Final Report for Five Day Training Workshops on

Project Cycle Management

Submitted to:
Save the Children International

Submitted by:
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Introduction

Risalat Consultants International FZE vied in a bidding for delivering two separate, five day, sessions of training programs for the provincial staff of Save the Children International in Urozgan Province. The bid was successful and the assignment was awarded to Risalat. This document details the proceedings of the second session which was on Project Cycle Management.

The session was delivered between 22\textsuperscript{nd} and 26\textsuperscript{th} of February, 2015 and a total of 15 senior level staff of SCI Urozgan participated in the program.

Training Objectives

Apart from the core concepts in PCM, some additional concepts in Leadership, Communication Skills and Strategic Planning were also shared with the participants. As the session was intended for senior level management staff at SCI Urozgan, it was aimed at enabling the participants accomplish the following:

- Understand the essential concepts in ‘full circle’ managing of a project in an organization.
- Identify the root causes of problems faced by target beneficiaries and identify viable solutions for them.
- Prepare, analyze and utilize a Logical Framework Matrix while planning and managing a project.
- Define their role as a leader and identify how that role differs from other roles they have had.
- Understand the management challenge and the new functions of management.
- Discover how they can prepare for and embrace the forces of change.
- Facilitate team performance.
- Enhance their ability to effectively communicate in writing and though oral presentations.
- Prepare effectively for giving and conducting interview.
- Develop comprehensive reports for projects and other assignments.
- Influence people in the right direction.
- Communicate effectively with team members.
- Think strategically and align their team with company’s mission.
- Achieve results through people.
Program Timing

In order to facilitate trainees take care some essential official engagements during the workday, each day’s session would start an hour later than start of working hours i.e. at 09:00 am and end an hour before CoB i.e. at 03:00 pm.

There was a tea break of 15 minutes at 10:30 and an hour break for lunch at 12:30 pm.

Course Facilitator

All the five days of the session were covered by one of Risalat’s highly skilled and experienced trainers, Mr. Emal Khan Hekmaty. He has several years of experience in designing, managing and delivering different consulting assignments, both here in Afghanistan and overseas.

Workshop Contents

With the main focus on PCM, the program also included some topics in Leadership, Strategic Planning and Communication Skills. Following are the topics covered under each subject:

**Project Cycle Management**

- Understanding The Project Cycle
- The Identification phase
- Types of needs assessment research methods
- Quantitative and Qualitative research tools
- Preparing a Concept Note
- Project Design
- Stakeholder Analysis
- Problem Analysis
- Preparing and utilizing a Logical Framework (Log Frame) Matrix
- Setting Indicators
- Project Budgeting
- The Implementation Phase
- Activity Reporting
- The Evaluation Phase
- The M&E process – steps to help assess impact
- Writing a Terms of Reference (TOR) for an Evaluation

**Leadership**

- Learning organizations
- Core skills like communication, body language, delegation, meetings, and time management
- Understanding the trust cycle and building trust
- Managing change
- Achieving Personal Mastery
- Achieving a Shared Vision
- Systems Thinking
- Managers vs. Leaders
- Influence Strategies
- Doing Delegation Right

**Strategic Planning**

- What Does Strategic Planning Actually Mean
- What are Our Values
- Identifying a Vision and Setting a Mission
- Where are We (SWOT Analysis)
- Framing Goals And Objectives
- Getting The Work Done
- The Strategic Planning Cycle
- Obtaining Buy-Ins And Support
- Making It Happen
- Different Ways Of Presenting A Strategic Plan

**Communication Skills**

- The Components of Communication
- Non-verbal Communication
- 7 C’s of Effective Communication
- Public Speaking and Oral Reporting
- Written Communication – Letters
- Constructing Clear Sentences and Paragraphs
- Delivering Good and Bad News
- Short and Long Formal Reports
- Technology Enabled Communication
- E-mail Writing
- The Job Search Process and building an effective Resume/CV
- Interviews
- Successful Business and Group Meetings

Program Procedures in Detail

The program started with recitation of a few verses from the Holy Quran by one of the participants. This was followed by a general introduction of the trainer and the trainees to one another.

Before the formal session started, a brief pre-test was conducted asking five questions aimed at gauging the participants’ existing knowledge of the topics in PCM and the additional topics as they are already involved in managing projects and their activities require them to have some leadership and planning skills as well as be able to communicate effectively.

Before starting the session discussions, basic rules and guidelines, like putting phones on silent timelines, respecting others’ ideas etc. for the training program to be applicable during the training days. Program participants were asked about their expectations form the workshop which were to be reviewed at the end of the session jointly by the trainer and the trainees.

Out of the five days the program consisted, the first two days were allocated to PCM as that was the main purpose of the training. The remaining three days were covered by leadership, Communication Skills and Strategic Planning.

Each day was started with explanation of the concepts by the trainer on the multimedia projector, asking questions from trainees and sharing of their experiences regarding the topic at hand. They would also take notes apart from the prepared handout provided by Risalat to all of the trainees.

A variety of training methodologies were utilized by the trainer which were all aimed at ensuring all the delegates are involved and they actively participate in the learning process.

Each new day would start with a recap of the previous day’s main topics. The trainees also asked questions about some issues which were not included in the training discussions, but were relevant to the concepts discussed in the workshop.
At the end of the program a post-test was administered with similar questions to those of the pre-test. This was aimed at gauging the understanding of the participants about the topics delivered during the training as compared to their existing knowledge before the session.

An end of workshop, final evaluation was conducted by the trainer which included questions about delegates’ views on different aspects of the training. Overall, their views are positive and appreciative, which are summarized at the end of this report.

**Facilitation Techniques**

The course leader utilized a multitude of training techniques and approaches which included general explanation of the topics, question and answer, brainstorming sessions, group discussions, and practical implementation of the topics by trainees.

Different methods of delivery were employed in order to guarantee effective communication of all the topics at hand and that the participants get the concepts clearly, as well as practice what they learn.

**Challenges**

The only challenge faced during delivery of the program was managing the delivery of all the topics within the given five days. This is because the topics initially requested by SCI were later added upon by some additional topics which lengthened the whole program, hence reducing the overall time for some practical activities and more detailed discussions. However, this did not cause any topics to be overlooked or left out from the program.

**Effect of the Training Program**

After analyzing the tests conducted before and after the training, as well as the ideas expressed and discussions by the delegates during the training, it can be concluded that there have been improvements in their knowledge and understanding of the concepts shared during the training program.
The following graph summarizes the results from the pre and post tests conducted before and after the workshop:
The graphs below summarize the training participants’ feedback regarding different aspects of the workshop: