

# Implementation Tips for USAID Partners

Sharing Resources and Knowledge Among the Global CSO Community

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## Definitions

**Workplan**—Document that lays out your planned activities, the resources required and the targets.

## References

[UN Work Planning Guide for Managers](#)

[Work Plan Template](#)

## Using Your Workplan as a Management Tool

**Q.** How can we best take advantage of our approved workplan?

**A.** The transition from project planning to implementation is a challenging part of program management. If you use your workplan as a planning tool and as a management tool, the transition to implementation is much easier.

Assign each section of your workplan to appropriate individuals or teams. For example, assign the budget section to your finance staff, the section on targets to the monitoring and evaluation staff, the activities section to the program staff and so on.

Each person assigned should review the actual implementation and monitor progress against the workplan and note:

- Are all the steps in the workplan being followed?
- Are additional steps necessary that were not planned for?
- Will these additional steps require additional funds or resources for the program to be successful?
- Were the time estimates realistic? Are things taking longer or going faster?
- Do any changes need to be made in light of your answers and do these changes require USAID approval (see sidebar on the next page)?

By giving ownership of each section to different project team members, the entire team is involved in keeping the plan on track and working together to make adjustments and improve program implementation.

## A Model from Workplan to Implementation

As a service provider, your unique approach to your work is your implementation model. Your model describes how you do your work, the costs associated and the expected results. All of these elements are captured in your workplan. By treating these as components of your implementation model, your team can focus on how to improve your results.

## What changes need to be approved by USAID?

Some changes to your program will require USAID approval, including:

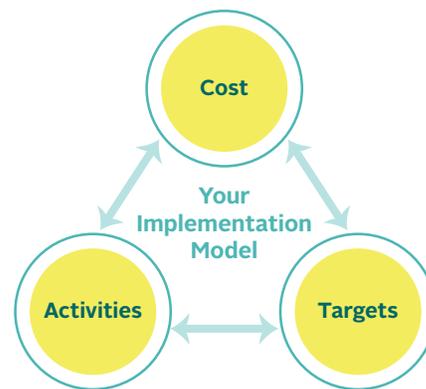
- changes in key personnel
- changes in targets
- changes in geographic scope
- budget modifications

The three primary components of your implementation model are:

1. *activity descriptions* (how you go about providing your services)
2. *cost/budget*
3. *indicators and targets* (both the USAID indicators and other internally developed indicators, including process indicators)

When you link these three elements together, you can begin to see how changes in one will affect the other two. Your model may start simply, but you can expand it by adding more detailed indicators to allow you to manage and evaluate your program on various levels. As you grow, you could scale up targets in your implementation model. The workplan will be similar since you are doing the same type of activity, but it will have an impact on your budget, since you may need more staff or more equipment to reach more people with services and achieve the revised targets.

### Three main components of your implementation model



On the other hand, if you decide to increase the types of activities you are undertaking (for example, you have a home-based care program and add an orphans and vulnerable children component) you will have to expand your workplan. You will require additional funds for implementation and you will also have a new set of indicators and targets that will need to be addressed. You should assess your organizational capacity to expand your program to ensure that the capacity exists to achieve the activities you indicate need to be done.

## For More Information

For this or other issues of *Implementation Tips*, please visit [www.NGOConnect.net](http://www.NGOConnect.net). The Web site is a dynamic and interactive portal dedicated to connecting and strengthening CSOs, networks and CSO support organizations worldwide.

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## Next Steps

Meet with your team regularly to review progress made compared to the workplan.

- Is the project on time? On target? On budget?
- What adjustments have been or need to be made and why?
- How will you monitor the impact of those adjustments to make sure they are successful?
- Do any of the proposed changes require USAID approval?

Be sure to record the successes and failures and the decisions you make. This body of knowledge will become the foundation for your next workplan and future applications for funding. By continually monitoring your progress against your workplan, your workplan will evolve, continuously advancing your program and improving the services to beneficiaries.

