

**PROJECT PROPOSAL WRITING**  
**(A Tool for Resource Mobilization and**  
**Effective Attainment of Organization**  
**Objectives)**

OJI OGBUREKE, PhD

November 2011

# OBJECTIVES OF THE PRESENTATION

- By the end of the presentation, participants will be able to:
  - Define a project and a project proposal
  - Explain a project cycle and how a project proposal fits into it
  - Understand the role of the project proposal and activities related to each stage
  - Structure a good project proposal

# OBJECTIVES OF THE PRESENTATION - Continued

- By the end of the presentation, participants will be able to:
  - Define a logical framework
  - Explain the uses of a logical framework
  - Understand the relationship of the different parts of a logical framework
  - Develop a logical framework

# OUTLINE OF THE PRESENTATION

- The outline of the presentation include the following:
  - What is a project, project cycle, and a project proposal?
  - Where is project proposal writing in the project cycle?
  - How are project elements formulated?
  - What should be done before writing a project proposal?

# OUTLINE OF THE PRESENTATION - Continued

- How is a project proposal written?
- What are the main terms of the proposal writing process?
- What is a logical framework?
- What are the uses of a logical framework?
- How is a logical framework developed?

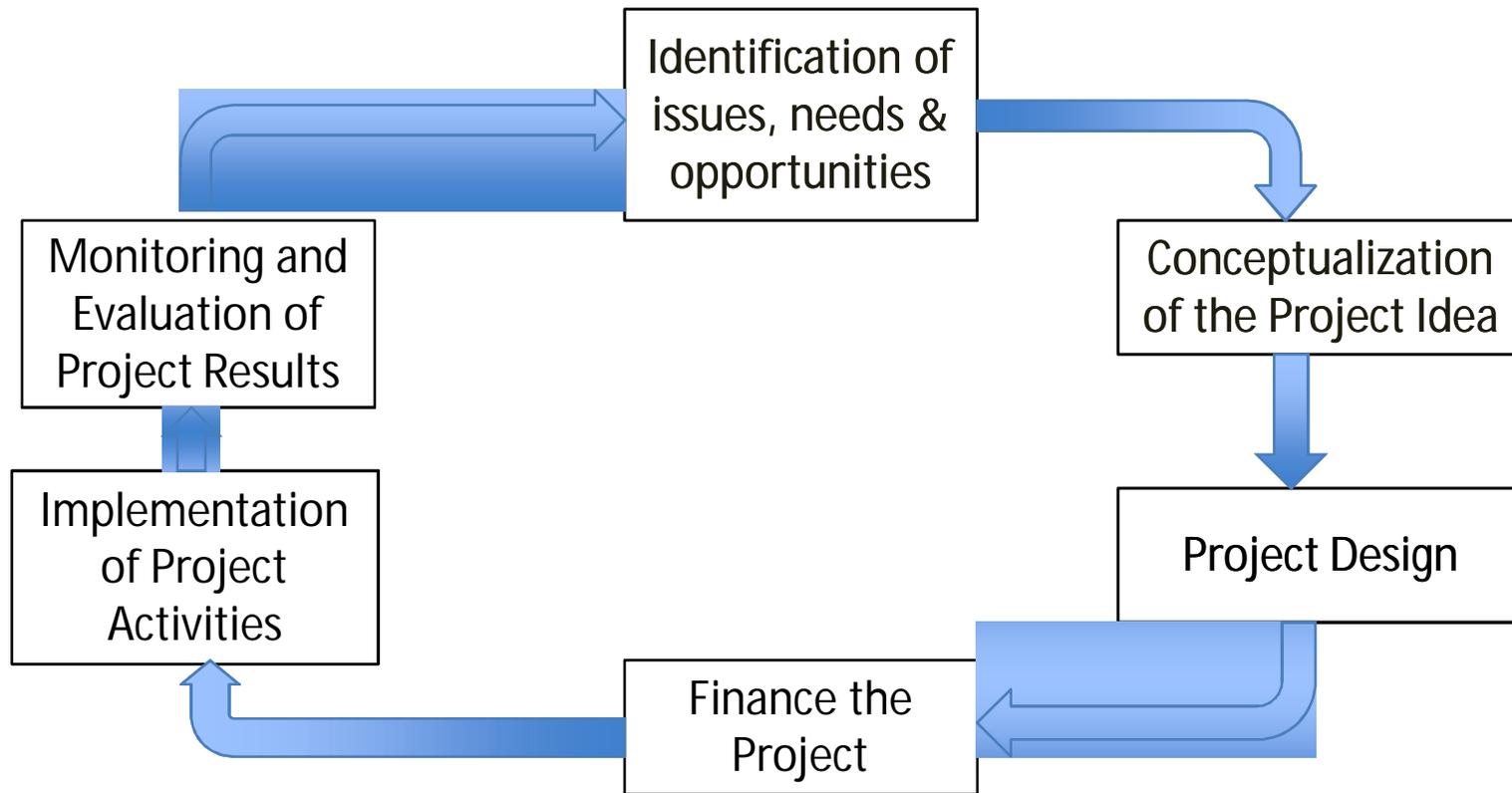
# WHAT IS A PROJECT?

- A project is a series of activities systematically designed and carried out with the aim of achieving clearly defined objectives or goals.
- A project must be based on the organization's larger plan – usually the strategic plan of the organization.
- A project is not:
  - Past activities that are repeated in exactly the same way on a periodic basis.
  - Activities with no clearly defined goals/objectives.
  - Ongoing (regular organizational activities (e.g. regular monitoring activities or board meetings))

# WHAT IS A PROJECT CYCLE?

- A project cycle is a logical sequence of events consisting of the following:
  - Identification of issues/needs or opportunities
  - Conceptualization of the project idea
  - Designing of the project
  - Financing of the project
  - Implementation of project activities
  - Monitoring and evaluation

# WHAT IS A PROJECT CYCLE? - Continued



# WHAT IS A PROJECT PROPOSAL?

- A project proposal is a detailed description of a series of activities aimed at solving a certain problem.
- Generally, a project proposal contains a detailed presentation of the following:
  - Project Justification (why the project)
  - Project Goal and Objectives (what the project intends to achieve)
  - Project Methodology (how the project will be carried out)

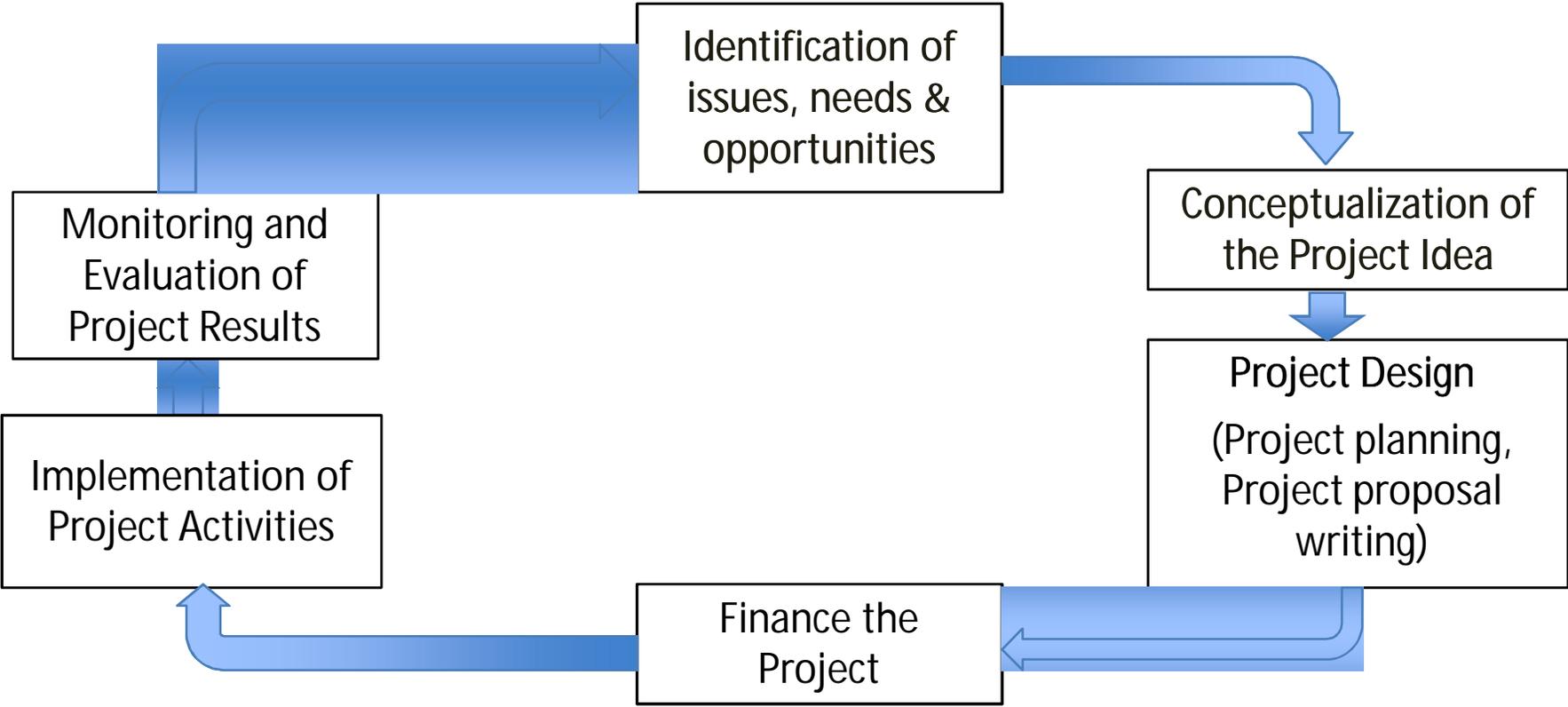
# WHAT IS A PROJECT PROPOSAL? - Continued

- Project Activities (what must be carried out)
- Project Implementation Timeline
- Human, Material and Financial Resources needed to execute the project
- The project proposal is a tool – not a goal.

# ELEMENTS OF A PROJECT PROPOSAL

- Project title
- Goals and objectives of the project
- Description of project activities
- Description of expected project results
- Project implementation plan
- Beginning of operations
- Resource allocations
- Project personnel
- Detailed project budget (including sources of funds)
- Logical framework

# WHERE IS PROJECT PROPOSAL WRITING IN A PROJECT CYCLE? -



# PRIOR TO WRITING A PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **What should be done prior to writing a project proposal:**
  - **Collect Primary information:**
    - Conduct surveys such as situational analysis, baseline, etc.
    - Interview past and prospective beneficiaries
    - Hold community meetings or forums
    - Consult experts' opinion
  - **Collect Secondary information:**
    - Review past project evaluation reports
    - Look for and verify statistical data
    - Review past project proposals

# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- What should be the structure of the project proposal?
- This is usually determined by:
  - Nature of the project
  - Funding agency's requirements
- However, common parts of most project proposal structures include – See subsequent slides.

# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **TITLE PAGE:**

- Also called the **cover page**, indicates:

- the project title
    - The name of the lead organization
    - The names of the other organizations collaborating with the lead organization, if any
    - The date and place of the project preparation
    - The name of the donor agency (or potential sponsoring agency) to whom the proposal will be sent to

# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **PROJECT TITLE:**

- Should be short (not too long)
- Should be concise (not too general)
- Can refer to a certain key project result or leading project activity
- Should be able to tell the reader what to expect from the content of the proposal

# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **Which of the project titles are effective?**
  1. Environment Education
  2. Communities Track State Budget Allocations and Expenditures in Edo State, Nigeria
  3. Protection of the Watershed of Lake Osi from the Wastewater Flowing through Ogi River Originating from Local Households in Nigeria
  4. Citizens Protect Lake Chad in Borno State, Nigeria

# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **CONTENTS PAGE**

- Proposals with more than 10 pages should have contents page, and should include:

- Table of Contents
    - List of Figures (if any)
    - List of Tables (if any)
    - Acronyms (if any)

# WRITING A PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- The summary should include:
  - The problem statement
  - The project's objectives
  - The project methodology
  - Implementing organizations
  - Key project activities
  - The project duration, and
  - The total project budget
- The executive summary is usually written after developing the proposal, and is often not more than two (2) pages.
- Could even be less than a page depending on the length of the proposal

# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **CONTEXT (BACKGROUND)**

- Describes social, economic, political, and cultural background from which the project is initiated
- Should contain relevant data collected prior to the proposal writing
- The length should balance with the size of the overall proposal

# WRITING A PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **PROJECT JUSTIFICATION (RATIONALE)**

- **Problem statement**

- Describes the specific problem or problems the project is trying to solve
    - Points out why a certain issue is a problem for the community or society as a whole
    - Explains how the needs of the target group are a direct consequence of the described problem (s)

# WRITING A PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **PROJECT JUSTIFICATION (RATIONALE) – Conti.**

- **Priority needs:**

- Prioritize the identified needs
- Explain the criteria or method used in prioritizing the needs identified

- **Proposed approach (methodology):**

- Describes the strategy or strategies chosen to deal with the problem (s) and how it will lead to improvement
- For example, if the priority need is (***improved access to safe water and sanitation***) – approaches that can be used could include - (describe each approach):
  - Provision of affordable and appropriate water facilities to the community; and
  - Promotion of Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) for all households in the community.

# WRITING A PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **PROJECT JUSTIFICATION (RATIONALE) – Conti.**
  - **Implementing organization:**
    - Present the capability of your organization, which includes the capacity and previous project records.
    - Explain why your organization is the most appropriate to carry out the project.
    - To what extent is your organization connected to the local community?
    - Which is your organization's constituency?
    - What expertise is your organization bringing on board?
    - What is the capacity of your collaborating partners? If any.

# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **PROJECT GOAL (PURPOSE/AIM)**

- Describes what the long term benefits to the target group are.
- Enables you to understand what the core problem is and why the project is important.
- Rules for setting a project goal:
  - Try to have only one goal per project
  - The goal should be connected to the vision for development
  - It is difficult to measure the accomplishment of the goal using measurable indicators, but it should be possible to prove its merits and contribution to the vision

# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **PROJECT GOAL (PURPOSE/AIM) - Continued**

- **Examples of the project goals:**

- Improving the quality of life in Igbere community
    - Eradicating poverty and social injustice among women in Edo State
    - Eliminating maternal mortality in Edo State

# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

- States in concrete terms the benefits to be received by the project beneficiaries or target group as a direct result of the project
- Provides a more detailed breakdown of the project goal
- Most projects usually have more than one objectives

# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

- Project objectives must be **SMART**

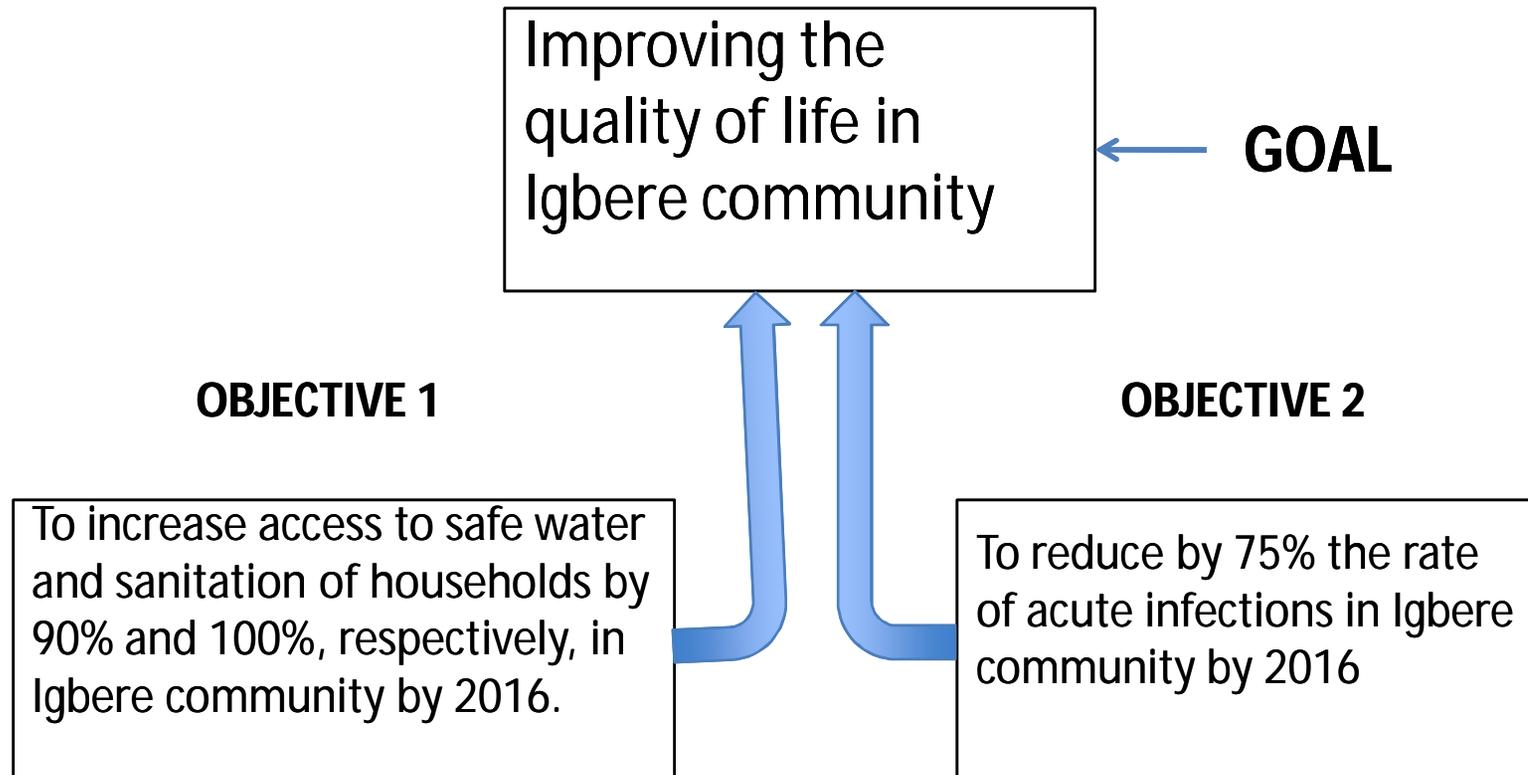
- **S** = Specific
- **M** = Measurable
- **A** = Attainable
- **R** = Realistic
- **T** = Time bound

- Examples:

- Increase access to safe water and sanitation of households by 90% and 100%, respectively, in Igbere community by 2016.
- Reduce by 75% the rate of acute infections in Igbere community by 2016

# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **Relationship of a Goal and Objectives:**



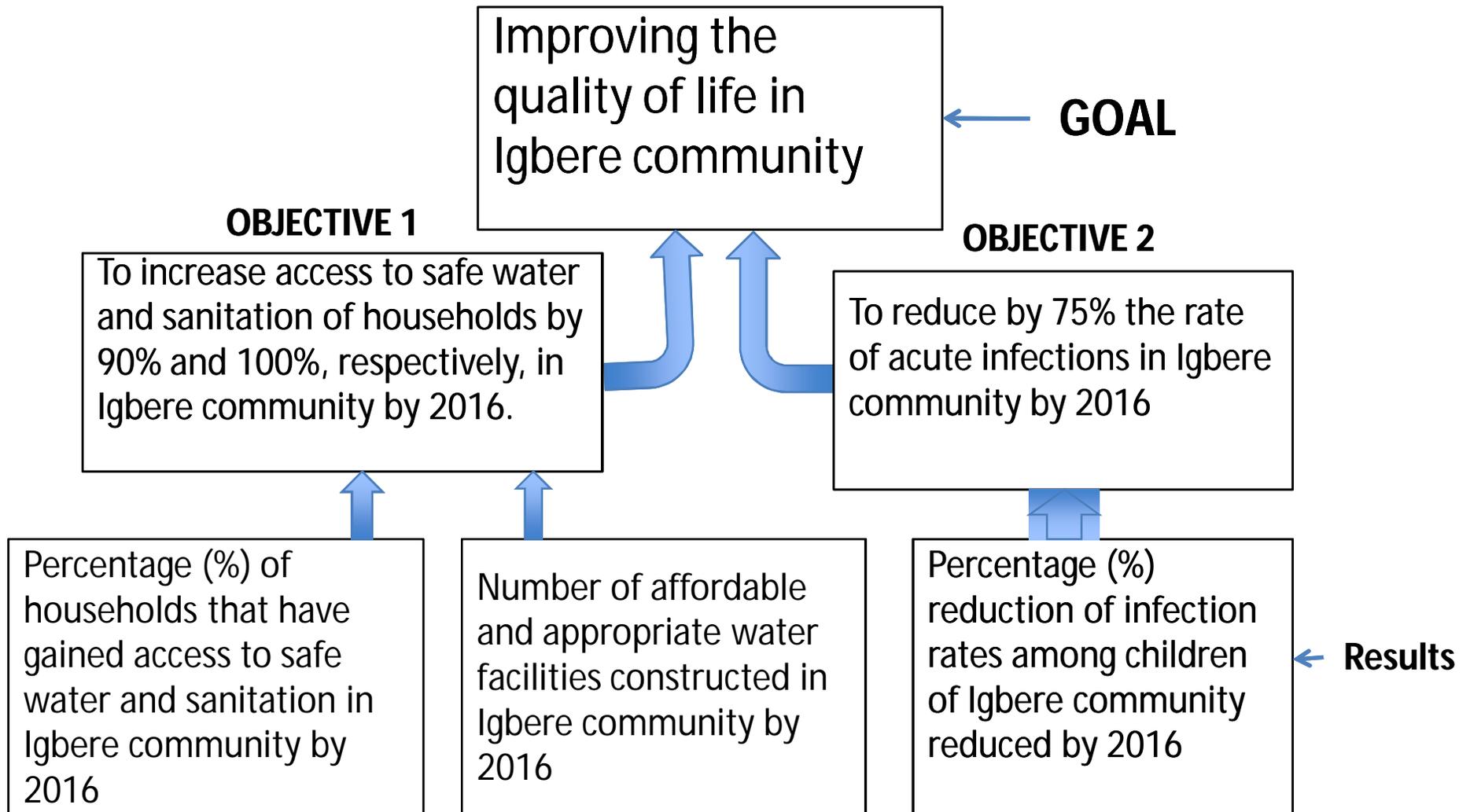
# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **PROJECT RESULTS**

- Describes the services or products to be delivered to the target group directly from the project
- Should be measured through the use of objective indicators
- Examples:
  - Percentage (%) of households that have gained access to safe water and sanitation in Igbere community by 2016
  - Number of affordable and appropriate water facilities constructed in Igbere community by 2016
  - Percentage (%) reduction of infection rates among children of Igbere community reduced by 2016.

# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **Relationship of a Goal, Objectives and Results:**



# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **TARGET GROUP:**
  - Provide a detailed characteristics of the target group.
  - Who will be the direct beneficiaries of the project
  - What is the size and characteristics of the target group?
  - Target group analysis may include:
    - Age
    - Geographical location
    - Ethnicity
    - Gender
    - Religious affiliation
    - Occupation
    - Economic and social status
    - Others

# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION:**

- Describes in details activities and resource allocation.
- Who will implement the project activities?
- When will the project activities be implemented?
- Where will the project activities be implemented?
- A project implementation can be divided into two:
  - Activity Plan
  - Resource Plan

# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION – Continued**

- **Activity Plan**:- includes

- Specific information and explanation of each of the planned project activities
    - A clear statement of the duration of the project
    - When will the project begin and end?
    - Suggested format to present the activity plan:
      - **Simple activity table** – that shows sub-activities, tasks, timing and responsibility
      - **Gantt Chart** – that shows the dependence and sequence for each activity

# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION – Continued**

- **Steps involved in preparing an activity plan:**

- List all project activities.
    - Break activities into manageable sub-activities, and then into tasks – avoid breaking activities into too many activities.
    - Clarify sequence and dependence – by relating activities to each other to determine their sequence and dependence.
    - Draw up a timeline for each task – by giving each task a start up date, a duration, and a completion date.
    - Summarize the scheduling of main activities – by summarizing the timing of the entire main activity

# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION – Continued**

- **Steps involved in preparing an activity plan: - Continued**

- Use milestones – Milestones are key events that provide a measure of project progress and targets for the project team to aim for.
    - Define expertise – The level of expertise needed should be decided for each task separately.
    - Allocate tasks among the team – Distribute responsibilities in consultation with the members of the team.

# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

## PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION – Activity Plan in a Simple Table

ACTIVITIES/TASKS	IMPLEMENTATION TIME			RESPONSIBILITY
	Start	End	Note	
<b>1. Community Mobilization</b>	<b>Oct. 10, 2011</b>	<b>Nov. 23, 2011</b>		<b>Program Manager</b>
<b>1.1. Arrangement with two radio stations in the state to request for expression of interest by communities</b>	<b>Oct. 10, 2011</b>	<b>Oct. 11, 2011</b>		<b>Communication Officer</b>
<b>1.2. Preparation of radio messages and selection criteria</b>	<b>Oct. 10, 2011</b>	<b>Oct. 12, 2011</b>		<b>Communication Officer</b>
<b>1.3. Announcement over the radio calling for expression of interest from communities</b>	<b>Oct. 14, 2011</b>	<b>Oct. 26, 2011</b>		<b>Communication Officer/Radio Station</b>
<b>1.4. Selection of and notification to communities</b>	<b>Oct. 27, 2011</b>	<b>Oct. 31, 2011</b>		<b>Program Manager/Coordinator</b>
<b>1.5. Meeting with community leaders</b>	<b>Nov. 15, 2011</b>	<b>Nov. 23, 2011</b>		<b>Program Manager/Coordinator</b>

# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

## PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION – A Gantt Chart

ACTIVITY	IMPLEMENTATION TIME			RESPONSIBILITY
	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	
1. Design and implement training program for project management	XXXXXXXX			Program Manager (PM)
1.1. Conduct needs assessment		XXXXXXXX		Consultant
1.2. Design training modules			XXXXXXX	Consultant
1.3. Conduct training			XXXXXXX	Consultant
2. Improve procedure for project management	XXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXX	XXXXXXX	Program Manager
2.1. Conduct management audit of current procedures		XXXXXXXX		Consultant

# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **Project Implementation – Continued**

- **Resource Plan**

- Establish cost categories – e.g. Administrative, Capacity Building (or Training), Equipment, Operations (Overhead), etc.
    - Summarize the cost information for budgeting
    - Identify units, quantity per period, and estimated unit costs.
    - Calculate costs per period and total project costs



# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **PROJECT BUDGET:**

- A budget is an itemized summary of an organization's expected income and expenses over a period of time.
- Budget format vary from organization to organization and from donor to donor.
- It is very necessary that an organization compiles strictly and punctually with its donor organization's budgeting and reporting requirements.

# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **PROJECT BUDGET – Continued**

- **Two main elements of a budget:**

- **Income (Revenue)** – the amount of financial assets and in-kind contributions used as source of support for the project. Sometimes sources are multiple, each source must be reported.
- **Expenditure (Expenses or Costs)** – all the costs that are anticipated to occur during the project's implementation.

- **Budget categories** – classify expenditures into smaller groups according to a certain criteria – enables effective monitoring of expenditure

# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **PROJECT BUDGET - Continued:**
  - **Two main costs are:**
    - **Direct costs** – costs associated with direct project activities - (e.g. a training workshop).
    - **Operational costs** – expenses related to internal activities of the organization and are considered fixed costs in the short term – (e.g. staff salaries, rent, utilities, etc.)
  - **Units, Quantity per Period and Estimated Unit Costs** – are used to calculate costs associated with direct and operational costs.

# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

## PROJECT BUDGET: SAMPLE INCOME FORM (in EUR)

- **Total Budget 21,345**
  - **Income:**
    - Mark Foundation 12,345
    - Contribution from LG 8,000
    - From Organization 1,000
    - Total Income: 21,345**

## PROJECT BUDGET: SAMPLE EXPENDITURE FORM (in EUR)

- **Total Budget 21,345**
  - **Expenditures**
    - Salaries (6 months at EUR500 per month) 3,000
    - Consultants (3 trainers x 3 days x 3 trainings x EUR 100 per day: 2,700
    - Office supplies 1,345
    - Travel and lodging 4,250
    - Direct costs 8,750
    - Equipment 3,300
    - Total Expenditure 21,345**

# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

- Monitoring – can be defined as the ongoing process by which stakeholders obtain regular feedback on the process being made towards achieving goals and objectives.
- Evaluation is a rigorous and independent assessment of either completed or ongoing activities to determine the extent to which they are achieving stated objectives and contributing to decision making (*Sources – Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation for Development Results. UNDP 2009. Page 8*)

# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **MONITORING AND EVALUATION - Continued**
  - Formulate clear indicators for each objective and result
  - Indicate how and when to conduct monitoring and evaluation activities to determine project's progress and outcome
  - State which methods will be used to monitor and evaluate the project
  - Identify who will carry out the project evaluation.

# **WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL**

- **MANAGEMENT AND PERSONNEL:**

- Describe the project personnel including the individual roles each will play.
- Explain the communication mechanisms that exist between the positions.
- Other information such as CVs should be attached to the annexes.

# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **REPORTING:**

- Present the schedule of project progress and financial reporting in the proposal – usually this according to donor requirement.
- Reporting could be quarterly, six monthly, and annually.
- Terminal reporting is also usually required.
- Donors usually provide their own reporting format for narrative and financial reports.
- Reporting should not only be activity based, but also result and outcome based.
- Lessons, challenges and way forward should be included in the report.
- Qualitative and quantitative data should be used to develop the report.

# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **ANNEXES:**

- Annexes should include all the information that is important, but too large to be included in the text of the proposal.
- The usual documentation to be annexed to the project proposal is:
  - Analysis related to the general context (e.g. a civil society sector assessment)
  - Policy documents and strategic papers (e.g. a local environmental action plan);

# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **ANNEXES – Continued**

- The usual documentation to be annexed to the project proposal is:

- Information on the implementing organizations (e.g. annual reports, success stories, brochures and other publications);
    - Additional information on the project management structure and personnel (CVs for the members of the project team);
    - Maps of the location of the target area; and
    - Project management procedures and forms (organizational charts, forms, etc.)

## WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **LOGICAL FRAMEWORK (or LogFrame):**
  - A tool used to describe major elements of a project.
  - It gives answers to questions about the why, what ,how, who, where and when of a project.
  - It is presented a 4 by 4 matrix
  - The first column of the matrix systematically presents the project overall objective, the purpose, mid-term results, and the activities.

# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **LOGICAL FRAMEWORK (or LogFrame):**
  - The second and third column presents the corresponding indicators and their sources of information.
  - The fourth column presents important assumptions that are beyond the direct control of the project but that need to be fulfilled for the successful implementation of the project

# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **Logical Framework Matrix:**

OVERALL OBJECTIVE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	
PROJECT PURPOSE	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
RESULTS	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
ACTIVITIES	MEANS	COSTS	ASSUMPTIONS

# WRITING THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

- **WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH LOGICAL FRAMEWORK?**
  - Can contribute to improved planning of a project or program
  - Promotes objective-led rather than activity-led planning
  - Facilitates linkages between micro-planning and macro-planning
  - Facilitates management of diverse activities unified by common objectives
  - Forces those involved to be explicit about the implications of carrying out planned activities, in terms of resources, assumptions and risks.

**THANK YOU**