SMALL GRANTS GUIDE

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USAID Climate Ready

The USAID Climate Ready Project works with 11 Pacific Island countries to achieve their climate change adaptation goals and become more climate resilient to better protect the lives and livelihoods of their citizens. The project supports: (1) strengthening and mainstreaming climate change adaptation policies and laws; (2) enabling access to multilateral and bilateral climate change funds; and (3) strengthening implementation of climate change adaptation projects. USAID Climate Ready is implemented by DT Global, a U.S.-based institutional contractor.

Pacific Islands Development Program

Since 1980 the Pacific Islands Development Program (PIDP) has served the nations and peoples of the Pacific through innovative capacity building, interchange among regional leaders, and policy-relevant research on priority issues. Housed in the East-West Center in Honolulu, Hawaii, PIDP is a founding member of the Council of Regional Organizations of the Pacific (CROP), and is the Secretariat of the Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders (PICL), a regional council of 20 member governments. PICL members help us to channel our capabilities and leverage the resources of PIDP and the East-West Center to advance the collective ambition of Pacific peoples.

East-West Center

The East-West Center promotes better relations and understanding among the people and nations of the United States, Asia, and the Pacific through cooperative study, research, and dialogue. Established by the U.S. Congress in 1960, the Center serves as a resource for information and analysis on critical issues of common concern, bringing people together to exchange views, build expertise, and develop policy options.

Recommended citation

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THE IDEA FOR THIS GUIDEBOOK emerged from USAID Climate Ready's work to help community-based organizations in the Federated States of Micronesia prepare proposals for climate change adaptation projects in order to seek funding from a small grants facility managed by the Micronesia Conservation Trust and funded by the Adaptation Fund. The Pacific Islands Development Program at the East-West Center funded the production and publication of the guidebook.

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—**Keith Bettinger, Ph.D.** Consultant, USAID Climate Ready Project, Adjunct Research Fellow, East-West Center

ABBREVIATIONS AND SPECIAL TERMS

Adaptation Fund	An international fund that finances projects and programs aimed at helping developing countries to adapt to the harmful effects of climate change. Set up under the Kyoto Protocol of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.
Baseline	Describes what conditions were like before the project. Provides a point of reference for determine whether the project is successful in achieving its activities, outputs, outcomes, and objectives
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
Climate rationale	An understanding of the physical processes associated with a changing climate (e.g., sea level rise, increasing temperatures, changing rainfall patterns) and how these physical processes affect human systems and activities. The climate rationale is a critical supporting part of a climate change adaptation project proposal. It demonstrates that the problem being addressed is primarily a climate change problem and not a development problem.
Core problem	The main problem that the project seeks to address
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, based in Canberra, Australia.
Deliverables	The tangible/observable things that a project will produce as a result of its activities (e.g., analyses, workshop reports, training curricula, farmers' cooperative organization).
Disaggregated indicators and targets	Measures that show how many individuals in specific subgroups, such as men and women, participated in an activity or benefited from an outcome. "Disaggregated data" refers to data that have been broken down into categories to provide detailed information.
DRR/DRM	Disaster Risk Reduction/Disaster Risk Management
ESS	Environmental and Social Safeguards
Evaluation	The broad, systematic, and periodic assessment of a project to determine the effectiveness of the project and the overall approach. Generally conducted after the project has been completed, although sometimes there is also a mid-term evaluation.
Exclusion list	An indicative list of project types that the funder will not support.
GCF	Green Climate Fund. Established within the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to assist developing countries in adaptation and mitigation practices to counter climate change. Largest dedicated funder of climate change projects in the world.
GEDSI	Gender Equity, Disability, and Social Inclusion

GEF	Global Environment Facility. Unites countries with international institutions, civil-society organizations, and the private sector to address global environmental issues and support national sustainable development initiatives. Supports community-based projects through its Small Grants Programme.
Impact chain analysis	An analytical tool frequently used to map out the relationship between the physical processes of climate change and the impacts of these processes on society.
Indicators	How you know a change is happening as a result of something in the project (activities, outputs, outcomes). **Quantitative** indicators are generally based on numbers or clearly defined values and are used to answer the questions *what, how many,* and *when*. **Qualitative** indicators are used for things that are difficult to attach a number value to and often consist of stories and descriptions. Qualitative indicators answer the questions *why* and *how*.
Indirect drivers	The indirect causes of a problem, in many cases linked to the leverage points where the problem can be addressed.
JNAP	Joint National Action Plan for climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction. A common planning instrument found throughout Pacific Island countries.
LEAP	Local Early Action Plan. A common planning instrument used in several Pacific Island countries.
Learning	The steps the project management team takes to ensure that the lessons from a project, both good and bad, are used to improve standard operating procedures, decision-making processes, and the behavior of individuals, communities, and organizations/agencies.
Leverage points or control knobs	The elements of a problem that can potentially be changed; the potential entry points for a project; the parts of the problem where the project may be able to make a difference.
Logical framework or logframe	Lays out the activities, outputs, and outcomes of a project, describing specifically what the project is going to do. May be referred to as a "results framework" or a "design and monitoring framework." Also described as a "matrix." Some organizations use the term "theory of change" to refer to the logical framework, but this is somewhat misleading.
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
Mainstreaming	Incorporating GEDSI, climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction, and/or other considerations into every step of strategy and project design. Mainstreaming can be thought of as full integration of the project concept into the planning and implementation processes.
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MER	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting

MERL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting, and Learning
Monitoring	The collection and analysis of data and information concerning the project's progress. The project management team conducts monitoring throughout the project's implementation.
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MoV	Means of Verification. The data source, methodology, tool, or instrument used to measure the value of an indicator
NAPA	National Adaptation Programme of Action
NDC	Nationally Determined Contributions to the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PIC	Pacific Island Country
Pilot project	A demonstration or trial project designed to show the benefits of a particular approach.
Project activities	The things that a project does; the specific tasks that produce the project outputs (e.g. workshops, trainings, construction, analyses).
Project impacts	The medium- to long-term contribution that a project will make to the broader aspects of the community (e.g., livelihoods, resilience, adaptive capacity, well-being). Impacts are generally outside the complete control of a project. The project contributes to impacts but cannot cause the impacts to occur by itself.
Project inputs	The resources, such as money, equipment, or expertise, that are required to implement the activities and produce the outputs of a project.
Project objective	The overall goal of a project; what the project intends to achieve.
Project outcomes	What a project intends to accomplish by the end of the implementation period.
Project outputs	The goods and services that a project creates to achieve its outcome(s). These may include facilities, assets, skills, abilities, methodologies, and other "things" that facilitate positive change.
Problem mapping	The process of exploring and describing in detail the causes and effects of the core problem.
Problem tree/ objective tree (Problem tree/ solution tree)	A common tool/technique for mapping problems and informing the design of project theories of change and logical frameworks.
PWD	Persons with Disabilities

Reporting	The responsibility of a project management team to provide periodic formal updates to the project's funder.
Risk management	A systematic process of identifying, analyzing, and responding to two types of project risk: 1. Risks to the project: Uncertain events or conditions that, if they occur, would have a negative effect on the project's ability to achieve its objectives. 2. Risks caused by the project: Ways that the project could negatively impact the people and place where the project is being implemented.
Risk register	Systematic listing of the possible risks that could affect a project, including an assessment of the likelihood and impact of each risk on a scale from low to high.
Risk statement	A statement for each identified risk that includes three elements: cause, event, and impact.
Safeguards	Policies designed to ensure that funded projects have minimal negative impact on ecosystems, people (including indigenous people, women, PWDs, migrants, minorities, and children), cultural resources, and so forth.
Screenings	Tools used to review project ideas and concepts to determine what, if any, measures need to be taken to address any potentially negative impacts.
S.M.A.R.T	Characteristics of a good project indicator: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound.
SPREP	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, based in Apia, Samoa.
Template (proposal template, grant application template)	Blank application form that needs to be filled out with a project proposal.
Theory of change	A narrative and diagrammatic description of the "change" a project seeks to implement, beginning with the problem state and progressing through to the solution state.
UN	United Nations
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
With and without project scenario	A description of what the future would probably look like if the project *is* implemented compared to what the future would probably look like if the project *is not* implemented.

CHAPTER 1:
INTRODUCTION

THE STORY OF THE PACIFIC is one of adaptation. For thousands of years the people of the Islands have been adapting to new environmental conditions and thriving, managing their environments sustainably, and developing community-rooted systems for overcoming the periodic hard times stemming from typhoons and severe storms, droughts, and other environmental challenges. Now the environmental conditions that nurture and sustain Pacific peoples are shifting as a result of global warming and climate change

While local communities are not responsible for these changes, they must find ways to adapt to them. In this context, community cohesiveness and social capital are important assets. People of the Pacific understand the challenges they face as a result of these changing conditions and are adept at harnessing local wisdom to overcome them.

In some cases, external assistance is needed to empower and enable communities in the struggle against climate change. Fortunately, there are a number of small grants programs that provide financial support to communities to implement projects that enhance resilience and improve adaptive capacity. Unfortunately, the need for these resources far outweighs the support that is available, and so grants tend to be competitive. However, well-designed adaptation projects that draw upon the strengths of communities have a good chance of finding support.

The need for a small grants guide

The inspiration for this guidebook comes from the experiences of many different stakeholders in developing small grants project proposals in the Pacific region. Although there are many opportunities for financing available, until now there has been little if any guidance on how to develop a good project proposal. Funders seem to assume that community organizations know how to develop good projects that are consistent with the funders' expectations, but the truth is that most people find the idea of developing a project proposal intimidating. This is because no one is ever really taught *how* to develop a project proposal; in most cases it is a case of learn-by-experience.

Many organizations that have been successful in securing external financing for projects find that developing successful proposals becomes easier over time. But what about organizations and community groups that have little experience in developing projects? For them

The Project Cycle

there is a steep learning curve, and until now, few accessible, user-friendly resources have been available. Developing project proposals is a unique skill set. It is a technical process that requires research and a careful structuring of data and information to support a specific set of activities that will make a positive change in the community. However, as difficult as designing a project might seem to you, the truth is that you probably already have most of the information and know-how that you need to develop a successful project proposal. The trick is to put together this information and know-how in a way that demonstrates to a funding organization that your plan for promoting positive change in your community is practical and worth their investment.

This guide is designed to guide you through the process of compiling your information and know-how into a successful small grants proposal. Although this guide focuses primarily on climate change adaptation projects, much of it is applicable to other types of projects as well. The key difference between climate change adaptation projects and regular development projects is that adaptation projects focus on problems that are primarily driven by climate change, whereas other projects focus more on traditional development or conservation issues.

How to use the guide

Each of the guide's chapters focuses on one aspect of developing a proposal. For the most part you can use the chapters sequentially, as indicated in the figure below. The exception is Chapter 4, which covers gender equity, disability, and social inclusion (GEDSI) considerations. GEDSI considerations should be part of the foundation supporting your project, and so these considerations need to be *mainstreamed* through every step of developing your proposal from the very beginning when you are first considering the problem you want to address with your project. Throughout the guidebook, you will see example questions and criteria that have been taken from actual small grants applications and evaluation forms. The guidebook is written to help you address these kinds of questions, which are very likely similar to the questions that you will need to address in your own proposal.

Guidebook Navigation

PROJECT IDEA | CLIMATE RATIONALE | LINKAGES TO EXISTING POLICIES & FRAMEWORKS | THEORY OF CHANGE | LOGICAL FRAMEWORK | MONITORING, EVAL., REPORTING & LEARNING | RISK MANAGEMENT

◄ GENDER EQUITY, DISABILITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION (GESDI) CONSIDERATIONS ►

Key tips

We recommend that you read through the entire guide before starting the process of developing your proposal. Before you begin, here are some tips that will help you develop a successful proposal:

- **Read the directions the funder provides** in the request for proposals (RFP) fully and completely, and make notes. In a surprising number of cases, projects are rejected because they do not follow the funder's instructions. This includes the eligibility criteria, the types of projects being funded, and the format of the application.

- **Make sure that your project addresses the evaluation criteria and the goals of the funder.** These are the things the funder considers when "grading" your proposal. In many cases, the evaluation criteria include a scoring system or points. Make sure that your proposal meets all the requirements to earn the maximum number of points possible.

- **Keep your information organized.** Figure out a system that works for you for organizing the background research, data, and information you are using to support your project proposal. Also, make sure that you always keep track of the most up-to-date version of your working proposal, and keep multiple backups in different places. If you are collaborating with others, it is important to control the inputs and make sure that you do not experience "version confusion". Using cloud-based systems (e.g., Google Docs) is a very efficient way to collaborate on documents, but it requires reliable internet connectivity.

- **Plan ahead and give yourself time.** It is a good idea to create time-bound targets for your team and allow plenty of time for proof-reading and revision. If you are requesting support from external organizations or experts, give them plenty of time to review your proposal and provide feedback, and give yourself time to respond meaningfully to their feedback and to incorporate it into your proposal draft. Also make sure that you can easily submit your proposal by the deadline. In most cases, deadlines are not flexible. This is to help ensure that the process is fair to everyone competing for grants. Even if you know the person responsible for tracking the grant proposals, do not expect any special treatment.

- **Plan for the unexpected.** Remember that computer crashes, power outages, internet failures, and other technical problems always seem to happen at the worst time possible, so give yourself plenty of time in case such an event happens. Finish the final draft of your proposal ahead of the deadline.

- **Developing effective project proposals takes a lot of work.** To the extent possible, budget staff time to developing the proposal, and make sure your team can concentrate fully on putting the proposal together and are not distracted by other duties or deadlines.

- **Designing a good project proposal requires multiple perspectives** on the problem you are trying to address. This means that the process of developing the project should be participatory and should include a wide range of stakeholders. It is always a good idea to get "fresh eyes" to go through project proposals even if you think you have everything figured out. An outside reviewer can help point out logical errors, invalid assumptions, and other weaknesses.

- **Include fieldwork and consultations in your design process.** Good projects are not born in an office or conference room.

- **Identify the right problem** before you decide on what the project is going to do.

- **Gather your data and information before you start** filling out the application form.

- **Remember that projects should complement other initiatives** in your community and be consistent with your community's development plans and aspirations.

- **Make sure that figures, legends, tables, and other visual aides are legible** in your final proposal.

- **Remember the real purpose of your project proposal**: to improve the resilience and adaptive capacity in your community, not to secure money. The money you secure with the grant is just a means for achieving this goal. Thus, before preparing your proposal, take some time to reflect on the purpose of applying for the grant. Consider whose lives will be improved and how you can create a positive impact in the community.

This guidebook encourages you to take a deliberative approach to developing your project. This means that the majority of your time should be spent on identifying an appropriate problem to address in your project and then developing a rigorous **evidence-based** explanation of the direct and indirect causes of the problem. This makes designing a project much easier. So in summary, approximately 80% of your time and effort should be spent on research, participatory consultations, testing your assumptions, and validation, and 20% should be spent on designing what the project is actually going to do.

Good luck!

CHAPTER 2:
MAKING THE "CLIMATE CASE" FOR YOUR PROJECT

| PROJECT IDEA | CLIMATE RATIONALE | LINKAGES TO EXISTING POLICIES & FRAMEWORKS | THEORY OF CHANGE | LOGICAL FRAMEWORK | MONITORING, EVAL., REPORTING & LEARNING | RISK MANAGEMENT |

◄ GENDER EQUITY, DISABILITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION (GESDI) CONSIDERATIONS ►

2a. Understanding and establishing the "climate rationale"

SUCCESSFUL CLIMATE CHANGE proposals begin with a solid understanding of the physical processes associated with a changing climate (e.g., sea level rise, increasing temperatures, changing rainfall patterns) and how these physical processes affect human systems and activities. This is sometimes referred to as the **climate rationale**. Having an effective climate rationale is among the most critical elements for successful project design. The climate rationale explains how changes in environmental conditions caused by global warming are making life more difficult for people in some way. This explanation must be supported by good data and information. In this chapter, we will cover the basics of developing a climate rationale for your project proposal.

Building a Climate Rationale

Sea Level Rise   Increasing Temperature   Changing Rain   Etc.
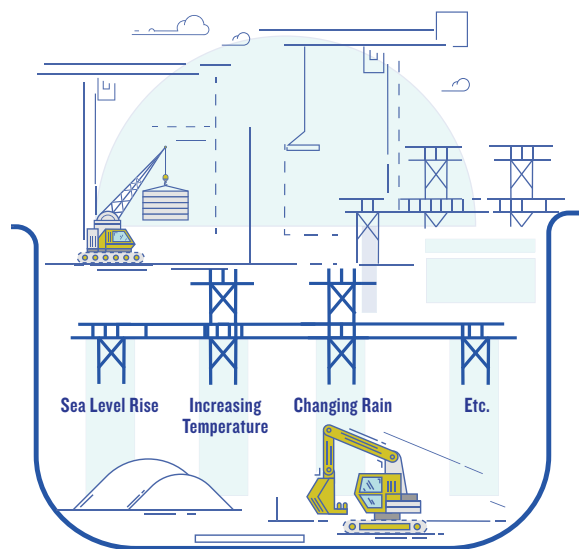
Why is the climate rationale important?

The climate rationale is important because climate funds such as the Adaptation Fund and the Green Climate Fund have been designed specifically to address problems that are caused primarily by climate change rather than those that are driven primarily by human factors, such as mismanagement of resources, poor governance, or other basic economic and social development issues. The reason for this is that these funds have been established under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which obligates developed countries to provide "new and additional" financing to developing countries to address the impacts of climate change.

The "new and additional" clause was included in the UNFCCC to help ensure that developed countries do not divert existing development aid and budgets to climate change. In practical terms, this is meant to ensure that funding for climate change projects does not come at the expense of the funds that are already available to assist developing countries in meeting their general development goals. An evidence-based climate rationale is a critical part of full-sized projects, but small grants programs that are funded by international climate funds also have to apply the same logic to the projects they support.

From a practical perspective, project proposals must demonstrate clearly how they specifically address climate change adaptation needs as opposed to general development needs. In other words, you must make a clear case that climate change has created or worsened the problem. As important as this is, it is also one of the most challenging parts of developing a successful project proposal.

Designing projects to address impacts

In most cases, your project *will not* address the physical processes associated with climate change.[1] For example, imagine that you live in a coastal community that is being affected by sea level rise. You are most likely not going to be able to design a project that stops sea level rise. Instead, you will need to design a project that addresses the **impacts** of sea level rise. These impacts may include coastal erosion, saltwater intrusion into aquifers, damage to crops, and many other negative processes.

However, each of these impacts could also be the result of non-climate drivers, such as resource mismanagement, poor enforcement, or inappropriate agricultural practices (e.g., dredging activities, deforestation of mangrove protective barriers). In the case of our example, if unsustainable land-management practices or other human factors are the main factor driving the coastal erosion or saltwater intrusion we are trying to address, but the proposed activities in the project focus on sea level rise, the proposed project is not likely to have much of an impact. This is because, even after the project is implemented, the human causes are likely to continue.

In other words, this is an example of a project that *tries to solve the wrong problem*. Climate change funds are not likely to approve these types of projects. In addition, if the real driver of the problem is a lack of enforcement of existing laws or issues of political will, the project is not likely to be funded. In these cases, funding agencies will look to government authorities to fulfill their responsibilities as a more cost- effective first step to addressing the problem.

Tips on project selection

Hence part of developing a winning proposal is *project selection*. A good rule of thumb is that you should not start with a problem that you already want to address with a project and then work backwards to a climate change rationale. In other words, you should not invent or concoct a climate change rationale for a project that

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[1] In some cases, a project may address some direct impact of physical processes. For example, a drainage improvement project may be implemented to upgrade infrastructure to protect against more frequent and severe flooding. However, these sorts of projects are much larger than small grants projects.

Map to Project Selection

you have already designed and for which you are seeking funding. Instead, and ideally, you should begin with the physical processes of climate change, determine what impacts these will have on human systems, and then choose your project based on these impacts. This will help you to ensure that your project is indeed rooted in climate change, and you will be able to "screen out" projects that are not primarily addressing climate change problems.

Another good rule of thumb is that if you remove climate change from your problem formulation, and you still have a big problem, then the problem to be addressed is not a climate change problem. Or alternatively, if the problem to be addressed existed in an unmanageable state before climate change impacts became obvious, *then* climate change is clearly not the key driver of the problem.

Sometimes it is difficult to tell if a project is a "climate change project" or a "development project" because development problems such as poor infrastructure, lack of adequate health facilities, or poor agricultural productivity can make existing climate vulnerabilities worse. The key point is to identify problems that have arisen (or have become significantly worse) because of documented or observed changes in climate conditions. For example, infrastructure (e.g., roads) is being damaged because changing environmental conditions are causing more flooding. Or in the case of health facilities, if you can demonstrate that your public health infrastructure is facing difficulties due to more cases of dengue fever or malaria because climate change is expanding mosquito habitats, then you are showing that the primary cause of the problem is climate change.

Of course climate change adaptation projects can and should have development co-benefits, because the ability of individuals, communities, and governments to handle climate change is related to their level of socioeconomic development. However, as noted above, you must show with data and information that the problem is rooted in climate change.
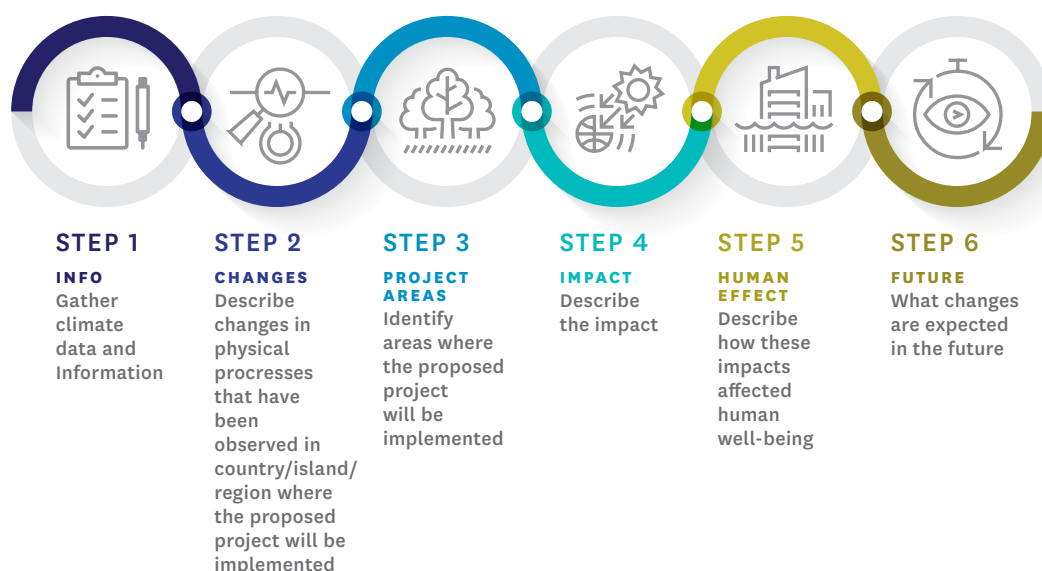
The next section describes some practical steps that you can take to develop your climate rationale and to demonstrate clearly that your proposed project is indeed addressing a climate change problem.

2b. Formulating a climate rationale to inform project design[2]

As noted above, climate change funding opportunities require that proposed projects include a clear **climate rationale**. Example criteria and questions drawn from actual proposal templates include:

- Describe the climate change problem the proposal is expected to address.
- Describe the most likely scenario that would remain or continue in the absence of the proposed interventions.
- Is the climate rationale clearly articulated?

Steps to Project Selection

STEP 1	STEP 2	STEP 3	STEP 4	STEP 5	STEP 6
INFO	**CHANGES**	**PROJECT AREAS**	**IMPACT**	**HUMAN EFFECT**	**FUTURE**
Gather climate data and Information	Describe changes in physical procresses that have been observed in country/island/region where the proposed project will be implemented	Identify areas where the proposed project will be implemented	Describe the impact	Describe how these impacts affected human well-being	What changes are expected in the future

The climate rationale is essentially a story of how climate change is happening locally and how it is affecting local people in negative ways. The steps below should help to guide you in telling your climate rationale story. We have included a simplified, purely fictional, example for illustrative purposes.

Step 1: Describe the changes in physical processes that have been observed in your country/island/region.

The first step is to describe the baseline climate conditions in your area, and how these have been changing in recent years. To the extent possible, describe trends and how "normal" conditions have been changing over

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[2] This section presents a methodology that is appropriate for small grants projects. Another tool that is often used to plot out the climate rationale is **impact chain analysis**, a concept mapping tool that generally begins with the physical processes of climate change and traces them to specific impacts on society. Links to resources describing impact chain analysis are included in the appendix.

time. This often involves a comparison. For example, if you have the appropriate data,[3] you could compare average rainfall from 1950–1980 with average rainfall from 1995–2015 to show that there has been an increase or decrease.

There are a number of sources for this type of data and information. A good starting point is your country's strategies and policies on climate change, which may include one or more of the following documents:

- Joint National Action Plan (JNAP) or Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)/Disaster Risk Management (DRM) plans
- National Communications to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
- National Adaptation Plan
- National Climate Change Strategy/Policy/Action Plan

These documents, which are usually available on the internet, generally describe the physical changes that are taking place and in most cases provide statistical information for things like sea level rise, number of hydro-meteorological disasters, total rainfall, and temperature trends. These documents represent a synthesis of existing knowledge on climate conditions, and most funders recognize them as authoritative sources. Therefore, if you are able to utilize information about changing environmental conditions that is included in these documents, you do not need to go to academic studies for data. **Remember to always cite the references that you use with footnotes or a bibliography.**

The basic example below demonstrates how this information might be applied as part of a climate rationale.

> *Palm Island historically has experienced a monsoon climate with a rainy season and a dry season. Over the past 20 years, however, data from Palm Island's National Weather Service, as well as data and information from regional agencies (e.g., SPREP), indicate a long-term increase in the length of the dry season and a decrease in the average amount of rainfall received during the rainy season. In addition, the same sources indicate the occurrence of more heavy rainfall events during the rainy season.*

Step 2: Identify an area where one or more of these changes has had an impact.

Based on this information, choose an area where these changes in environmental conditions have had an impact on human systems. It is important to choose a location, community, or group of people that the changes have actually affected. Briefly describe the baseline for this location, community, or group. For example:

> *Taro farmers on Palm Island have relied for generations on fairly predictable rainy*

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[3] The general rule of thumb in project design is that you use the best available information. This means that you should use information that already exists. In general for small projects, you will not need to conduct additional climate studies, but you must demonstrate that you have conducted a review to determine what information is the "best available." For some larger projects, new studies might be needed.

season rainfall to water their crops, which provide a large share of their household food consumption. In some cases, especially among women, small amounts of taro are also sold in the local market to earn cash income.

Step 3: Describe the impact that these changes in physical processes have had on the location, community, or group.

The next step is to describe how these changes in environmental conditions have changed conditions in your project area. A good rule of thumb is to look for impacts that were not experienced in the past or for an increase in the frequency of negative events. Remember to use data and information to describe the impacts, if possible. For example:

However, over the past 20 years, decreased rainfall during the rainy season has started to affect taro yields. The Palm Island Taro Growers Association indicates that average harvests have decreased by 12% in the past 10 years. As a result of the extended El Niño-influenced drought in 2013–2014, farmers reported losses of up to 75% of their normal harvest. In addition, the results of a household survey conducted by the Palm Island Women's Union (PIWU), a local NGO, indicate a significant decrease in the amount of taro available to female-headed households for selling in the market.

Step 4: What has been the broader impact of these changes on human systems and well-being?

Next, describe how the changes you described are affecting people. Here again, use data and information to support your story. In some cases it may be appropriate to refer to specific events and personal anecdotes from people affected by the changing conditions. However, if possible, these anecdotes should be used to illustrate more general trends that are being described. For example:

The decline in taro production has meant that households are having to spend more money on imported food to replace the taro they normally produce themselves. The PIWU household survey indicates that in 2019 people are spending 8% more of their household income on food than in previous years. This means that less money is available for other expenditures, including health and school fees. In addition, women have less disposable income, and health issues are starting to emerge due to changing diets and improper nutrition. The Palm Island Health Ministry indicates a sharp increase in non-communicable diseases that are often related to diet, and a study conducted by researchers from the University of Hawai'i suggested that an emerging over-reliance on less nutritious imported rice is contributing to this increase.

Step 5: What changes are expected in the future?

The last step is to describe what changes might happen in the future if action is not taken to address climate impacts and how these predicted changes could affect humans. Future **projections** are useful for this purpose, and they can generally be found in the same documents you used for Step 1. Projections will help you make the case for your project based on how it will help avoid future costs, and will demonstrate the urgency for action. For example:
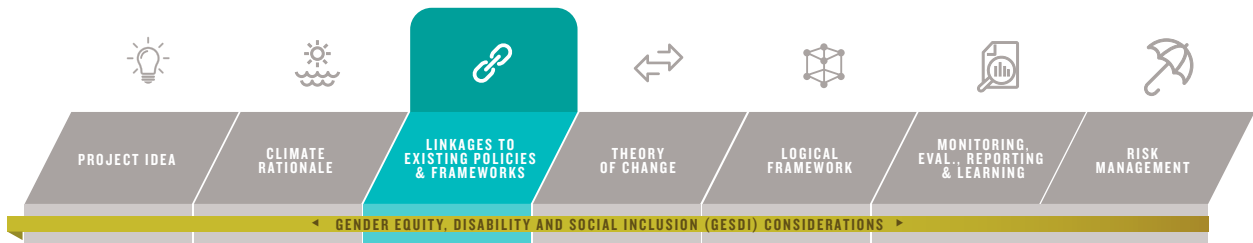
> *Future projections of rainfall and temperature developed by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO) and included in Palm Island's JNAP indicate that by 2030 rainfall could decrease by an additional 15% and that the growing season may decrease by 21 days. These same projections suggest that by 2050 the total decrease in rainfall could be as high as 32% and the growing season could be shortened by 32 days. Based on these projections, it is likely that the island's taro production system will be hit extremely hard in the absence of adaptation action. This is likely to increase strain on households and exacerbate the impacts described above over the medium and long term.*

2c. Conclusion

A well-crafted **climate rationale** sets the stage for your proposal by clearly describing the environmental changes that climate change has caused and their current and future impacts on human systems. The climate rationale feeds directly into the *theory of change* on which your project is based (see Chapter 5). The lack of a good climate rationale is one of the biggest reasons that project proposals are not funded, not just at the small grants level but also projects proposed to large-scale donors such as the Green Climate Fund.

As we see from the steps and the example described above, one of the most important considerations is *project selection*. If you begin your planning process with an understanding of the physical processes associated with climate change, it makes it much easier to identify a problem that climate change has caused. Then, by gathering and using relevant facts, data, information, studies, and case studies, you can craft a compelling *story* of climate change that demonstrates clearly why your project is needed and why the problem you are addressing is a climate change problem, and not a development problem.

CHAPTER 3:
LINKING YOUR PROJECT TO EXISTING POLICIES AND FRAMEWORKS

PROJECT IDEA | CLIMATE RATIONALE | LINKAGES TO EXISTING POLICIES & FRAMEWORKS | THEORY OF CHANGE | LOGICAL FRAMEWORK | MONITORING, EVAL., REPORTING & LEARNING | RISK MANAGEMENT

◄ GENDER EQUITY, DISABILITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION (GESDI) CONSIDERATIONS ►
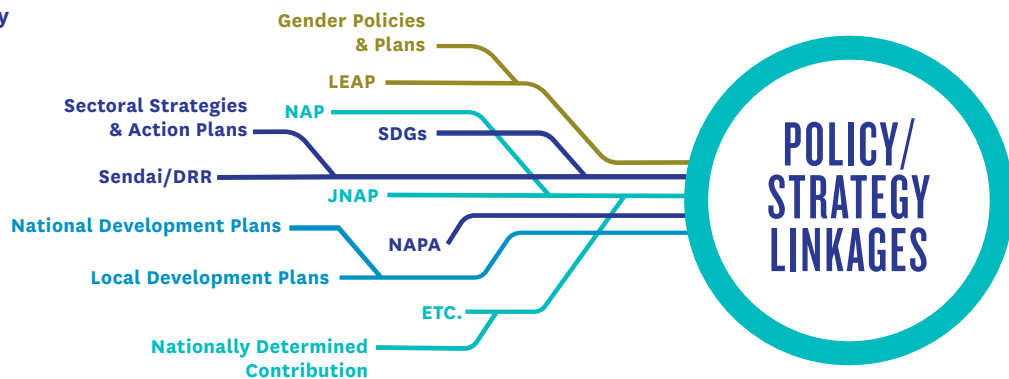
3a. Choosing the right subject for your project

IN CHAPTER 2, we briefly touched on the importance of *project selection* as an early consideration in developing a successful proposal. This chapter continues the discussion of the importance of project selection. This can be thought of as choosing the right subject for your project *before* you begin designing the project.

The key message is that we do not just randomly pick a project out of the sky or fish one from the sea. Rather, all projects (not just climate change adaptation projects) should be part of larger, coordinated efforts to bring about change in our communities and countries.

From a practical perspective, this means that **you must link your project proposal to existing efforts to decrease vulnerability and increase resilience to climate change**. Project proposals generally do this by referring to existing strategies, policies, and priorities that have already been established by the national government, a subnational government (e.g., state, municipality), the local community as described in local planning documents (e.g., Local Early Action Plan, or LEAP), and other relevant stakeholders.

Policy/Strategy Linkages

Gender Policies & Plans
LEAP
Sectoral Strategies & Action Plans
NAP
SDGs
Sendai/DRR
JNAP
National Development Plans
NAPA
Local Development Plans
ETC.
Nationally Determined Contribution

POLICY/ STRATEGY LINKAGES

Creating these linkages will strengthen your project in the following ways:

- **Demonstrate ownership.** This means that the project is a priority of the national government and the local community; these stakeholders "own" the project. This indicates that the project responds to a local need and originates from the people who stand to benefit from (and be affected by) the project, and that the project is not being imposed by an external entity. This is a very important consideration for climate funders. Proposals that do not address the stated needs of the community are not likely to be funded.

- **Demonstrate acceptability.** Another important and related consideration is that the project is acceptable to the people in the target community. This helps to demonstrate that the project will effectively meet the needs of the community. There are many examples of projects that have failed because they have not been consistent with local expectations. Linking your project to the priorities that the target beneficiaries themselves have identified helps to avoid this problem.

- **Demonstrate sustainability.** In the case of projects, the word "sustainable" has a specific meaning: the benefits of the project (the outputs and outcomes, see Chapter 6) will continue after the project is completed. When you design a project, you want to make sure that the target community continues to benefit from the goods or services the project provides even after it is completed. One aspect of sustainability, especially in the case of small grants projects, involves the community taking care of or maintaining whatever the project builds. If your proposal cannot demonstrate this, it is unlikely to be funded. Projects that are consistent with already-identified needs and priorities of the community are generally more likely to be sustainable and hence to receive funding.

- **Demonstrate efficiency.** Reviewing existing policies, plans, strategies, and initiatives helps to ensure that your project will not duplicate the work that other stakeholders are implementing and that your project will complement, build on, and enhance efforts that are already underway.

In the next section we will provide some guidance that will help you ensure that your proposal is consistent with existing policies, strategies, and frameworks.

3b. Finding the "fit" for your project

You will always need to demonstrate how your proposal is aligned with existing frameworks. For reference, here are some questions taken from actual small grant application templates:

- How is the project in line with national, state, or local plans/efforts and desired long-term outcomes?
- How is the project aligned with the identified priorities of the community's management plan?
- Indicate how the proposal aligns with the national priorities of your country as set out in the National Development Plan, the UNFCCC-submitted Nationally Determined Contribution, the National Adaptation Plan, and other relevant strategy documents.
- Describe how ownership of national and subnational stakeholders will be assured.
- Specify whether there are any other related national/regional ongoing or planned initiatives.

The key objective here is to demonstrate that your project reinforces and advances the priorities that your national, subnational, and local governments have already identified, as described in the relevant documents

and action plans. Following the steps laid out below will help to ensure that your project proposal considers each of these elements.

Step 1: Identify linkages to national policies and strategies related to climate change.

As noted, each country has its own strategy and policy context, but most countries in the Pacific have a Joint National Action Plan for Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Management (JNAP) or some similar document that describes the overarching goals and priorities of the country with respect to climate change. For example, the JNAP 2014-18 of the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) describes six priorities:

1. Establish and support an enabling environment for improved disaster risk management/climate change adaptation in the Marshall Islands
2. Public education and awareness of effective climate change adaptation (CCA) and disaster risk management (DRM) from local to national level
3. Enhanced emergency preparedness and response at all levels within the Marshall Islands
4. Improved energy security, working towards a low carbon future for the Marshall Islands
5. Enhanced local livelihoods and community resilience for all Marshall Islands people
6. Integrated approach to development planning including consideration of climate change and disaster risks

Most of these priorities are fairly broad, and so it is not difficult to ensure that project proposals are aligned with at least one of the priorities.[1] For example, any sort of capacity development (conducting workshops or training sessions, developing curricula) would be aligned with the second priority. Any project elements aimed at improving planning would be aligned with the sixth priority. The fifth priority would apply to any projects aimed at reducing disaster risk, improving food security, increasing agricultural productivity and livelihoods, and so forth. In most cases, it will be sufficient for you to reference the policy, the priority(ies), and the way in which your project is aligned. For example:

> This project is aligned with Palm Island's Joint National Action Plan's priority #4, which calls for enhanced food security, and priority #7, which aims to improve livelihoods and incomes of small farmers, including women, because the project's objectives include strengthening the resilience of taro production systems to the impacts of climate change.

In addition, as noted in Chapter 2, national strategy and policy documents tend to have a great deal of information about climate change. Most of these documents also contain references to other national documents that you can incorporate into your proposal. For example, the RMI JNAP summarizes that country's National Climate Change Policy Framework.

Lastly, you may find it beneficial to conduct consultations with the agencies and authorities responsible for developing and overseeing implementation of these strategies and policies. Some application templates include questions about the stakeholder consultations that have been conducted to inform the project's design, and so these kinds of consultations help to demonstrate that your team has worked to coordinate with other agencies, organizations, and projects.

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[1] In general, however, the more meaningful linkages you can create the better.

Step 2: Identify linkages to your country's international commitments and statements relating to climate change.

All Pacific Island Countries (PICs) have submitted reporting statements and commitments to the UNFCCC. These include National Communications, Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC), and, in some cases, National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA)[2] documents. Like the national policy statements, these documents often outline general priorities, although for some countries the NDCs only include mitigation priorities.

Where possible, your project proposal should reference these documents. For example, Kiribati's Initial Nationally Determined Contribution describes 12 general strategies for implementation, including:

- Improving knowledge and information generation, management, and sharing
- Increasing water and food security with integrated and sector-specific approaches and promoting healthy and resilient ecosystems
- Strengthening health service delivery to address climate change impacts
- Delivering appropriate education, training, and awareness programs

As with national policies and strategies, it is a simple task to reference these policies once you know what they are. In addition to these UNFCCC documents, consider referencing regional agreements and declarations that include your country. One example is the Suva Declaration on Climate Change (2015).

Step 3: Identify linkages to sectoral plans and policies that are relevant to your project.

Your project proposal should also reference any sectoral policies and plans relevant to your project's activities. These plans will vary from country to country, but there are some general commonalities. For example, most countries in the Pacific have some sort of agricultural strategy, a coastal management strategy, and a marine resources strategy.

In our example of the Palm Island Taro project, we would want to make sure that our project is aligned with and advances the priorities spelled out in the Palm Island Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development Strategy and Action Plan. In some cases, your project proposal might cover more than one sector, and you should make sure to reference all the relevant plans, strategies, and priorities.

Step 4: Identify linkages to cross-cutting plans and policies.

Some countries have plans that cover cross-cutting issues, the most common being gender. It will strengthen your proposal if you are able to demonstrate that your project in some way advances the goals of these plans. For example, the Solomon Islands National Gender Equality and Women's Development Policy (2016–20) has several "priority outcomes" relevant to climate change adaptation activities, including:

- Gender-responsive government programs and services

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[2] Note that only countries classified as Least Developed Countries (Tuvalu, Kiribati, Vanuatu, and the Solomon Islands) have NAPAs

- Improved economic status of women
- Equal participation of women and men at all levels of decision-making, governance, and leadership

Chapter 4 will provide guidance on how to incorporate these considerations into project design. At this point it is important to make sure that you reference the appropriate policies. Other cross-cutting issues to consider include persons with disabilities (PWD), disaster risk reduction/disaster risk management (if your country does not have a JNAP), and migration.

Step 5: Identify linkages to local/community plans and processes.

Although this is listed last, for small grants projects this is one of the most important considerations because it helps the funder understand that your project will be acceptable to the local community where it is being implemented and that the community is likely to continue/maintain the outputs of the project after the project is completed. This is a major consideration for project funders; projects that are not aligned with community priorities, norms, and needs are not likely to be effective, nor are their benefits likely to be sustained when the funding runs out. Therefore, it is important to identify not only local plans, but planning processes, and to ensure that the project is in alignment with these.

As noted above, it is always a good idea to conduct consultations with a representative group of local people (especially those who the project will benefit or affect) and to meaningfully incorporate their feedback into the project's design. Consultations should be documented in your proposal, as they provide evidence to the funder that your project is locally rooted.

3c. Conclusion

As noted above, it helps to think of your project as part of a broader strategy to improve lives and livelihoods in your community. In other words, your project is a piece of a larger puzzle that might include national, subnational, and community policies and activities as well as programs carried out by church organizations, community groups, non-government organizations, and perhaps even private-sector enterprises. It is important to ensure that your project is clearly linked to all of these policies and activities because no single project alone can address the impacts of climate change. Moreover, uncoordinated action on climate change can lead to redundant expenditures and wasted resources, policy confusion, and in some cases, even to increased vulnerability.

By describing how your proposed project links with all of the above-mentioned policies, strategies, and frameworks, you will demonstrate to your funder that you have thought about the bigger picture. You will also show that you have carefully identified a problem and need that is consistent with existing priorities. This will go a long way to improving the chances that your project will receive funding.

CHAPTER 4:
INCORPORATING GENDER EQUITY, DISABILITY, AND SOCIAL INCLUSION ISSUES

| PROJECT IDEA | CLIMATE RATIONALE | LINKAGES TO EXISTING POLICIES & FRAMEWORKS | THEORY OF CHANGE | LOGICAL FRAMEWORK | MONITORING, EVAL., REPORTING & LEARNING | RISK MANAGEMENT |

◄ **GENDER EQUITY, DISABILITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION (GESDI) CONSIDERATIONS** ►

4a. Understanding the importance of gender equity, disability, and social inclusion issues

AMONG THE MOST CRITICAL ASPECTS of successful proposals is the inclusion of *gender equity, disability, and social inclusion* (GEDSI) issues. From the funder's perspective, there are at least two reasons for this. First, part of the basic mission of organizations such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the United Nations (UN) is to improve the lives and livelihoods of the most vulnerable and the poorest of the poor. Second, negative impacts of climate change often fall disproportionately on these groups.

Most Vulnerable Groups

Indeed, climate change impacts tend to make existing inequalities in society even worse, in particular those between women and men and those affecting persons with disabilities (PWDs). These are often referred to as **socially differentiated impacts**. In other words, people and groups can experience different impacts from climate change due to entrenched discriminatory or cultural norms, unequal access to land, water, education, or other resources, or because of physical barriers.

Virtually all grant makers require projects to pay special attention to the situations of vulnerable and marginal groups,[1] and it is nearly impossible to obtain funding for a project without meaningful inclusion of GEDSI considerations. More importantly, failure to take into account GEDSI dimensions means that your project will not be as effective as it could be in reducing vulnerability and increasing resilience. Project funders want to ensure that there is **equitable distribution of benefits**; this means that the benefits from the project should flow to different groups (including men and women) in a fair manner and that the project will not unfairly benefit (or disadvantage) any one group over others.

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[1] GEDSI is often sometimes grouped under the broader category of environmental and social safeguards (ESS).

Therefore, mainstreaming GEDSI into your project design is essential. This chapter provides an overview on how to do this. Note that in all cases it is useful to consult with or engage a GEDSI professional in the design of your project. Many local NGOs have significant experience with GEDSI issues, and so exploring partnerships for project design and implementation can be very beneficial.

4b. Relationship to project design and implementation

Most if not all funding opportunities will require you to address GEDSI issues. This will be made clear in the directions for the grant, and in many cases the evaluation criteria include GEDSI considerations as well. Remember that addressing GEDSI issues is not a discrete step in project design and development, but rather should be incorporated into every step, starting from the initial research and consultations that inform the design of the project. Example criteria/questions drawn from actual proposal templates include:

- Does the activity integrate gender equality, environmental sustainability, disaster risk reduction, and social inclusion, including people with a disability?
- Are the majority of beneficiaries women, children, or other vulnerable groups?
- Is there a likelihood that the project will have adverse impacts on gender equality and/or the situation for women/girls?
- Have women's groups/leaders raised gender equality concerns regarding the project during the stakeholder engagement process?

To address these questions and criteria in project design, mainstreaming GEDSI can be divided into three components, each of which consists of two to three tasks:

Component 1: GEDSI analysis

Task A: Understand the GEDSI context

Your project's design should be built on a thorough understanding of how gender/social differences are manifested in your target area. This includes an analysis of the general roles that women and men play in the community. Your analysis should note any existing disparities and/or differences. Some common areas of focus include:

- **Land rights:** Do women and men have different rights with respect to how land is used and owned? Does this have any bearing on vulnerability to climate change impacts? Does it have any bearing on the types of activities your project might need to include to ensure equitable distribution of benefits?
- **Division of labor and economic roles and entitlements:** Are there differences in the community in terms of the types of work men and women do? Are there differences in terms of cash-earning opportunities? If there are, do these differences create additional exposure, sensitivity, or vulnerability to climate change for either men or women? Do the differences affect the ability of women or men (or other groups) to make themselves more resilient to hazards and climate change impacts?
- **Existing knowledge systems and skills regarding CCA:** Are there differences between women and

men or any other group with respect to the ability to access and use information?[2] Do women and men have different skills (e.g., swimming) that make them more or less vulnerable to hazards? Do women and men have different types of knowledge that might be important with respect to climate change?

- **Power and decision-making:** Are there differences between groups with respect to authority and decision-making in the community? Are women and men represented equally in local councils and decision-making bodies? Are there any factors that might limit the ability of a certain group to provide inputs into the design and subsequent implementation of the project?

- **Perceptions of risk and resilience:** Do different groups have different values and priorities when it comes to hazards and climate change impacts?

Your analysis should consider access to material resources, educational resources, decision-making processes, and livelihood activities. As noted above, it helps to consult with experienced experts. Another good practice is to review gender and GEDSI analyses that have been conducted for other successful projects. Data and information can be gathered from stakeholder consultations, government statistical reports, and published reports, including, if available, the government's gender action plan or policy framework.

Remember that special arrangements may be necessary to ensure inclusivity in stakeholder consultations. For example, you may need to hold separate focus groups for women and men or schedule meetings and consultations so that they do not conflict with women's other activities and responsibilities. Also note that PWDs are often not able to access participatory events due to location; a common issue is that meetings are held in venues that are not accessible to PWDs.

Additionally, you should be mindful that just because individuals are present in a meeting does not mean that they are participating. Ensure that engagement is *meaningful*. There are many resources available that provide useful insights and best practices for ensuring that your consultative processes are genuinely inclusive. Utilize this information to ensure that your project design process is sensitive to these considerations. In particular incorporate measures to ensure that women are participating in project design activities. This includes ensuring adequate representation of women in consultative and planning meetings.

Task B: Determine gendered impacts of climate change.

The observed and expected changes in physical processes associated with climate change should be well documented in your country's climate change strategies and policy framework (e.g., National Adaptation Plan, Joint National Action Plan for Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction, National Adaptation Strategy, and other relevant documents). In some cases, the different ways that climate change impacts (or is expected to impact) women and men may be described in these documents.

However, you may need to gather additional information from women in your target area through key informant interviews, focus groups, or other activities. Specific impacts on PWDs are often neglected in policies, statements, and impact assessments, and so you may need to make additional efforts to acquire this

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[2] For example, in some areas the adult literacy rate is much higher among men than women, which means that printed materials are more effective at reaching men than women.

information as well. The information that you gather should be incorporated into the tools and methodologies that you utilize to develop your climate rationale (see Chapter 2).

Task C: Incorporate gender into your theory of change.

Utilizing information gathered in Tasks A and B, ensure that gender is addressed in your theory of change (see Chapter 5). The theory of change is a narrative and/or graphical representation that explains the change in vulnerability that you expect to result from your climate change adaptation project. The theory of change begins with an analysis of the drivers of vulnerability to climate change, drawing on the impact chain analysis. But it also includes social, economic, cultural, and political dimensions that contribute to vulnerability or that might increase the likelihood that people suffer harm or damage from climate change hazards.

Component 2: GEDSI-sensitive actions

Task A: Develop GEDSI-inclusive activities

Based on your theory of change, make sure to design your **activities**, **outputs**, and **outcomes** (see Chapter 6) to include women, PWDs, and other groups, and to address their specific vulnerabilities. This may include developing specific activities for women, which may consist of workshops or specialized learning materials. In some cases, the timing and venue of certain activities may need to be arranged to facilitate the participation of women and/or PWDs. To the extent possible, ensure that activities, information products, and other materials that your project develops are accessible to all groups.

Task B: Ensure that the implementation team will have access to GEDSI expertise

As noted above, many local NGOs have expertise in GEDSI issues, and some have dedicated experts on their staff. If your organization has this type of expertise and experience, make sure to describe how you will draw upon it in the implementation stage of the project. Be explicit about which staff member will have primary oversight responsibility for GEDSI *mainstreaming*.[3] If your organization does not have expertise in GEDSI issues, describe how you will partner during implementation with an organization that does.

Make sure that your project's governing board incorporates principles of social inclusion (i.e., an equitable split between women and men). In some cases, you may need to include capacity-building activities for project staff and other stakeholders to increase awareness and competencies with respect to GEDSI issues.

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[3] The term "mainstreaming" describes efforts to introduce GEDSI, climate change adaptation, and other considerations that are not normally considered into day-to-day processes of planning, budgeting, and project design. For example, in the past, it was common practice to design a strategy or a project and then think about how to incorporate gender considerations after the strategy or project design process was nearly completed. Designing strategies and projects in this way means that gender is not fully integrated. A mainstreamed approach would instead incorporate gender considerations from the very beginning of strategy or project design. Funders generally look for GEDSI considerations to be mainstreamed into proposals. In addition, if some part of your project can advance the mainstreaming of climate change adaptation considerations into planning, budgeting, and other processes of governance, this is generally viewed favorably by funders.

Component 3: GEDSI-sensitive monitoring and evaluation

Task A: Formulate GEDSI-sensitive monitoring targets and indicators

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are essential components of all projects. M&E activities help to ensure that the project is doing what it is supposed to do and provides the information necessary to make adjustments if the project is not meeting expectations. For example, the use of **disaggregated indicators and targets** (indicators that show how many women and men participated in an activity[4] or benefited from an outcome) will help to ensure gender equity in project implementation. These should be carefully considered and included in your project proposal.

In addition, if your country has developed any national GEDSI indicators or targets (e.g., in a National Gender Equality Action Plan or similar policy/strategy document), make sure that these are incorporated into your project-specific targets and indicators. Similar to when you are conducting your gender analysis, separate data collection techniques may be required for specific groups in your M&E plan.

Task B: GEDSI knowledge management

It is also important to ensure that you document the results of GEDSI activities, outputs and outcomes and that this information is incorporated into the regular reporting to your donor. Your project proposal should also include a description of how your project will ensure that knowledge and lessons learned from GEDSI activities will be captured and shared, incorporated into institutional practices, scaled up, and/or replicated. Ensure that any materials produced, such as training materials, communications materials, and other knowledge products, include GEDSI-balanced images.

4c. Conclusion

Many variables, including gender, disability status, age, and sexual orientation, can influence how the impacts of climate change are experienced. For this reason, these considerations must be incorporated into the design of climate change adaptation projects. This chapter has provided a general overview of steps you can take to ensure that GEDSI considerations are mainstreamed into your project proposal. More resources providing greater detail are available. A list of helpful references is included in the appendix.

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[4] For example, consider sign-in sheets for a workshop that indicate the gender of participants.

CHAPTER 5:
IDENTIFYING AND ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM: DESIGNING A "THEORY OF CHANGE"

5a. Learning from "worst practices"

WE'VE ALL HEARD OF "BEST PRACTICES": this expression refers to wisdom that has developed over time for doing a particular task or achieving a particular goal. Best practices are very useful for learning and for the development of projects. However, we can also learn a great deal from what has not worked in the past and also from the mistakes that people tend to make over and over again. We can refer to these as "worst practices," and we are going to start off this chapter with an example of a worst practice.

But first we need a little technical background. Virtually all funding application templates will ask that you develop a project design plan. This is sometimes referred to as the **logical framework**, or **logframe** for short.[1] The logical framework lays out the activities, outputs, and outcomes of the project, describing specifically what the project is going to do (see Chapter 6). You have probably seen a logical framework before, and you may have developed one or more yourself. The logical framework can be compared to a blueprint for a building's construction; it describes **how to implement the project**.

A mistake that is commonly made in proposal development is to begin with a logical framework, rushing to lay out the workshops and training activities, equipment purchases, and other procedural elements. This approach is a **worst practice** because when you begin with the logical framework in this way, you are not thinking about the gaps, barriers, obstacles, and weaknesses that the project is going to address. In other words, in these cases, project proponents spend more time thinking about **how** the project is going to work and not enough time thinking about **why** the project is going to work. This can lead to projects that do not live up to expectations or projects that fail altogether. This is primarily because such projects are attempting to solve the wrong problem or because they are built upon an incomplete understanding of the nature of the problem. In most cases, these kinds of proposals will not receive funding in the first place.

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[1] "Logical framework" is a fairly general term for this tool. Different organizations sometimes use different names for the logical framework. You may see it referred to as a "results framework" or a "design and monitoring framework." Despite differences in formatting and language, these terms all have the same meaning. Some organizations use the term "theory of change" to refer to the logical framework, but this is somewhat misleading.

In order to avoid this, we need to make sure that we have a complete understanding of the nature of the problem we are trying to solve before we begin to consider the project's activities and workplan. This is where the **theory of change** comes in. This is a confusing concept for many people, especially because the term is sometimes used to refer to different things by different organizations. However, the concept is simple:

The theory of change is simply an explanation of why you think your project is going to work and why it is the most appropriate way to address the problem.[2]

There are two key elements here. The first involves describing why the problem exists and what changes are necessary to eliminate or reduce the problem. This requires you to think about current conditions and also to imagine the future conditions under which the problem will no longer exist.

The second element involves describing the feasibility and appropriateness of your proposed solution. Most people will agree that there is usually more than one way to solve a particular problem. Among these different approaches, however, there are some that are likely to be more effective and efficient than others.

The theory of change demonstrates to the funder that your team has considered different approaches and that based on careful analysis, you have determined that your proposed project is the best among them. To put it in everyday terms, you have to choose the right tool for the job. The "theory of change" is an explanation of why you chose the tools that you did for the job at hand.

The theory of change begins by identifying the **core problem[3]** and then describing all of the direct and indirect causes of the core problem. As noted in Chapter 2, in the case of climate change adaptation problems, changes in the environment caused by climate change will be among these direct and indirect causes. However, as we have seen, most problems also have non-climate aspects that interact with one another and with changing environmental conditions in complicated ways.

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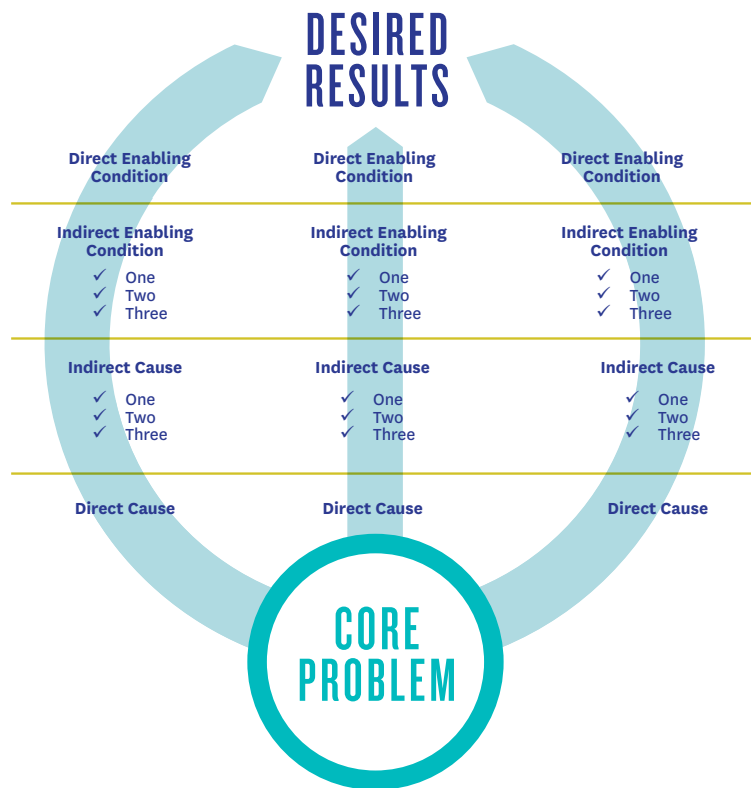
[2] USAID (2017) defines the theory of change as "a narrative description, usually accompanied by a graphic or visual depiction, of how and why a purpose or result is expected to be achieved in a particular context."

[3] The "core problem" is the main problem that your project seeks to address.

A good theory of change will incorporate interactions between different factors and drivers[4] and will describe all the barriers, gaps, and obstacles that are preventing the problem from being solved. The theory of change will also highlight how a project might influence (i.e., "change") the direct and indirect causes of the problem. The diagram below illustrates the theory of change concept.

Problem Statement	Contributing Factors		Enabling Factors	Result
This is the **core problem** that we need to address, and this is why it is important	This is a problem because…	Therefore…	If we bring about a change in…	We should see a change in the core problem, which will have positive impacts on the community
	Factor 1…		Factor 1…	
	Factor 2…		Factor 2…	
	Factor 3…		Factor 3…	

Thinking about your problem in this way has a number of advantages. It will reveal the elements of the problem that are possible to change and the elements of the problem that cannot be changed. For example, as noted in Chapter 2, in most cases it is not likely that you will be able to change sea level rise. However, you might be able to change some factors that make people or things susceptible to harm from sea level rise.

The elements of the problem that can be changed are things that you may have some influence over. You can think of these as "leverage points" or "control knobs." These are the potential entry points for your project. Once you have identified the leverage points, it is much easier to come up with activities that focus on these leverage points, which will lead to a much more effective and efficient project design.

The diagram above may make it seem simple. But remember that, much like your climate rationale (see Chapter 2), all of the statements and assumptions you make should be supported by some sort of data or information. In other words, the theory of change should be built on a solid **evidence base**. This includes collecting data and information about the nature of the problem from a literature review, surveys and censuses, from inclusive stakeholder consultations, and other methods.

These are not tasks that can be completed without leaving your office (another worst practice). Rather, they require research, and your conclusions need to be **validated** through consultative and/or review processes that provide an opportunity for people in the target community to review your findings and logic. You should develop your explanation of the problem and your theory of change before you develop your logical framework and project workplan. The next section will provide some guidance.

5b. How to "theorize your change"

Fortunately, most of the data, information, and know-how for developing a good problem statement and theory of change is available in your target area. It is just a matter of identifying the appropriate information and making sure that you have drawn on a variety of perspectives to explore the relationships between the different aspects of your core problem.

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[4] "Drivers" here refers to the direct and indirect causes of the core problem, and "factors" refers broadly to conditions that may make the core problem worse.

Example questions from actual proposal templates include:

- Please describe the adaptation problem, root causes, and barriers that need to be addressed and the proposed scenario with the project[5], including a brief description of the expected outcomes of the project.
- What are the realistic obstacles to project outcomes, and how will those obstacles be addressed?
- What challenges does the project seek to address?

There are a number of different methodologies to guide problem mapping.[6] Each of these can be used effectively, but like any tool, they can also be misused. The following steps are based on the **problem tree/objective tree[7]** methodology. This is a very commonly used technique for unpacking the complexity of development and climate change problems. There are many excellent and comprehensive guides to problem tree/objective tree analysis available on the internet. You will find links to some of these in the appendix of this guidebook.

Step 1: Based on your earlier work to select a project topic, identify your core problem.

The core problem should be something that can be changed or improved. In the case of climate change problems, choosing a physical process, such as increased rainfall or sea level rise, as a core problem is generally not a good idea because it is not likely that you will be able to change or improve a physical process. Remember also that sometimes it is more difficult than it might seem at first to identify the core problem. At this and every stage of developing your theory of change and problem statement, be open to revision.

For example, consider our taro farmers from Chapter 2. We can frame the problem in different ways. If we define the core problem as "extreme rainfall events", we do not have much chance of success because extreme rainfall events will likely continue regardless of our project. If we define the problem as "damage to taro crops from heavy rainfall," we may be steered in a different direction than if we define the problem as "taro crop production not resilient to climate change impacts." In the first case, we may focus on project activities aimed at preventing flood damage to taro patches, whereas the second instance may open up additional options to increase the resilience of the entire production system.

Step 2: Identify the direct drivers (i.e., the direct causes of the problem) and direct consequences of the core problem.

Remember that for a climate change adaptation project, one of the major drivers of the problem should be some aspect of climate change. But you should also focus on the non-climate factors that make your community vulnerable to climate change. To the extent possible, make sure that there is a direct relationship

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[5] A common practice in project design is to describe a "without project" scenario, which is a description of what the future would probably look like if the project **is not** implemented, and compare this with the "with project" scenario, which is a description of what the future would probably look like if the project **is** implemented. This makes it easier to clearly describe the benefits of the proposed project.

[6] "Problem mapping" refers to the process of exploring and describing in detail the causes and effects of the core problem.

[7] Sometimes referred to as a "solution tree".

between the core problem and the drivers. If there is not a direct connection, you are missing part of the puzzle. Remember that your driving factors should have an evidence base to substantiate them.

In the case of taro cultivation, in addition to the increased rainfall, direct drivers of flood damage to crops or a lack of resilience might include the location of the taro patches, the agricultural techniques and practices of the farmers, a lack of flood-control measures, and many other factors. Direct consequences might include decreased taro production.

Step 3: Identify the indirect drivers (i.e., the indirect causes of the problem) and indirect consequences of the core problem.

In many cases, it is difficult to identify options for addressing the direct drivers of the core problem, so you will need to dig a little deeper to determine what is causing the direct causes. These are the indirect drivers of your core problem, and in most cases, this is where you will identify your leverage points. Continue to identify indirect drivers until the leverage points appear. At each step of the way, make sure that there is an evidence base to support the connections.

For example, in examining the direct drivers of the taro problem, we may conduct research into why farmers are not using climate resilient cultivation techniques. We may learn that the farmers have no knowledge of climate resilient techniques because there are no guides, manuals, or extension services. We may find that they have inadequate access to seasonal forecasts to help them in deciding when to plant. Or we may find that they do not have access to loans to make improvements in their taro patches that would lead to better productivity.

Step 4. Identify leverage points.

In our taro patches example, we can see that once we start to identify the indirect drivers of the core problem, we can start to identify the parts of the problem where we may be able to make a difference. These are the leverage points. Once you have identified the leverage points, you can identify the kinds of changes that might be made to the indirect drivers of the problem that could transform them into enabling factors that will bring about an improvement in the core problem. Once you have done this, you will have identified your theory of change.

In the case of our taro problem, "lack of extension services" is an indirect cause of the core problem. This would become "extension services provided," which, according to our **theory of change**, should lead to some improvement in the core problem. "Farmers have no knowledge of climate-resilient cultivation techniques" would become "Farmers have improved knowledge of climate-resilient cultivation techniques". If our theory of change is based on good research work and inclusive stakeholder consultations, designing the specific activities to create the change should be straightforward.

5c. Conclusion

Approaching your project design process in this way will help you to identify the most effective activities to address your core problem. For example, once we recognize that one of the indirect drivers of our core problem is "lack of awareness of climate-resilient agriculture methods", then it makes sense that our project should focus on increasing awareness of climate-resilient techniques. According to our theory of change, this should decrease the vulnerability of the agricultural system to climate change.

At this point, we just need to figure out **how** to increase awareness of climate-resilient agriculture methods. There are dozens of ways to increase awareness, and many resources exist that describe best practices and case studies of what has worked in other places. The specific approach you use will depend on what approach is most appropriate in the local context. For example, if many of your local farmers are functionally illiterate, then producing written materials is probably not the best approach. Likewise, if your community lacks internet connectivity, developing an online training course will probably not be effective.

It should be clear that a good theory of change is extremely important, not only to the success of your proposal, but to the ultimate success of your project. In the next chapter, we will demonstrate how the theory of change helps the project design team determine the appropriate project activities.

CHAPTER 6:
DEVELOPING A LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

| PROJECT IDEA | CLIMATE RATIONALE | LINKAGES TO EXISTING POLICIES & FRAMEWORKS | THEORY OF CHANGE | LOGICAL FRAMEWORK | MONITORING, EVAL., REPORTING & LEARNING | RISK MANAGEMENT |

◄ GENDER EQUITY, DISABILITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION (GESDI) CONSIDERATIONS ►

6a. What is a "logical framework"?

A LOGICAL FRAMEWORK (logframe) can be thought of as the blueprint for your project. It clearly describes in table format what your project will do, the **deliverables** that it will produce, and the results that it will achieve. The logical framework describes a "chain of causality" linking specific activities to a desired change. Developing a logical framework is fairly straightforward if you have developed a good understanding of the problem you are seeking to address (see Chapter 5).

Most small grants proposal templates require you to provide a logframe table.[1] The table below is a generic logframe table. The formatting and language for different funders may vary slightly, but the essence is the same.

Project Objective: A short statement of the goal of the project					
Project Impacts: A description of the longer-term contribution your project will make to improved livelihoods or betterment of the community					
Project Structure	**Baseline**	**Indicator**	**Target**	**Risks**	**Assumptions**
Outcome 1: The change your project creates					
Output 1.1: The goods and services your project produces					
Activity 1.1.1: The things your project does					
Activity 1.1.2					
Output 1.2					
Activity 1.2.1					
Activity 1.2.2					
Outcome 2:					
Output 2.1					
Activity 2.1.1					

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[1] In some cases, you will not be asked to provide a table, but rather to describe the project in a narrative format. However, even if you are not required to provide a table, you may find it useful to organize your project into a table before describing it in words.

Note that the full logical framework includes information on risks and monitoring (the "baseline," "indicator," "target," "risks," and "assumptions" columns); we will cover these topics in Chapters 7 and 8 respectively. In this chapter we will focus primarily on the project structure, which is described in the first column in the table above. Most logframe formats have similar characteristics, as described below, although they may use different terminology. Additionally, notice how the outcomes, outputs, and activities are numbered and how they relate to one another.

Project objective

The **objective** of the project, sometimes called the "goal," is a short, clear description of what the project intends to achieve. The objective should be a simple statement, and generally does not include "through" or "by" language, as in the following examples:

- The objective of this project is to improve the resilience of traditional taro cultivation systems to the impacts of climate change.
- The objective of this project is to enhance the preparedness of coastal communities to extreme events driven by climate change.
- The objective of this project is to improve community water security against more frequent droughts.

Project impacts

The **impacts** describe the broader contribution that your project will make to broader aspects of the community (e.g., livelihoods, resilience, adaptive capacity, well-being). These are generally medium- to long-term changes in the community. If you are using the problem tree/objective tree methodology described in Chapter 5, the impacts will come from the "branches" of your objective tree. Impacts are different from **outcomes** (see below) because they are generally outside the scope and control of the project. In other words, your project will *contribute to* an impact, but the project will not make the impact happen all by itself.

For example, one impact of our taro project might be reduced poverty in rural areas. The taro project by itself cannot be expected to create a measurable change in rural poverty since poverty reduction takes more time than the project has and requires other factors to be in place. However, the project *can* contribute to poverty reduction by creating conditions that contribute to a longer-term reduction in poverty.

Not all small grants proposal templates ask for a description of impacts. It is generally a good idea to link impacts to goals that have been identified in relevant strategies and policies (see Chapter 3).

Project outcomes

The **outcomes** of the project describe what the project intends to accomplish by the end of the implementation period. Unlike impacts, the outcomes are a direct result of the project. Outcome statements can describe a change in behavior of the beneficiaries of the project or performance changes in a system, organization, or institution. You may think of project outcomes as a capability that an organization will have after the project that it did not have before the project, or a new, more sustainable way of managing resources

that is adopted by the community as a result of the project. Some examples of project outcomes include:

- Taro production in rural communities increases.
- Marine resource management practices are responsive to changes in climate conditions.
- Access to water in the community improves.

Project outputs

The **outputs** are the goods and services that your project creates to achieve its outcome(s). They may include facilities, assets, skills, abilities, methodologies, and other "things" that enable the change to happen. Often there is confusion between outputs and outcomes; even experienced project developers can get confused as to the difference between them. However, over time and as you gain experience, the distinction will become clearer to you. In general, outputs refer to goods and services that the project produces, whereas outcomes refer to the benefits that the goods and services provide (how the outputs are used).

As illustrated in the table above, outcomes may have several outputs. The outputs could be described as all the conditions that need to be put in place for the desired change (outcomes) to occur. For example, to achieve the outcome of "taro production in rural communities increases", we will likely have to provide several "goods and services", or outputs, such as the following:

- *Taro farmers gain skills in climate-resilient cultivation techniques.* In this case, the skills can be considered a good that will help them improve production.
- *Taro farmers' cooperative established.* Here the cooperative is also a "good" that can help the farmers market their produce.
- *Agricultural extension program for taro production established.* In this case, the establishment of the extension program could be considered a "good." Another way to phrase this might be "rural extension services improved."

Project activities

The **activities** are the specific tasks that produce the outputs. Activities are the things that you do. Several activities may be needed to produce one specific output. For example, the output "rural farmers gain skills in climate-resilient taro cultivation techniques" may require any or all of the following activities:

- Develop and distribute guidebook in local language on climate-resilient taro cultivation techniques
- Conduct workshops for farmers on climate-resilient taro cultivation techniques
- Establish a demonstration plot to show climate-resilient taro cultivation techniques
- Develop extension materials to help local agriculture agency teach climate-resilient taro cultivation techniques
- Conduct training-of-trainers for local extension officers and heads of farmers associations on climate-resilient taro cultivation techniques

Project inputs

The **inputs** are the resources that are required to implement the activities and produce the outputs.[2] The primary input for most projects is money, but in some cases, inputs may include equipment or expertise. The proposal template for some small grants may not ask for inputs because it is understood that the funds to be provided by the grant are the input. Inputs are usually described in the procurement section of the proposal.
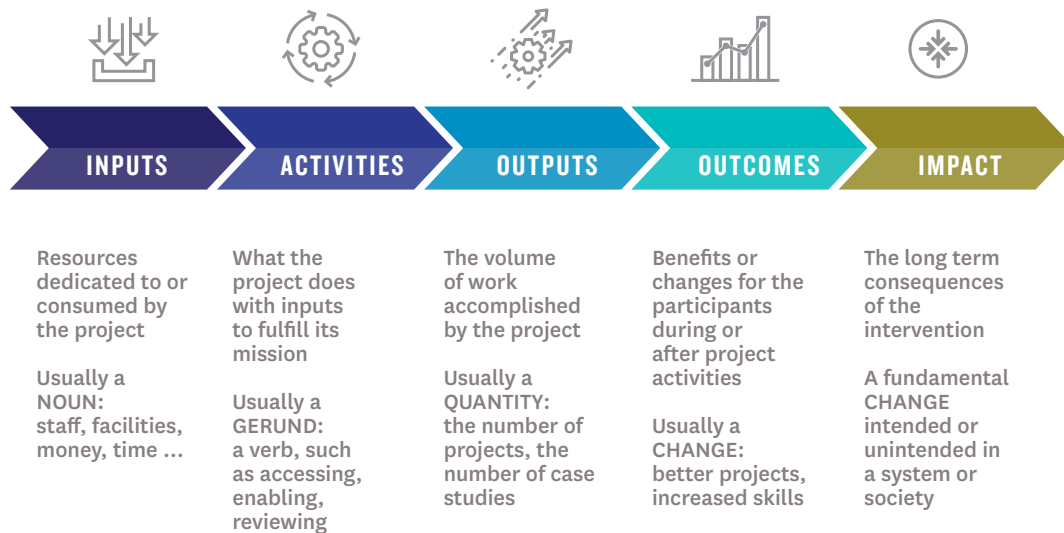
Putting it all together

To simplify, you can think of the "chain of causality" described in your logframe in this way:

- If we have these inputs, then we will be able to do these activities.
- If we do these activities, then we will produce these goods/services (outputs).
- If we produce these goods/services, then we can expect this change to occur (outcome).
- If this outcome happens, we will achieve our objective (goal), and it will contribute to broader improvement in our community (impact).

What are Inputs, Outputs, Outcomes and Impact?
The Logic Model Approach

INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	IMPACT
Resources dedicated to or consumed by the project	What the project does with inputs to fulfill its mission	The volume of work accomplished by the project	Benefits or changes for the participants during or after project activities	The long term consequences of the intervention
Usually a NOUN: staff, facilities, money, time …	Usually a GERUND: a verb, such as accessing, enabling, reviewing	Usually a QUANTITY: the number of projects, the number of case studies	Usually a CHANGE: better projects, increased skills	A fundamental CHANGE intended or unintended in a system or society

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[2] In some cases, the logical framework table template provided by the funder will have a space for inputs, but in most cases, inputs are described in the project's budget.

6b. Structuring your logical framework

Now that we have discussed the basics of the logical framework, we will walk through the steps of building your own logframe. Items from actual small grants templates include:

- Describe the activities to be undertaken and their key outputs. Include a short logframe table showing the objectives, outcomes, and outputs.
- Describe the project's workplan, including the activities, outputs, outcomes, and objectives.
- Provide a table describing the logical structure of how your project will achieve the stated objective.

The activities, outputs, and outcomes that you design for your project should be aligned with your **theory of change** (see Chapter 5). If you have used the problem tree/objective tree tool, you may take your outcomes and outputs (and in some cases your activities) from the "roots" of your objective tree, while the project objective can be taken from the core problem/solution.[3] Where you begin is a matter of preference, but many project developers will describe the project objective first, and then formulate the outcome(s).

Outcomes. As noted above, the **outcome** should be a clear description of a change that the project will cause to happen. In most cases, the outcome statement is written in the past tense. Choose an outcome that can be measured, because when you develop your monitoring plan (see Chapter 7), you will need to be able to indicate that the change occurred in some measurable way. Compare the change that you expect to a baseline situation. Use words such as "improved" and "enhanced."

As a general rule, it is good to be ambitious with respect to your outcomes, but not unrealistic in what you can expect to achieve. The number of outcomes a project has usually depends on the size of the project; small grants projects generally (but not always) have one outcome.

Outputs. Once you have determined your outcomes, refer to the objective tree to determine what goods or services need to be put in place to achieve the outcome. Good outputs are clear and generally easy to measure. These are generally called the **deliverables.**

Activities. Once you have determined the outputs that you need to produce, it is a relatively simple task to design the **activities** needed to produce them. Make sure that your activities are locally appropriate and acceptable. Additionally, you should make sure that your activities are accessible to all stakeholders and do not unnecessarily or unwittingly exclude any groups (see Chapter 4). Consider the number, amount, frequency, and other characteristics of any activity you plan to undertake. In some cases, you may only need to produce one deliverable (e.g., "handbook for climate-resilient agriculture produced"), whereas in other cases you may need to produce several (e.g., "four climate-resilient agriculture workshops conducted plus one handbook for climate-resilient agriculture produced").

Remember that the outcome needed to achieve the project objective is usually specific to your community. In other words, the change that you need to bring about with your project depends on local conditions and

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[3] Note that there may be some variations depending on how you have structured your problem tree/objective tree.

circumstances. However, once you have identified the change that you want to make happen, you can look at examples from other projects that worked to make a similar change to see what approaches were effective in similar circumstances.[4] Depending on the type of project you are designing, there may be "best-practices" manuals that describe activities and outputs that have worked elsewhere. These best practices can help you design your own outputs and activities.

Once you have your logical framework laid out, you should "test your logic" by talking through the chain of causality. Ask yourself the following questions, and, if possible, ask other stakeholders as well:

- If we conduct these activities, is it reasonable to expect that we will be able to produce these outputs?
- If we produce these outputs, will it be sufficient to lead to the desired change (outcome) within the specified project period?
- Have we forgotten anything (e.g., GEDSI considerations)?
- Are the activities, outputs, and outcomes realistic?

6c. Conclusion

The logical framework is the backbone and blueprint for your project proposal and serves as the basis and justification for your project budget. A good logical framework includes well-described activities, outputs, and outcomes that provide a clear picture of how the project will be implemented. You should also remember that a successful logical framework is rooted in a solid understanding of the problem that the project seeks to address, is defined through a well thought through problem/objective tree (recall Chapter 5), and has an inclusive design that ensures that a wide range of stakeholders in the community enjoy the benefits of the project.

This guidebook has waited until Chapter 6 to describe the logical framework; this is to help you avoid the temptation (and common mistake) of jumping right into the design of activities without carefully considering the complex nature of the problem, its linkages to broader priorities, and inclusiveness issues.

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[4] The website for your funder may contain previous project examples, or you may do an internet search for GEF small grants projects related to the topic of your project.

CHAPTER 7:
MONITORING, EVALUATION, REPORTING, AND LEARNING

| PROJECT IDEA | CLIMATE RATIONALE | LINKAGES TO EXISTING POLICIES & FRAMEWORKS | THEORY OF CHANGE | LOGICAL FRAMEWORK | MONITORING, EVAL., REPORTING & LEARNING | RISK MANAGEMENT |

◄ GENDER EQUITY, DISABILITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION (GESDI) CONSIDERATIONS ►

7a. What is "MERL"?

"MERL" IS AN ACRONYM for four related elements of project design and implementation: **M**onitoring, **E**valuation, **R**eporting, and **L**earning. You may have heard some of these terms used in different combinations; perhaps the most common of these is "M&E" (monitoring and evaluation), although it's common also to see MEL and MER. Although these terms are often listed together, they refer to different processes and procedures, all of which are important to project design and implementation. In this chapter, we will describe what these terms mean and explain how they relate to the design of a good small grant proposal.

Monitoring is the collection and analysis of data and information concerning the project's progress. The project management team conducts monitoring throughout the project's implementation phase. The monitoring framework tells the management team how they are doing with respect to achieving the project's goals and objectives and if the project is being implemented according to the plan.

Monitoring generally addresses questions about progress towards specific activities and outputs (e.g., Are we training the number of people we planned to train? Are the people in our training sessions learning the skills we planned for them to learn?). Monitoring allows the project management team to understand what parts of the project are working and where some adjustments may be needed to keep the project's implementation on track. During the proposal stage, you will need to develop an effective monitoring plan that is connected to the activities, outputs, and outcomes of your project. The funder is likely to scrutinize your monitoring plan.

Evaluation is the broad, systematic and periodic assessment of a project. This is generally conducted after the project has been completed (although in some cases there is a mid-term evaluation) to determine the effectiveness of the project and the overall approach. Evaluation is different from monitoring in that it focuses on broader questions (e.g., Was the project's approach appropriate to address the problem? Has the project improved livelihoods and well-being in the community?). In some cases, outside specialists conduct the evaluation, but often in the case of small grants, the grantees are expected to conduct the evaluation themselves. In some cases, the funder may conduct the evaluation, and some small grants do not require an evaluation or an evaluation plan at all.

Reporting refers to the responsibility of the project management team to provide periodic formal updates to the project's funder. Reporting can be thought of as a tool for accountability; it helps the funder know that the project management team is making progress towards the project's goals. Funders often use information in reports to relay information to their own donors.

In most cases funders have established rules and schedules for reporting; some funders require reports on a quarterly basis (every three months), whereas others might require reports only once or twice a year. In most cases when developing your proposal, you will not need to come up with your own reporting schedule. You will just need to follow the rules of your funder and incorporate their reporting requirements into your project workplan.

Learning refers to the steps the project management team will take to ensure that the lessons from the project, both good and bad, are used to change standard operating procedures, decision making processes, and the behavior of individuals, communities, and organizations/agencies for the better. Learning is a very important component of good proposals that is often overlooked in the design stage. Learning is particularly important for many small grants funders because they are often looking for promising **pilot** projects.[1] Funders like pilot projects because once a model is demonstrated to be successful and the benefits become clear, then other stakeholders can scale up the pilot project with their own resources.

Learning is also important so that other project teams can learn about the successes (and failures) and innovations brought about by your project. They can then incorporate those lessons into their own projects and policies. In order for this to happen, however, there has to be an effective mechanism for communicating information about the successes (and failures) of the project.

Effective **MERL** is a key component for bringing about lasting change and also for developing a successful project proposal. It will help your organization, your target beneficiaries, and your funder to make better decisions before, during, and after project implementation. As noted above, individual funders determine their evaluation and reporting requirements and procedures. The best advice is to make sure you are familiar with the established procedures of the particular funder you are approaching and to indicate in your proposal that you will follow these procedures. In the next section, we provide additional guidance on how to incorporate effective monitoring and learning mechanisms into your proposal.

7b. Monitoring and learning for success

As noted in the previous section, funders will pay close attention to how you have incorporated MERL into your proposal. This section provides some guidance on developing the monitoring and learning elements of your proposal. Some questions from real small grants project proposal templates include:

- Is the monitoring and evaluation plan feasible/realistic?
- Who is responsible for monitoring, evaluation, and learning for this project?
- Describe the monitoring, evaluation, and learning methods and approaches that you will apply

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[1] A pilot project is a demonstration or trial project designed to show the benefits of a particular approach.

to your project, including specific plans for data collection. This should include how data will be disaggregated.[2]

Monitoring. In most small grants applications, the monitoring framework is included as part of the logical framework (see Chapter 6). In addition, there may be a question(s) that asks you to write out your monitoring plan. A good starting point for developing your monitoring plan is your logical framework, because your monitoring plan should be clearly linked to the activities you are planning to implement. This will also help you decide what are the most sensible things to measure in your monitoring activities. Remember that the monitoring framework should be designed to provide information effectively on how the project is progressing while the project is being implemented.

Below is a sample logical framework table (often referred to as a "matrix"). This matrix includes space for baseline, target, indicator, and data source information for each project activity. The matrix included here combines the logical framework (see Chapter 6) and the monitoring framework, which is a common format for small grants applications. These matrix variables are further described below with examples from our imaginary taro project.

1.0 Outcome					
Output	**Activity**	**Baseline**	**Target**	**Indicator**	**Data Source/ Means of Verification**
1.1 Taro farmers gain skills in climate resilient cultivation techniques		5% of farmers familiar with climate resilient cultivation techniques	75% of farmers, including 75% of women farmers, familiar with climate resilient cultivation techniques	Survey questionnaire results	Surveys conducted before and after project activities
	1.1.1 Develop and distribute guidebook in local language on climate-resilient taro cultivation techniques	No guidebook exists	One guidebook developed and 500 copies distributed	Guidebook; number of copies distributed	Existence of guidebook; project distribution records
	1.1.2 Conduct workshops for farmers on climate-resilient taro cultivation techniques	No farmers trained	100 farmers, including 70% female farmers, trained on climate resilient techniques	Number of farmers trained	Gender-disaggregated sign-in sheets
	1.1.3 Demonstration taro plots established	0 demonstration plots	5 demonstration plots	Demonstration plots	Site visits and photographic documenta-tion

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[2] "Disaggregate" means to separate; "disaggregated data" refers to data that has been broken down into categories to provide additional details. For example, a workshop's participants might be disaggregated into male and female participants.

Baseline. The baseline describes the starting condition of the things that you are going to measure. It describes what things were like before the project and provides a point of reference to determine the degree to which your project is successful in achieving its activities, outputs, outcomes, and objectives. The baseline should be related to the *target* (see below) and the design of the specific activity.

To formulate a baseline, identify a variable relevant to the change you want to bring about with your activity. Examples of baselines might include "no climate change guidelines incorporated into Marine Protected Area (MAP) management plan" or "10% of smallholder taro farmers aware of climate-resilient agriculture techniques". These are conditions that are measurable and that you intend to improve.

The example provided in the matrix above shows several different baselines. As in other elements of your proposal, there should be a clear **evidence base** for the baseline. In other words, you should have a source for the information you use to establish your baseline.

Target. The target should likewise be geared to the specific activity and output and should be relevant to the baseline. The target describes how much of the good or service specified by the activity you will provide by the end of the project. In the case of activities, it describes how many times or how much your project will do the activity. In the case of outputs, your target will describe how much or how many of the outputs you are going to produce.

If the baseline tells you where you came from, the target should tell you where you are going. For example, **output targets** may include "MPA guidelines for assessing vulnerability and no-take periods incorporate climate change projections" or "75% of smallholder taro farmers aware of climate-smart agriculture techniques". **Activity targets** to support these outputs may include "four MPA steering committee workshops conducted" and "five training courses for smallholder taro farmers conducted". Make sure that your targets follow clearly from your activities and outputs. You may have more than one target for some activities and outputs.

Indicators. Indicators are how you know a change is happening as a result of something in the project (activities, outputs, outcomes). In the context of a monitoring framework, indicators describe what is going to be measured. There are different types of indicators, but many small grants programs focus primarily on **activity** and **output indicators**. Activity and output indicators demonstrate the project's progress in providing specific goods and services through the project's activities. A commonly used acronym to describe the characteristics of good project indicators is **"SMART"**. This means that indicators should be:

- **Specific**. The indicator focuses specifically on the activity/outcome in question. Each activity/outcome should have a different indicator; sometimes there will be more than one.

- **Measurable**. The indicator can be measured in a meaningful and reliable way. Indicators can be qualitative or quantitative, but qualitative indicators should be defined[3]. For example, "successful" is

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[3] Quantitative indicators are generally based on numbers or clearly defined values and are used to answer the questions *what, how many,* and *when*. Qualitative indicators are used for things that are difficult to attach a number value to and often consist of stories and descriptions. Qualitative indicators answer the questions *why* and *how*.

not a meaningful indicator unless the term is defined within the context of the project.

- **Attainable**. The indicator is achievable to the degree that is specified. The data to measure the indicator should also be available or obtainable with a reasonable amount of effort and expense.

- **Relevant**. The indicator should be a valid measure of the activity/output/outcome.

- **Time-Bound**. The indicator should be tied to a set timeframe.

Remember that the data required to measure your chosen indicator should be available or reasonably obtainable. If there are security or safety considerations that could impede measuring the achievement of your indicator, or if the indicator deals with sensitive information that sources might not be willing to provide, you might consider selecting a different indicator.

Data source/Means of verification. The data source, sometimes called the means of verification (MoV), describes "how you know" the indicator. The data source/MoV refers to the methodology, tool, or instrument you will use to gather the data for your indicator. The data source should be reliable and specific to the indicator. Data sources may include:

- Surveys
- Key informant interviews
- Site visits
- Pre- and post-workshop assessments
- Project monitoring documents
- Sign-in sheets

Make sure that your proposal includes the costs of monitoring activities and, if required, evaluation. Also make sure that you specify in your project team description which team member will be responsible for monitoring. This is critically important: if you do not have a dedicated and qualified team member that is to be responsible for monitoring activities, the project will be less attractive to funders.[4]

As a simplified example of a monitoring framework, if your output is "Community members trained and aware of climate change impacts on reefs and nearshore fisheries resources", you might use a monitoring framework with the following characteristics:

- **Baseline:** 10% of community residents aware of climate change impacts on reefs
- **Target:** 50% of community residents, including 50% of women, aware of climate change impacts on reefs
- **Indicator:** Community attendance in training workshop
- **Means of verification:** a) sign-in sheets; b) pre- vs. post-workshop assessment

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[4] Note that you do not necessarily have to have a full-time team member dedicated to monitoring and reporting, but you should ensure that it is included in a team member's scope of work.

Note that all elements of the monitoring framework for this output adhere to the SMART indicators mentioned above. In this example, the baseline would have been measured ahead of time during the project planning stage, and we may assume that the low level of community awareness was part of the rationale for designing this particular activity in the first place.

Learning. As noted in the first section of this chapter, learning is an important part of successful proposals and projects[5]. In some cases, the funder's application template will specifically ask you to describe the learning elements of your project, but in other cases there may be no explicit mention of learning in the application template. This does not mean that learning is not important to the funders, however. The best way to address either of these situations is to make sure that learning is fully incorporated into your project. You may design activities and outputs that focus specifically on learning and knowledge management. Ways to "learn" and share project lessons may include:

- Publishing case studies and success stories
- Hosting roundtable sessions or workshops to present and discuss experiences
- Using of social media to publicize project activities
- Including relevant information on the organization's website
- Posting videos or publishing newsletters
- Presenting at conferences

As with monitoring and evaluation, you should make sure that learning activities are included in the budget. When you consider learning, think about the following questions:

- How is your organization going to learn? What new skills, abilities, and competencies is your organization going to acquire?
- How will your project improve the institutional and human capacities of relevant government agencies? For example: "This project will improve the capability of the Department of Agriculture to incorporate climate change vulnerability information into normal processes of sectoral planning and budgeting."
- How is the community going to benefit in the long term from your project?
- Is your project scalable and replicable? How are others going to learn from your project experience so that they can repeat what you have done or avoid your mistakes, and how is the government going to be able to implement the successful innovations developed by your project on a larger scale?
- Are your outputs sustainable? How will you ensure that any booklets, publications, curriculum materials, or other materials that you produce continue to be used after your project is completed?

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[5] For example, this guidebook is an example of learning from previous projects supported by USAID and other development partners.

7c. Conclusion

A good MERL framework will help you to keep your project on track and will enable you to effectively capture the lessons learned—both positive and negative—from your project. A thoughtful and well-planned MERL framework is also a key element in presenting your project to funders. Virtually all funders will require you to develop a MERL framework as part of your proposal, and there are normally evaluation points added or deducted based on the quality of your MERL framework. There are many good guidebooks and references for all aspects of monitoring, evaluation, reporting, and learning. You will find links to some of these in the appendix.

CHAPTER 8:
MANAGING WHAT COULD GO WRONG: RISKS TO YOUR PROJECT

| PROJECT IDEA | CLIMATE RATIONALE | LINKAGES TO EXISTING POLICIES & FRAMEWORKS | THEORY OF CHANGE | LOGICAL FRAMEWORK | MONITORING, EVAL., REPORTING & LEARNING | RISK MANAGEMENT |

◄ GENDER EQUITY, DISABILITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION (GESDI) CONSIDERATIONS ►

8a. Planning for what can go wrong as you design your project

PROJECTS, LIKE MOST ASPECTS OF LIFE, are shaped by uncertain events. A saying common among project development professionals describes the importance of considering uncertainty in project design: *If your project does not manage uncertainty, uncertainty will manage your project.* In other words, to a certain degree your project's success or failure will depend on its ability to manage uncertainty. Managing uncertainty is a key consideration for funders in evaluating project proposals, and so it is the focus of this chapter.

Uncertain factors or elements that could affect a project are referred to as **risks.** Project-relevant risks come in two basic types. The first type is uncertain events or conditions that, if they occur, have an effect[1] on the project's ability to achieve its objectives (**risks to the project**). The second type is ways that the project could negatively impact the people and place where the project is being implemented (**risks caused by the project**). More simply, risks can be thought of as things that could go wrong. Risks can occur at any time during the project.

What is risk management?

Risk management is a systematic process of identifying, analyzing, and responding to both types of project risk. It can be thought of as the process of efficiently and effectively managing the uncertainties associated with a project. In all cases, project funders will expect you to consider risks that might affect your project and plan for managing those risks.

In general, it is best to deal with risks at the design stage of the project, as you have more flexibility at this stage and it is much less expensive to address risks before they actually occur. This is why funders are so attentive to risk management in project proposals. In many cases, you can address a risk simply by changing the design of the project. As you move from the design stage into implementation, your ability to manage risk generally decreases, and the costs of managing risks tend to increase. In other words, preventative risk-management strategies tend to cost less than reactive risk management.

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[1] These effects can be negative (threats) or positive (opportunities), but our primary focus here is on the risks that could negatively affect the achievement of the project's objectives.

In many cases, funders have standard policies and procedures for managing **risks caused by projects**. This is particularly true for small grants mechanisms funded by the GCF and the Adaptation Fund, as these grant programs have to follow the requirements of the donor who provides their funds. **Safeguards** are policies designed to ensure that funded projects have minimal negative impact on ecosystems, people (including indigenous people, women, PWDs, migrants, minorities, and children), cultural resources, and so forth. **Screenings** are tools used to review project ideas and concepts to determine what, if any, measures need to be taken to address these potentially negative impacts. Screenings are done to ensure that projects are in compliance with all safeguards.

Your funder's safeguards policies and screening tools will most likely be described in the application package. In addition to the funder's screening tools, you should also try to anticipate additional risks to your project. The main purpose of the safeguards and screenings is to prevent negative impacts from being caused *by the project*; safeguards and screenings normally do not address risks *to the project*.

The types of outside risk that may affect a project vary depending on a wide range of factors, including the size of the project (both in terms of budget and scope of activities), the location of the project, the types of activities to be undertaken, the way the project is implemented, and the stakeholders involved in the project's implementation. Some projects have more risks than others. For example, projects that involve construction generally have more risks than projects that focus solely on capacity development or institutional strengthening.[2]

How to address risk

Along these lines, how risks are managed depends on the nature of the risk; different risks may be handled in different ways. Some common ways of addressing risks include:

- **Avoid**: This involves eliminating the cause of the risk. In the case of small grants, the project should be designed in a way that avoids most risks.
- **Mitigate**: This involves taking measures that reduce either the probability that the risk will occur or the impact if it does occur. Mitigation reduces the **severity** of the risk, but does not remove the risk.
- **Transfer**: This involves transferring the risk to a third party who will deal with the impact if the risk occurs. Risk transfer is not normally applicable to small grants, but a good example of a risk transfer mechanism is insurance.
- **Accept**: Accepting a risk requires no action. This approach is used when the severity of the risk is very low or when the costs of avoiding, mitigating, or transferring the risk would be greater than the costs of the risk if it were to occur.

As noted above, the approach to managing risks depends on the nature of the risk, but for small grants, it is usually best to avoid as many risks as possible.

Do not avoid discussing risks or ignore risks in developing your proposal. Sometimes there is a temptation

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[2] Projects that involve construction and similar activities are often referred to as "hard" projects, whereas those that involve capacity development, institutional strengthening, policy/regulatory work, curriculum design, extension services, and similar activities are "soft" projects.

to think that if risks are brought up in the proposal, then it will hurt the chances of the project being funded. However, in most cases, the funder will already have a good idea about the types of risks associated with your proposal. So if you do not bring them up and address them in the proposal, it is likely that it will negatively affect the chances of your project being funded.

8b. Risk management for your project

This section provides step-by-step guidance on how to incorporate effective risk management into your project's design. The steps described below will help you to rigorously consider risks that could realistically affect your project, which will help you to design a more fundable and more effective project. Note that not all of the steps will be included in your proposal document, but they are all necessary for effectively identifying and addressing risks. Example questions and evaluation criteria from project templates include:

- Describe any major challenges/risks to the achievement of the project outcomes.
- Provide a risk assessment for the project with details of how risks will be managed and monitored to ensure that the likelihood of risks remain low. Detail in the recovery plan how you would deal with any problems that are likely to occur.
- Does the applicant demonstrate a solid understanding of the challenges/risks for the achievement of the project goals?

Step 1: Follow the funder's risk-management procedures

As noted above, in some cases the funder has in place safeguards and screening procedures to avoid projects that pose unacceptable risks. These screening procedures often include a tool or checklist which is designed to "screen out" certain types of projects that the funder will not support. If your funder has these procedures in place, as a first step you should apply the screening tool to your project concept. If your project "triggers," or activates, any of the safeguards, you will most likely need to change the design of your project so that the safeguard no longer applies. Most checklists consist of simple yes/no questions and are modeled after the requirements of either the Green Climate Fund or the Adaptation Fund, which themselves are based on global best-practices. Some examples include:

- Would the project adversely affect the development priorities of indigenous peoples as defined by them?
- Would the project activities pose risks to endangered species?
- Is there a risk that the project would lead to forced evictions?
- Will the proposed project involve the application of pesticides that have a negative effect on the environment or human health?

Checklists may contain as many as 50 questions similar to these. In general, your answer to each of these questions should be "no." If you answer "yes" to any of the questions it will most likely disqualify your proposal from consideration. It is generally good practice to be familiar with the environmental and social safeguards requirements of your prospective funder *before* designing your project. However, for most small grants projects these safeguards are seldom triggered. As a general rule, it's a good idea to avoid projects that involve large amounts of excavation, are implemented in marine or terrestrial protected areas or cultural sites, require

the acquisition of land, or would involve fertilizers, pesticides, or other chemicals. In some cases, the funder may provide an "exclusion list," which is a list of project types that will not be funded.[3]

Step 2: Identify risks

The next step is to identify all of the risks that might reasonably affect the achievements of your project's objectives.[4] The systematic listing of all the possible risks that could affect the project is often referred to as the **risk register**. The risk register starts with identification of specific risks. For each identified risk, a **risk statement** should include three elements:

- **Cause**: This is the process or factor that creates the risk.
- **Event**: This is the risk that is created by the cause.
- **Impact**: This is the positive or negative effect that the risk could have on achieving the project's objectives.

Risk statements should be formed as conditional ("if-then") statements, as in the example below. In this example we are identifying risks to a project that involves distributing climate-resilient taro plants to farmers on Palm Island:

- **Cause:** If farmers are unaware of the cultivation techniques for new seed varieties
- **Event:** Then farmers may plant the seeds at inappropriate times and locations
- **Impact:** Which may lead to decreased yield for the new varieties

Just like every other aspect of project design that has been discussed in this guidebook, risk identification requires good information and a solid **evidence base**. Several tools can be used to identify risks, including brainstorming, stakeholder consultations, and consultations with experts and with people who have implemented similar projects in your target area or elsewhere.

Types of risk. When you are thinking about risks, it helps to consider four general types of risks:

- **Risks associated with the project location/context.** These include factors associated with the local economy, physical geography, politics, or social and cultural factors. These types of risks vary from place to place.

- **Risks associated with the project's stakeholders.** Are the project's beneficiaries aware of the project and do they approve of the project?

- **Risks associated with the organization(s)/agency(ies) that are implementing the project and their partners/subcontractors.** Does the organization have the capability to carry out all of the project's activities? Does the organization have the capacity to manage the project effectively,

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[3] For example, see the International Finance Corporation's exclusion list at https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/topics_ext_content/ifc_external_corporate_site/sustainability-at-ifc/company-resources/ifcexclusionlist.

[4] It is important to recognize up front that you will likely not be able to identify all *possible* risks, nor do you need to. Focus on the risks that might reasonably be expected.

efficiently, and in a transparent and accountable manner?

- **Risks associated with the project's design.** These include analyzing the stakeholder map and the assumptions. Are the timelines for the project's activities, outputs, and outcomes reasonable? Are the budget estimates realistic? Are there hidden costs that have not been accounted for? Are the assumptions about project **sustainability** realistic? Can all the supplies and expertise that are required for project implementation be obtained reliably?

Step 3: Determine the likelihood of each risk

An important part of analyzing each risk is to determine the likelihood of it occurring. Risk likelihood is generally assessed on a scale that ranges from "low" to "high". Different funding agencies may have a different number of intervening steps between low and high (e.g., "medium low," "medium high")[5]. For example, the GEF generally uses the following four-point scale with associated numerical values:

- **High risk:** Probability greater than 75%
- **Substantial risk:** Probability between 51–75%
- **Modest risk:** Probability between 26–50%
- **Low risk:** Probability up to 25%

If your chosen funder has a scale, use it. If not, you can use your own scale; just remember to explain what the various categories mean. Remember that your probability rating should be based on some form of evidence or expert judgement. For example, if you are proposing a mangrove planting project, and one of the risks that you have identified is a typhoon destroying or damaging the mangrove seedlings, you may look at how frequently typhoons have occurred in the past and base your probability rating on these statistics.[6] This information can then be added to the risk register you developed in Step 2, as in the following example:

> *"If there is a typhoon then the mangrove seedlings may be disturbed or destroyed, which would decrease the effectiveness and coverage of the mangrove barrier. Based on the past 20 years of weather data, the project area experiences a direct hit from a typhoon once every 12 years. So the probability of this risk is 'low'."*

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[5] The Micronesia Conservation Trust uses a 5-point scale, whereas the Environmental Investment Fund of Namibia uses a 7-point scale.

[6] It is clear that climate change may alter the frequency and severity of severe events such as typhoons in the future, but a significant change is not likely to happen over the short term during which your project will be implemented, so in this case it is best to look at past experiences.

Step 4: Determine the impact of the risks if they occur

The next step is to determine the impacts of each risk if it indeed happens. Impacts, like probability of occurrence, are usually rated according to a scale, and so if your funder has a scale, use it. If the funder does not provide a scale, you can use your own, but be sure to be clear about what the different impact levels mean. An example of an impact rating scale that can be used to guide your own work follows:

- **Critical impact:** The event would cause project failure.
- **Major impact:** The event would cause major cost/schedule overruns and would affect the number/ degree/amount of activities, outputs, and outcomes.
- **Moderate impact:** The event would cause moderate cost/schedule overruns, but would not affect the activities, outputs, and/or outcomes.
- **Minor impact:** The event would cause only minor cost/schedule overruns.
- **Insignificant impact:** The event would have no significant impact on the project.

Determining the impact of risk events takes expert judgement and experience, and so it is a good idea to consult with experts and community members for information on the impacts of certain risks. Impacts should also be described in terms of the project's activities, outputs, and outcomes. Once you have determined the impact, this information can be added to the risk register (see Step 6 for an example of a typical risk register), as in the following example:

> *"If there is a typhoon, then the mangrove seedlings may be disturbed or destroyed, which would decrease the effectiveness and coverage of the mangrove barrier. Based on the past 20 years of weather data, the project area experiences a direct hit from a typhoon once every 12 years, and so the probability of this risk is 'low'.* **However, the establishment of a mangrove barrier is one of three primary outputs of this project, and so damage or destruction of the seedlings would have a major impact on the project's objectives."**

Step 5: Determine severity of risks and prioritize

Once you have estimated the probability and impact of the risk, you can combine these two measures to determine its **severity**. This allows you to prioritize the potential risks to your project and determine the appropriate course of action for dealing with each. Risks need to be prioritized because the resources for managing them are limited. In most cases, a **risk rating matrix** is used, as in the example below.

		IMPACTS				
		Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Critical
PROBABILITY	Almost Certain	Low	Medium	High	Severe	Severe
	Likely	Low	Medium	Medium	High	Severe
	Possible	Low	Low	Medium	High	Severe
	Unlikely	Low	Low	Low	Medium	High
	Rare	Low	Low	Low	Medium	High

Risk rating matrix used by Micronesia Conservation Trust for screening project proposals. Note that both the probability and impact scales are accompanied by descriptions of each rating level which are not included here.

According to this matrix, the risk of a typhoon to our mangrove planting project has a rare-unlikely likelihood, but a major impact. This means that the risk is rated as **medium** severity. As noted, the risk rating matrix helps us to determine what actions to take for each of the risks. The specific action to take depends on the judgement of the project developer, but in general the different levels of severity correspond to the following types of action:

- **Low severity:** In most cases no action is required. The risk should be monitored during implementation to ensure that it does not become worse.
- **Medium severity:** These risks should be addressed through modification of the project design to **avoid** or **mitigate** the risk. This can be accomplished by introducing new activities to address the risk, or by changing the timing, location, or other relevant aspects of the at-risk activity.
- **High severity:** These types of risks are serious threats to the achievement of the project's objectives and in most cases require a redesign of the project to avoid and/or mitigate the risk. This may involve changing the location of the project.
- **Severe severity:** These types of risks are sometimes referred to as "project killer" risks. If your project design includes these kinds of risks, the project is not likely to be funded.

Step 6: Respond to risks

The last step is to respond to the risks you have identified. As noted in Step 5, each level of risk requires a different type of response. Responding to risks may involve changing the project design or adding new activities and/or outputs. Be sure that your risk management measures are incorporated into the budget, procurement, and timelines of your project if necessary. The goal of your risk management measures should be to lower the severity of the risk.

The output of this step depends on the funder you are approaching. Some application templates ask for a narrative (written out in words) description of the risks and risk management procedures. Others might ask you to develop a table that describes the risk, likelihood, impact, and response measure as in the example below.

Risk	Likelihood/ Impact	Severity	Response	Severity after response
A direct strike by a typhoon damages or destroys the mangrove seedlings	Low/Major	Medium	Plantings will be scheduled at the end of typhoon season so the seedlings have the maximum time to take root	Low

As you can see, a **mitigation** response has been selected for this risk. This particular measure lowers the severity of the risk so that it no longer threatens the project. Another option might be to **avoid** the risk by moving the activity to a location that is less susceptible to damage from typhoons.

8c. Conclusion

All projects face uncertainties that may affect their ability to achieve their objectives. In general, funders prefer to minimize risks in projects. All other things being equal, funders will choose to fund proposals with lower risks or proposals that have identified all reasonable risks and have taken steps to manage them.[7]

Before starting the process of designing a project proposal, it is a good idea to consider risks that might affect the project. Thinking about risks before you design your project will help you to select a project that is less risky. Then, by following the steps described in this chapter, you will be able to effectively identify, analyze, and respond to any risks that may affect your project. This will enable you to develop a more effective project and also to submit a proposal that is more likely to be funded.

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[7] It is common to see statements such as "preference is given to proposals in which risks are manageable and with suitable mitigation measures".

CHAPTER 9:
CONCLUDING REMARKS

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS across the Pacific are shifting as a result of climate change and global warming. These shifting environmental conditions are having direct and indirect impacts on resource availability, food security, health—and ultimately lives, livelihoods, and the stability of communities. Unfortunately, these changes will continue into the future, and in many cases will become more severe. As these changes unfold, there will be an increasing demand for well-designed projects that draw on the strengths of the community to adapt to the negative impacts of climate change. However, adaptation initiatives are most effective when they are designed and implemented by communities themselves and aligned with the social, economic, and cultural priorities and characteristics of these communities.

This guidebook has attempted to demonstrate best practices learned from experience to support your organization's efforts to design projects that will have a positive impact in your community. It provides a general overview of some of the steps involved in developing a successful project. The tips and methods described here have been developed over time and draw on the successful practices of many project developers, as well as tools that have been refined through USAID-supported capacity development activities. However, there is no 100 percent correct way to develop a successful proposal. Over time, you will figure out what works best for you and your organization. Remember that developing a successful project proposal can be a difficult task, but it gets easier the more you do it.

This guidebook is not meant to be the definitive resource for project development. As you develop your own projects, you will find tools and techniques that work best in your situation. There are many resources available for specific tasks associated with project design and implementation. However, this guidebook addresses some common weaknesses that have been observed in small grants proposals, and covers some key elements that should be included in all project proposals.

Remember that most of the information and know-how needed to design a successful project probably exists in your community. It is hoped that this guidebook will empower you and your organization to draw upon these resources to design measures that will enhance the resilience and adaptive capacity in your community.

APPENDIX:
CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER RESOURCES

Chapter 2: Making the "Climate Case" for Your Project

World Meteorological Organization. 2018. *Climate Rationale Methodology (draft)*. 68pp. http://www.wmo.int/pages/prog/wcp/ccl/mg/mgccl17/documents/CCl-MG-1-2018_Item10_Climate_Rationale_Methodology.pdf

Green Climate Fund. 2018. *Steps to Enhance the Climate Rationale of GCF-Supported Activities*. 8pp. https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/gcf-b20-inf11.pdf

Chapter 3: Linking Your Project to Existing Policies and Frameworks

United Nations Development Programme. 2012. *Designing Climate Change Adaptation Initiatives*. 62pp. https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/951013_Toolkit%20for%20Designing%20Climate%20Change%20Adaptation%20Initiatives.pdf

Chapter 4: Incorporating Gender Equity, Disability, and Social Inclusion Issues

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GCF. 2017. *Mainstreaming Gender in Green Climate Fund Projects*. Songdo, South Korea. 78pp. https://genderandenvironment.org/resource/mainstreaming-gender-in-gcf-projects/

Chapter 5: Identifying and Addressing the Problem: Designing a "Theory of Change"

Unite Nations Environment Programme. 2017. *Use of Theory of Change in Project Evaluations*. 10pp. https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/id/8b45f5ff-c37b-4aac-b386-6b6b8e29aaed/11_Use_of_Theory_of_Change_in_Project_Evaluation_26.10.17.pdf

Chapter 6: Developing a Logical Framework

Asian Development Bank (ADB). 2016. *Guidelines for Preparing a Design and Monitoring Framework. Mandaluyong City, Philippines*. 54pp. https://www.adb.org/documents/guidelines-preparing-design-and-monitoring-framework

Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD). 1999. *The Logical Framework Approach (LFA): Handbook for Objectives-Oriented Planning (4th Edition)*. Oslo, Norway. 111pp. http://www.ccop.or.th/ppm/document/home/LFA%20by%20NORAD%20Handbook.pdf

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Chapter 7: Monitoring and Evaluation

Hammill, Anne, Julie Dekens, Timo Leiter, Julia Olivier, Lena Klockermann, Eva Stock, and Anne Glaser. 2014. *Repository of Adaptation Indicators: Real Case Examples from National Monitoring and Evaluation Systems*. GIZ & IISD. 74pp. https://www.adaptationcommunity.net/?wpfb_dl=221

Kusek, Jody Zall, and Ray C. Rist. 2014. *Ten Steps to a Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation System*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank. 268pp. https://www.oecd.org/dac/peer-reviews/World%20bank%202004%2010_Steps_to_a_Results_Based_ME_System.pdf

PACT. 2016. *Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Learning (MERL) for Peacebuilding Programs*. Washington, D.C.: Pact. 136pp. https://www.pactworld.org/library/monitoring-evaluation-reporting-and-learning-peacebuilding-programs

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). 2009. *Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation for Development Results*. New York, NY: UNDP. 232pp. http://web.undp.org/evaluation/handbook/documents/english/pme-handbook.pdf

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