



Diocese of
Mangochi

WORKSHOP REPORT

TRAINING REPORT ON PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT

CARITAS MANGOCHI

Mwema Lodge, Mangochi Malawi

18-22 March 2024

Submitted to: The Mangochi Diocesan CADECOM Coordinator



Bishop Montfort Stima during opening ceremony for proposal development training for Mangochi Diocesan staff on 18th March 2024



Executive Summary

Catholic Development Commission in Malawi (CADECOM), Mangochi is the official relief and development arm of the Catholic Diocese of Mangochi in Malawi. The Diocese of Mangochi covers three districts namely Balaka, Machinga and Mangochi. It is one of the commissions under the Social Development Directorate of the Diocese. Other Commissions are Catholic Justice and Peace, Health and Education Commission. CADECOM works with vulnerable communities in the three districts in Development and Humanitarian programmes with financial support from internal and external development partners. To access both internal and external funds, CADECOM competes with other organizations by responding to request to applications by submitting a concept note or a project proposal.

CADECOM as an organization has been doing internal capacity assessment and the development partners have also conducted organizational capacity assessment. The internal and external organizational capacity assessment revealed that CADECOM programme and accounting members of staff knowledge and skills in the development of competitive project concept note and proposal and budgeting need strengthening. To address this gap, CADECOM requested the services of Caritas Africa to conduct a capacity building training in resource mobilization for its key 9 programme and accounting staff to address the challenges faced.

The training workshop was facilitated by Mr. Carsterns Mulume from 18th – 22nd March 2024. The training methodology included presentations, group work, hands on practice in writing concept note and plenary sessions. Later trainees got hand-outs, soft materials and sample proposals, concepts to assist to have the much-required experience.

The workshop was officially opened by Bishop Montfort Stima who is the Local Ordinary of the Diocese.

The workshop was guided by two objectives: (1) to introduce the concept, process, and approach of proposal development workshop participants and (2) to provide practical tools, hands on practice in writing concepts and proposals. The aim of the workshop was to strengthen the-capacity of technical staff in Mangochi to learn the whole process of proposal development from situation analysis until a proposal is submitted.

The trained staff developed a roadmap to guide them in ensuring that they put into practice all what they learnt. According to the evaluation after the training, all participants expressed confidence to write a winning proposal. The following sections describe the process and output of the workshop.



Background

Mangochi like any other institution which depends on funding for its operations has been affected by reduced funding from partners. In a situation like this where funding is not flowing in as it used to be, it's hard not to panic. A common reaction for non-profit organisations faced with funding problems is to write more proposals, launch more appeals among others.

However, this outreach strategy isn't just about the frequency of your communication. It's also about understanding how your development partners and donors and potential donors are feeling and tailoring your approach to match their needs. In particular, you need to be careful of "donor fatigue", a situation where donors become emotionally indifferent to donation requests. Donor fatigue can be brought about by several factors, including:

- Too-frequent appeals for funding.
- Difficult personal circumstances.
- Economic difficulties, such as a cost-of-living crisis.
- Disillusionment with rate or effect of change.

For institutions like Mangochi CADECOM, understanding donor fatigue and implementing strategies to counteract it are critical to maintaining the flow of generosity that sustains their activities. In an era marked by global challenges, from climate crises, to wars, to pandemics, the demand on donors has never been higher. This saturation of need, coupled with the constant barrage of devastating news, can lead to compassion fatigue. Donors often feel their contributions are just a drop in the ocean, leading to frustration and a decline in the willingness to give. This emotional burnout and withdrawal pose a significant challenge for charitable organisations.

Donor fatigue is a complex issue that NGOs cannot afford to ignore, especially in times plagued by multiple global crises. While the challenge is formidable, it is not insurmountable. By employing strategies that respect, value, and engage donors, non-profits can maintain and even expand their funding streams. Capitalizing on the giving season, sharing success stories, being transparent, expanding donor networks, and fostering a sense of community are all strategies that can reinvigorate existing donors and attract new ones.

In the end, combatting donor fatigue is about reinforcing the human connection between those in need and those with the capacity to help. It's about reminding each person behind every donation that they are essential, valued, and part of a collective effort to make the world a better place. In doing so, non-profits can continue to inspire generosity, compassion, and action, even in the face of the most daunting global challenges.

It is against this background that Mangochi diocese organized this training to equip its social development staff with necessary skills and competences to respond to calls for proposals.

SECTION I: Official Opening and Welcome Remarks

The opening session was facilitated by Mr. Pieter Nthenda who is the Diocesan CADECOM Coordinator. Mr. Nthenda introduced the facilitator, Mr. Carsterns Mulume, who is also the Regional Humanitarian Programme Officer at Caritas Africa and then the guest of honour, His Lordship Bishop Stima.

The meeting started with an opening prayer then introduction of participants followed

i. **Keynote address: His Lordship, Mgr. Bishop Montfort Stima, Bishop of Mangochi Diocese**

The proposal training workshop was officially opened by Bishop Montfort Stima of Mangochi diocese. In his remarks, His Lordship used the adage of *sikadzwa kokha kaopa kulaula* encouraging participants to work hard in designing and implementing competitive project proposals that will serve the community with dignity without creed according to the social teachings of the Catholic Church.

He encouraged the staff to “Be innovative, cast widely so that you can make a huge catch.”

He then thanked, SCIAF, the partner who provided funding for this training. He also thanked the facilitators for accepting to train the staff. He finally encouraged all the participants to take the training seriously so that it bears fruits.



Figure 1 “*Sikadzwa kokha, kaopa kulaula*” said His Lordship Montfort Stima

SECTION II: Training Workshop proceedings

I. Introductions to the workshop and objectives

In this session, the workshop objectives were shared and discussed. They included:

The facilitator highlighted the workshop objectives which included equipping participants with practical skills on how to write winning proposals; encouraging participants to also look beyond proposal development and embrace wider resource mobilization techniques. At the end of the workshop, the expected outputs were a full training report, draft concept on an existing call and a strengthened resource mobilization team in Mangochi.

Pre workshop formalities which comprised climate setting, expectations, workshop rules etc. and presentation of training module outline are as attached.

The introduction sessions also included re-familiarizing training participants with basic terminologies used in proposal and resource mobilization.

1.1. Presentation on what resource mobilization is

This presentation was made with an objective of making participants understand the difference between resource mobilization and proposal development. Participants were also taken through the definition of a grant and the processes of accessing a grant. This was aimed at ensuring that they understand the standard Guidelines for Request for Proposals.

II. Difference between concept note and full proposal.

The participants were taught the primary differences between a concept note and a fully developed proposal. Ideally, a concept note is a brief, but powerful, document that serves as a preview of any proposed project or initiative. That it acts as a prelude to the full project proposal, offering potential funders a glimpse into the project's key objectives, activities, expected outcomes, and budget estimates.

The main objective of a concept note is to capture the attention of potential funders, enticing them to invite you to submit a comprehensive project proposal. Techniques of how to write a concept note were shared with participants and they also practiced on a real-life call for proposal. A full proposal should mostly be done after you are sure that you will be funded after getting a positive response from the concept submitted.



III. Grant project design

Participants were taken through the basic steps and processes which are required to understand in grant project design and the following presentations were facilitated:

1. Basics of a Project (Project Cycle Management)
2. Problem Analysis and objective tree analysis
3. Project Design Tools (Logical Framework and Results Framework)

Basics of a Project (Project Cycle Management)

This presentation was done to share different stages of Project Cycle Management (PCM). It was aimed at ensuring that by the end of the session, participants can:

1. Define what a project is and appreciate its three main principles
2. Understand the PIFIE stages and what each stage is all about.

Problem tree analysis

This session discussed stages of problem analysis to be done to understand the actual problems of a particular community or participants.

It was aimed at ensuring that at the end of the session, participants should be able to

1. Carry out problem tree analysis
2. Come up with a list of core problems to be addressed.

Define the Problem Tree Terms

It was emphasized that its important to be clear about the terms and definitions used in the problem tree. The following definitions and examples can be used in exercises with partners and communities. **Problem:** A problem is a specific negative situation related to the human condition.

A **problem** is not the absence of a solution because this would presuppose the type of intervention, which may or may not be the most appropriate. Problem trees use problem statements (sentences that contain a “who,” “what,” and “where”) written next to the trunk to launch the discussion of causes and effects.

A weak problem statement might look like this: *Some poor people in parts of Balaka district do not have enough money to provide good health care for their children, who suffer from diseases for which there are available immunizations.* This statement does not clearly specify who is affected or where they are located. It states the problem as the absence of a solution rather than the presence of a problem.



Figure 2. Participants discussing a problem statement

A stronger problem statement looks like this: High measles mortality rates are found in children under five in urban Mangochi. You now know who (children under five), what (high rates of mortality due to measles) and where (urban Mangochi), and the problem statement does not presuppose what is the best approach for tackling this issue.

Cause: A cause is an underlying factor that exists in the household, community, organization, or external environment that has brought about the problem. Drought, inadequate maternal care, or the poor quality of medical service delivery may be causes of the problem of high mortality rates among infants.

Effect: Effects are social, environmental, political, or economic conditions, usually negative, that result from the problem. One likely effect of high HIV/AIDS prevalence rates among adults is large numbers of orphans. Similarly, lower primary school attendance rates would be an effect of high mortality rates due to HIV/AIDS among productive adults.

Objective tree analysis

This session was aimed at providing a practical/visual presentation of an Objective tree and how that can be used to inform goals, objectives, strategies as well as activities.

At the end of the session, participants were able to carry out an objective tree assessment and used the information collected to fill in a logical framework.

IV. Project Design Tools

It was emphasized that in project design, there is need to understand the logical framework as well as the results framework.

i. Developing a logical framework

This session was facilitated to allow participants to practice doing a needs assessment and fill in the problem tree and using the information, to fill in a log frame. Participants were briefed that results of the stakeholder, problem, objectives, and strategy analysis are used as the basis for preparing the Logical Framework Matrix. It was emphasized that the participants should understand that the logical framework analysis is an analytical process and set of tools used to support project planning and management. The analysis aids thinking and allows information to be analysed and organised in a structured way. Basically, the analytical process should lead to the Logical Framework Matrix as a product of the process.

A simple four by four matrix was presented but it was emphasized that different partners may use different matrices but understanding this simple matrix is key to filling in all the other matrices as requested and demanded by partners.



Figure 23 Group discussion on Logical Framework

This session learning objectives for the training participants were as follows:

- Explain the purpose of a logframe and structure of logframe.
- Compare and contrast components, purpose, and structure of results frameworks and logframes;
- Explain the purpose of identifying assumptions in logic models; and
- List and describe several measurement
- Methods and the contexts in which they are used.

Logframe will vary in terms of the number of levels and the terms used to describe those levels. The logframe template used by your project will depend on your donor’s requirements or—if the donor doesn’t have specific requirements, use template followed by your organization.

Simulation exercises were conducted with the training participants. For example, participants created a 4 by 4 Logical Frame based on information available as collected during needs assessment using the problem tree. Thereafter, participants filled in own Logical Framework based the project they are developing and using information from the problem tree and objective tree analysis.

The Logical Framework Matrix (LFM) - typical structure

Project Description	Indicators	Source of Verification	Assumptions
Overall Objective – The project’s contribution to policy or programme objectives (impact)	How the OO is to be measured including Quantity, Quality, Time?	How will the information be collected, when and by whom?	
Purpose – Direct benefits to the target group(s)	How the Purpose is to be measured including Quantity, Quality, Time	As above	If the Purpose is achieved, what assumptions must hold true to achieve the OO?
Results – Tangible products or services delivered by the project	How the results are to be measured including Quantity, Quality, Time	As above	If Results are achieved, what assumptions must hold true to achieve the Purpose?
Activities – Tasks that have to be undertaken to deliver the desired results			If Activities are completed, what assumptions must hold true to deliver the results?

ii. **Creating a Results Framework**

This session was facilitated to enable participants understand a Results Framework and fill in the form. It was emphasized that the results framework (RF) presents an operating unit’s strategy for achieving a specific objective. Typically, it is laid out in graphic form and supplemented by a narrative. A RF includes the objective and the intermediate results necessary to achieve it. The framework also conveys the development hypothesis implicit in the strategy and the cause-and-effect linkages between the intermediate results and the objective. It includes any critical assumptions that must hold for the development hypothesis to lead to achieving the relevant objective.

Assumptions are especially important in the Logframe because they complement the “vertical logic” of the hierarchy of objectives by introducing the “horizontal logic” of the project. Making the assumptions explicit provides a reality check by pointing out that vertical logic succeeds *if and only if* the assumptions at each level of the Logframe hold true. The table below describes the assumptions.

Objectives statements		Assumptions
Goal		
Strategic objectives	←	IF the strategic objectives are met and the assumptions hold true at the strategic objectives level, THEN they should all contribute to the goal
Intermediate results	←	IF the intermediate results are produced and the assumptions hold true at the intermediate results level, THEN the strategic objectives can be met
Outputs	←	IF the outputs are completed and the assumptions hold true at the outputs level, THEN the intermediate results can be produced
Activities	←	IF the activities are conducted and the assumptions hold true at the activities level, THEN the outputs can be completed

V. **Understanding indicators and means of verification.**

This session was meant to provide participants with practical and easy ways of creating indicators and how to verify the same and why indicators are important.

The participants were able to differentiate different types of indicators and were able to create own indicators based on information they had from the previous sessions.

It was emphasized that basically there are four types of indicators as below:

Input indications: Which describe what goes on in the project (e.g. number of bricks brought on site and amount of money spent);

Output indicators: Which describe the project activity (e.g. number of classrooms built);

Outcome indicators: Which describe the product of the activity (e.g. number of pupils attending the school);

Impact indicators: Which measure change in conditions of the community (e.g. reduced illiteracy in the community)

The facilitator stressed that the indicators must be **Practical** in a sense that they must measure what is important in the hierarchy of results rather than what is easy to measure. They must measure change that is attributable to the project.

Also to note that indicators and the corresponding data collection methods they imply must be cost effective.

Secondly, the indicators must be **Targeted**- in terms of quantity, quality, and time (QQT) and other attributes as below.

Quantity- how much? - how much is good enough for achieving the next higher-level results?

Quality- how well? – What kind of crops, farmers, graduates etc

Time – by when? (dates)

An ideal performance indicator statement normally specifies seven elements of change – albeit not in any particular order. This is the “gold standard”, but it may not be possible in every instance. When developing a performance indicator consider these seven elements, but then use your own best judgment as to what is appropriate given your situation.

- ① Nature – What, fundamentally, is the core of the planned change or achievement at each level? Example: Use of water.
- ② Quantity – What quantities or levels in the nature of the indicator are involved? Example: Increased use of water.
- ③ Quality – To what national, international, or other standards will this change hopefully be achieved? Example: Clean water, perhaps as defined by the World Health Organization’s standards.
- ④ Beneficiary subgroup – Which subgroups will benefit from the change? While it depends on the objective level and the project, subgroups usually include households (single female-headed, poor, landless, pastoralist, living with HIV/AIDS, etc.) and individuals (women, men, youth, children of certain ages or sexes, etc.). Also, CRS, partner, community groups and government agency staff might be recipients of training and resources. Example: Rural households in the Eastern District.
- ⑤ Target – What is the planned improvement across the total life of the project in terms of people or resources for this indicator? Setting targets is likely to be informed by local knowledge and any secondary baseline information you have. Example: 10,000 rural households.

- ⑥ Timeline – When is it expected that the target will be achieved? Example: By November 2026.
- ⑦ Baseline – It is important to mention the comparison with the baseline in the indicator statement, if in fact baseline data will be collected. Often baseline measures are not known when proposals are submitted; in this case a baseline survey is planned as a first-year activity. In some cases, a baseline measure can be estimated from available secondary data or from your experience with similar work. This may help to set appropriate targets for project achievement.

It is also important to disaggregate performance indicator statements by sex, where appropriate.

For example: **Final indicator** By November 2026 (timeline), 10,000 (target) additional (baseline) rural households in Mangochi District (participants) enjoy increased (quantity) use of (nature) clean (quality) water (nature).

VI. Risks, Assumptions, stakeholders and Project Activities

This session allowed participants to appreciate the risks associated with projects and the assumptions as well as how to come up with activities in a project and identification of stakeholders. At the end of the sessions, participants were able to identify risks and assumptions and created concrete activities to achieve an outcome and identified stakeholders.

VII. Practical grant writing session

This session involved practical writing of grants and participants were taken through actual steps involved as below:

1. Preparation of grants
2. Core components of grants
3. Submitting proposal and follow up
4. Budgeting

VIII: Project Reporting; Projects Office; Project documentation

This session allowed participants to appreciate how reporting is done and its importance, what is the role of every officer in project reporting as well as importance of documentation and how to document success stories/stories of change as part of resource mobilization and project management.

IX. Projects Monitoring and evaluation

This session enabled participants to appreciate the difference between monitoring and evaluation and how to carry out the same.

At the end of the session, participants understood the importance of monitoring and evaluation.

It was emphasized that monitoring is a process of observing project progress and resource utilization and anticipating deviations from planned expectations. It is continuous or periodic checking and overseeing by the management at every level of implementation on an activity to ensure that inputs, work plans, expected outputs and other required actions are going on well according to plan.

The facilitator observed that components to measure during monitoring vary from project to project but all in all, the following should be measured in monitoring:

- Input – Output (performance)
- Progress of work: (technical performance)
- Time performance;
- Cost performance

In addition to the above it is also important to monitor any unusual situation or events

While evaluation is a process which attempt to determine critically, systematically, and objectively the worth of a project, whether it is proposed, on going or competed. It is a process of assessment of performance at a particular point in time or after the completion of the project. The following components must be measured when doing an evaluation of a project: Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact and Sustainability.

X. Crosscutting themes.

Participants were encouraged to consider cross cutting themes in any project that may apply as appropriate as below:

- Gender
- Safeguarding. is our responsibility to ensure that our staff and programs honor and protect the rights and dignity of all people—especially children and vulnerable adults—to live free from abuse and harm.
- Catholic Social Teaching
- COVID
- HIV
- Environment



XI. Budgeting

This session allowed participants to appreciate the importance of proper budgeting, the need for budget notes, at what time does budgeting starts as well as what gets into a budget. It was elaborated that accountants/finance personnel are part of the project management team.

XII. Appendices

It was emphasized that all proposal should have a detailed implementation plan which is well numbered, and these numbers should correspond to the narrative, budget as well as the log frame.

XIII. Action planning

After the training, participants came up with their action plans as in the appendix below:

ACTION	DATE	RESPONSIBLE PERSON
Finalizing problem tree analysis	5/4/2024	Mangochi team
Sharing the finalized problem tree to facilitators for comments	5/4/2024	Mangochi team
Evaluation reports	8/4/2024	All participants
Individual training reports	8/4/2024 (14:00 hours)	All participants
Training report and sharing of training materials	11/4/2024	Facilitators
Individual submission of problem statement assignments	10/4/2024	Mangochi team
Consolidation of complete problem statement and concept note	12 and 13 /4/2024	Mangochi team
Sharing complete concept note to facilitators	16/4/2024	Mangochi team representative
Feedback from facilitators on the concept note	18/4/2024	Facilitators
Incorporate facilitators feedback	19/4/2024	Mangochi team
Final review	20/4/2024	Facilitators
Submit to donor	21/4/2024	Mangochi team



Diocese of
Mangochi

SECTION III: Proposal Development workshop Closing Session

Mr. Nthenda facilitated the closing session which was officially closed by the Director of Social Development, Rev. Fr. Raphael Mkuzi who expressed delight that the workshop was a success and that participants were equipped with the necessary skills to mobilize resources through proposal develop.

He observed that the workshop was a step in unifying all commissions to work together in writing winning proposals to mobilize resources that will help the diocese to run its affairs. "The just ended workshop is a way of embracing the common mission and vision of our Diocese. Work therefore, towards the common goal. In unity, you will achieve," said Fr. Mkuzi.

He thanked the facilitator for the dedication and expressed hope that the participants will now take up the challenge of writing winning proposals.

He then blessed all participants and declared the workshop closed.

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Diocese of
Mangochi

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

	Participants Name
1	Frank Nangwale
2	Fr. John
3	Enelesi Charles
4	Peter Makundi
5	Tapiwa Gama
6	Madalo
7	Fr. Christopher Sichinga
8	Gasiano Nicholas
9	Pieter Nthenda
10	Catherine Mesa
11	Catherine
12	Jack
13	Fr. Raphael Mkuzi
14	Leonard
15	Fr. John