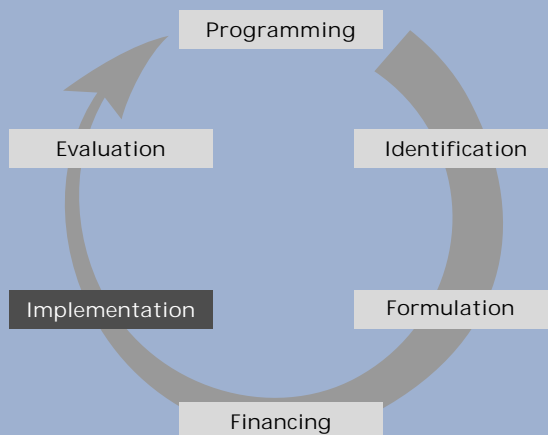


Implementation

Execution of the project plan

Chapter 10



10

The purpose of the implementation stage is the efficient creation of physical structures and institutional systems to yield a sustainable flow of benefits. During implementation, activities are carried out according to a timetable and financial plan. Special conditions must be satisfied, and regular monitoring and supervision conducted.



For all phases of the project cycle other than programming, checklists have been prepared in the same format, to allow the user of the Guidelines to examine key issues likely to arise in the preparation and implementation of projects, alongside possible responses. Issues and responses are grouped according to a set of problem statements within the framework of principles established in the strategic

approach, starting with Institutional and Management principles, and proceeding through all categories of principles. In the Identification and Formulation phases, each programming context is handled separately since issues and responses differ between Focus Areas. In other phases, issues and responses are generic, and the same set of checklists applies in every Focus Area.

ALL FOCUS AREAS

KEY ISSUES

POSSIBLE RESPONSES

Implementation Monitoring¹

Effective control of costs, contracts, and budget disbursement are essential to ensure project compliance with implementation targets. Therefore examine:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Is the agreed local budget component being released on schedule? ● Are project costs in line with budget? ● To what extent is the award and supervision of contracts transparent and efficient? ● What mechanisms have been established for financial accountability? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Discuss any local budget shortfall at an appropriate government level. ■ Where costs exceed budget, identify causal factors and correct. If impossible, reduce the scope or scale of the activity. ■ Discuss the tender and award procedures with appropriate agencies to ensure correct, timely application of EC procurement procedures. ■ Agree financial management procedures with the implementing agency. |
|--|---|

Changes in policy objectives and economic factors external to the project may necessitate revision to reflect their influence on project benefits. Therefore examine:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have there been significant changes in the project context since financing was secured? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Carry out a Mid-term Review to re-assess the project objectives, outputs and activities to determine their influence on its viability. ■ In Mid-term Review, determine what changes can be made to the scale, scope and schedule of the project. |
|--|---|

¹ Monitoring of implementation addresses general issues that cut across the guiding principles.

It is important that conditions built into the financing agreement for the project are fulfilled. Therefore examine:

- **Have the pre-conditions, agreed at the time of financing, been fully satisfied?**
- **Are there specified conditionalities to be satisfied during implementation and are these being met?**
- Discuss unsatisfied pre-conditions with the relevant agency. Consider renegotiating the financing agreement.
- Monitor progress on all conditionalities and discuss any failings with the implementing agency.

Monitoring and supervision of all aspects of the project must be effective, and allow planned revision of targets and other remedial actions to be made in good time. Therefore examine:

- **Are appropriate data being collected to permit timely calculation of input, output and impact indicators relating to all the guiding principles?**
- **Are project progress reports serving a useful purpose?**
- **Is there a need for any additional project supervision?**
- Review monitoring and evaluation procedures, and undertake further training as necessary.
- Verify that progress reports are being used to highlight rather than disguise problems.
- Where problems are encountered, commission Mid-term Review to revise the project and log frame.
- Discuss the need for further capacity building or external supervision to enhance project monitoring.

Institutional and Management Principles

Changes in the structure of implementing agencies may weaken (or improve) their capability to implement the project or programme. Therefore examine:

- **Have changes in the structure of the implementing agency, since financing was secured, altered their ability to implement the project?**
- **Does the schedule of project activity still seem realistic?**
- Re-assess the implementation schedule and propose revisions.
- Identify if additional consultancy support may be required to meet shortfalls.
- Consider whether other public or private sector agencies should be brought in.

Measures to improve inter-sectoral and inter-agency planning may meet with resistance, thereby hindering implementation. Therefore examine:

- **Are weaknesses in the strategic plan or developments in other sectors or other agencies affecting implementation?**
- **If the project was predicated on institutional reforms, have these been carried out?**
- **Are different agencies fulfilling their roles and responsibilities?**
- Identify weaknesses in existing procedures for integrated planning and recommend improvements.
- Identify what remedial actions may be taken to reduce inter-sectoral conflicts and integrate implementation with other programmes and projects.
- Monitor compliance with pre-conditions relating to institutional change, discuss shortcomings and try to find remedies. Where this is impossible, modify the project framework.

Sustainability of services requires that users and operators understand and fulfil their responsibilities for O&M. Therefore examine:

- **Is the strategy for handing over services to the operating agency and/or users well-defined and does it seem likely to work?**
- Ensure that the hand-over plan and associated training requirements are defined and running on schedule.
- Propose remedies where the strategy is not working well in practice.

There is a danger that training and capacity-building measures, defined at formulation, are cut back during implementation or are ineffectual. Therefore examine:

- **Are the implementing agencies managing project implementation – financial management, user participation, data collection, monitoring – satisfactorily?**
- **Have suitable staff been recruited and retained to fill key project posts?**
- **Is the agency developing its human resources over the long term?**
- **Is there a need for strengthening the implementing agency's management capacity in the short term?**
- Where under-performance is evident, discuss with the implementing agency and identify remedial actions.
- Identify ways to attract and retain suitably qualified staff.
- Verify that training is providing the required skills.
- Review the agency's human resource development strategy and make recommendations for improvements.
- Identify what additional consultancy support may be required and how it may be funded.

Management information systems may need revision if the nature or scope of the project are revised during implementation. Therefore examine:

- **Are effective management systems in place?**
- **Are the project planning and procurement mechanisms working effectively?**
- **Does the quantity and quality of data collected match the needs of the project and permit effective monitoring and management decision-making?**
- Where management systems appear weak or open to malpractice discuss practical improvements with government.
- Review the operation of systems established for data collection, storage and processing and make necessary revisions.
- If the project scope or objectives are revised, ensure that management information systems are still appropriate.

Social Principles

Intervention may disrupt traditional user rights to land and water resources and lead to increased inequalities between stakeholders. Therefore examine:

- **Are compensation measures for land consolidation and land taken for rights of way acceptable?**
- **Are compensation measures adequate for those losing traditional rights to water?**
- **Is there evidence of detrimental social impact that was unforeseen during formulation?**
- Ensure that affected parties have full information regarding expected project benefits. Consult with stakeholders, and improve compensation if necessary.
- Define the extent, nature and causes of the detrimental social impact and modify the project's implementation to reduce the problem.

Where a community-based approach is used the community may want to modify the scope of the project during implementation. Therefore examine:

- **Are local communities requesting changes or additions to the project?**
- **Are the targeted stakeholders, including the disadvantaged, women and minority groups able to participate in implementation decisions?**
- **Is the participation of different stakeholder groups equitable, accountable and transparent?**
- **Are key target groups receiving benefits from the project as intended?**
- Assess requests to determine if changes can be incorporated. If not, present the issues to the community and examine alternative strategies.
- Identify those stakeholders who are marginalised, and develop methods for their participation.
- Encourage participation processes that avoid any one group gaining undue influence or control.
- Identify what factors are preventing social benefits from reaching the target groups and revise the project approach to overcome them.

The financing proposal may identify effective women's participation as central to the project's success. Therefore examine:

- **Are women centrally involved in implementation activities?**
- **Are women represented on a significant proportion of all committees at decision-making levels?**
- **Initiate discussions and actions to improve the participation of women in the management of project activities.**
- **Review the structure of committees. Where necessary and practicable, seek to increase the proportion of women.**

Economic and Financial Principles

Changes in economic factors occurring between financing and implementation may require revision of the project. Therefore examine:

- **Have any factors changed that may result in the project not bringing about the intended economic benefits for any beneficiary group?**
- **Identify the factors that may reduce economic benefit. Discuss these with relevant parties and modify project activities as required.**

Long-term financial sustainability must be planned for during implementation. Therefore examine:

- **Are the mechanisms intended to ensure cost recovery and the financial sustainability of the project being put in place?**
- **Are monitoring procedures in place to determine the financial sustainability of the project?**
- **Initiate discussions with government to ensure that necessary human, financial and physical resources are in place.**
- **Strengthen training and capacity building concerning cost recovery procedures.**
- **Ensure that all parties understand the data gathering and reporting procedures needed to facilitate cost recovery.**

Co-ordination of funds from different sources is essential to avoid wastage and project delay. Therefore examine:

- **Are contributions from different government and donor sources well co-ordinated?**
- **Initiate donor co-ordination meetings at an appropriate level.**

Environmental Principles

Environmental damage may result because adverse impacts were previously unrecognised or inadequate resources provided for mitigating measures. Therefore examine:

- **Is the project having any unforeseen environmental impacts?**
- **Are institutional structures and equipment in place to permit effective environmental monitoring during and after implementation?**
- **Are the mitigating measures defined during project formulation being fully implemented?**
- Review the environmental monitoring procedures and advise government as to their adequacy and sustainability.
- Review the implementation of mitigating measures to assess their adequacy, sustainability and acceptability.
- Check with stakeholder representatives to see if there are unforeseen environmental consequences. If necessary, define new mitigating actions.

Information, Education and Communication Principles

Information obtained from project monitoring should be used to shape and direct the implementation process. Therefore examine:

- **Is information on project performance being circulated to all stakeholders, or merely being held in unread reports?**
- **Are project reports being analysed and used to inform project management decisions?**
- Use process and impact indicators to evaluate if project implementation is on schedule and meeting objectives.
- If indicators cannot be calculated, appear unreliable or inadequate, review monitoring and evaluation procedures.

Provision of information and clarity of procedure are necessary for conflict resolution between different stakeholder interests. Therefore verify:

- **Are implementing agencies providing adequate information to stakeholders and ensuring transparency of purpose?**
- **Are health education programmes reaching all beneficiaries including disadvantaged and minority groups?**
- Ensure that proposed information dissemination measures – workshops, newsletters, village meetings, etc. – are implemented.
- Ensure that training of government staff and other stakeholders in information management is carried out.
- Use performance indicators to review health education efforts (*see Part III*) and make appropriate recommendations for change.

Technological Principles

Where construction quality is poor or equipment is badly specified, systems may fail prematurely and maintenance costs will be high. Therefore examine:

- **Are project consultants and contractors performing adequately?**
- **Is supervision of construction and commissioning of systems adequate?**
- **Are construction works being monitored to ensure quality and adherence to design specifications?**
- **Is the equipment procured proving satisfactory?**
- **Have adequate repair provisions, including spare parts, been made?**
- Monitor the effectiveness of consultants and contractors against agreed performance indicators. Where necessary consider revoking contracts or applying penalties.
- Identify means of strengthening the technical supervision of construction.
- Put in place repair workshops, trained workers, spares, stock control, etc.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of any installed equipment and use the findings to influence subsequent procurement.

Technology that was judged appropriate at the design stage may prove in-appropriate as implementation proceeds. Therefore examine:

- **Are any weaknesses in technical design becoming apparent?**
- **Are users showing a willingness and ability to take responsibility for operation and maintenance of equipment?**
- **Do local agency staff understand the technology and know its operation and maintenance requirements?**
- **Is indigenous knowledge being incorporated into designs?**
- **Carry out a mid-term review, mandating technical experts to recommend revisions to design, equipment specification or other corrective action.**
- **Review the training programmes that are in place for the end users of all new technologies.**
- **Examine the possibility of adopting alternative technical solutions, including appropriate indigenous technologies.**

Technological and construction aspects usually represent the major capital and recurrent cost items. Therefore examine:

- **Are the implementation costs within budget estimates?**
- **Is the project delayed?**
- **Is the original design proving to be inappropriate or likely to result in high O&M or other recurrent cost problems?**
- **Identify the reasons for higher than expected costs and if necessary revise designs.**
- **If higher costs are due to external factors (e.g. major currency fluctuations, climate change) consider revisions to the project to remain within budget, seek additional funding or, under severe conditions, recommend project closure.**
- **Ensure that issues of cost over-run are addressed in the terms of reference (TOR) of any mid-term review.**