minutes

Topic Objectives

At the end of the topic participants should be able to:

- Explain the importance of having a justifiable/realistic budget proposal
- Explain request (funds) procedures in a budget: (type, amount and how to use)
- List possible internal and external sources of resources. (funds)

Content

- Budget proposal
- Budget justification / realistic budget
- Resources (funds) requested in a budget: type, amount and how to use
- Internal and external sources of resources (funds)

Specific Activities

1. Give a short lecture on a budget proposal and what are and why do we need a justifiable/realistic budget.  
   Dak. 10  
   FN 1

2. Allow questions and discuss
   Summarize all Elements of a good proposal  
   Dak. 20  
   FN 2
FN 1 Proposed budget and its justification

A budget proposal is an outline, which shows the amount of money that will be used to implement the various activities of the project. In most cases the planned activities of the project require funds for their implementation. Therefore, the project proposal should contain the breakdown of the budget required to implement each activity. In other words, the proposed budget should be itemised clearly for each activity. In addition to each item of expenditure in the proposed budget being justified, the unit cost of each item should be shown. Some of the items of the proposed budget could be allowance for trainers, allowance for participants, logistic support and the cost for the venue. (An extract of the proposed budget to be given to participants)

It should be emphasized that fund/money is one of the resource requirement for the implementation of the planned activities of the project. Other resources required include human resources, infrastructure and information. For a detailed discussion on this refer to the module on Resource Management.

Discussion about a budget proposal.
Summary
This module has discussed proposal writing and assessment. From the discussion we conclude that a good project proposal should have the following components in a logical sequence:

1. **Title of the project proposal** and the area where the project will be implemented e.g. Kinondoni Municipality.
2. **Table of contents** which shows all the items indicated in the project proposal and the page numbers on which they appear.
3. **Executive Summary**, which explains the essential components of the project proposal in detail.
4. **Terms of Reference (TORs)** or the statement of the problem depending on the type of the project proposal.
5. **Goals and objectives** of the project proposal.
6. **Strategies/methodologies** that will be used in executing the project.
7. **Implementation plan**, which is simply an action plan for executing the project.
8. **Monitoring and evaluation** mechanism of the project in accordance with the implementation plan.
9. **Timeframe** indicating the duration of the project e.g. five years (from 2003 – 2007).
10. If the project proposal is self generated then the **dissemination of information** pertaining to the outcome of the implementation process should be included. If it is a response proposal then, the stakeholders should be informed, and they should be part and parcel of the project.
11. **Proposed Budget and its justification.** The budget should be itemized for each activity of the project and a justification of the same should be done.
12. **Appendices:** This should be the last item of the project proposal. It is normally attached at the end of a project proposal in order to provide extra information about the applicant(s).

The CMACs should assess a project proposal on the basis of all the components listed above. A good proposal should therefore contain all the items discussed in this module. It is important to remember that apart from logical sequencing of the items above, the client should consider relevancy and suitability of the project in the context of the community response towards HIV/AIDS.
Notes