Cre8
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Failing to prepare things well means preparing to fail.

INTRODUCTION

Step 1 is the base of the project and provides an opportunity for the project initiator to discuss ideas with all stakeholders. This step is like filling an idea box: everyone should welcome all ideas with an open mind. Indeed, it is important to avoid drawing conclusions on issues and ideas at this stage at the risk of becoming too strict and stifling inspiration.

CONTENT AND GUIDELINES

During Step 1, the **PROJECT IDEA** is developed. This is the responsibility of the project initiator or initiators. Ideas mostly emanate from individuals. Even when brainstormed within a group, an idea can always be traced back to an individual.

If you have an idea, you can look for a quiet place to brainstorm about it within yourself. Then you can design a proposal – whether in words or otherwise (e.g. a drawing) – to present your ideas to others. On the basis of that proposal, you can approach others and share your ideas.

You can get inspiration from reading books or newspaper articles, watching videos or listening to music related to your idea. You could also visit museums, historic sites or even go on an observational tour around your village or town – anything that can help you crystallise your idea

for a project and make it viable in your specific context.

'MY IDEA BECOMES OUR IDEA'

The development of an idea for a project starts with individuals suggesting their ideas and other participants being invited to give their opinions on those ideas, thus transforming those from an individual's idea to a group idea. In the process, an idea first suggested by one participant may change into something different. Encourage all participants to share their ideas with each other, as this will help them to expand and enrich the project idea. Also when working with different partners, it is important to make sure they are also involved in the development of the idea.

It is advisable to record and store all relevant information that has been collected, for instance in a **project box**. In connection with the
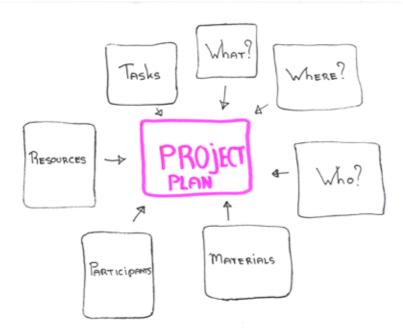

monitoring and evaluation, it is also advisable to document any information received either from or about each of the participants, including their specific expectations.

Once the project idea has been finalised, you as an initiator will be required to develop a **project setup plan**. This includes a list of things to be considered and decisions to be made in order to set up the project:

- Where will the project take place?
- Who will be involved in planning and supporting the project?
- Which resources are needed and how will they be mobilised. Those could include monetary or material resources, for instance rehearsal space. Can it be obtained for free from a local church, mosque, school, community centre, etc.?
- Who will be in charge of what (e.g. the artistic leader, the administrator, the finance manager)? Encourage the division of tasks such as PR (to be done by the administrator). The trick is to assign administrative and logistical tasks to as many participants as possible. To avoid confusion and duplication, make sure there are clear divisions between roles and reporting mechanisms.
- Who will be the participants (children, young people, etc.) and how will they be selected?
- Who will be the skills facilitators and what are their artistic disciplines?
- What kinds of training materials and/or training schedules will be required?

EXAMPLE

In 2004, Cre8's project coordinator went to Dunga Beach, just outside of Kisumu, Kenya. Here, the project idea and setup plan were developed from personal observations, from discussions with the children, and from interviews with their schoolteachers and local development organisations. As a result, Cre8 organised a children's theatre project that:

- was based on information and inspiration from the children with whom the project coordinator interacted
- dealt with hygiene and sanitation, as most children were often sick due to poor hygiene and a lack of proper sanitation
- dealt with the identification, development and exposure of artistic talent.

To prepare for the Dunga 'Okang Machielo' project, a group of children was assigned to go around the village with paper and pencils to draw things. At the end of the day they all came together and shared their ideas. One boy had drawn three pictures: one showing people cutting down trees, another portraying children begging for food and crying, and a third showing police arresting people who were cutting the trees. On the basis of these pictures, the dance group later developed a dance.

In Yala, the Cre8 team visited the village of Marenyo and sat down with some of the local young people who suggested ideas for a possible project. All the ideas were discussed at a round table and the strongest ones were adopted to form the basis for a project idea, which was later developed into a project setup plan.

Cre8 encourages the initiators to rely on local supporters such as local churches or mosques, community centres, family and friends. If you are already a well-established organisation, you can ask for material and financial contributions from members and maybe also from their relatives, etc. Cre8 also forms the project group, involving members from different partner organisations (use Internet search engines to explore different fundraising options and choose the one that is most appropriate for you. Use search phrases such as 'fundraising plan for grassroots youth groups' or 'fundraising plan for community arts project', etc.)

At the end of this first step, the initiating team will put together a PROJECT PLAN. This will serve as a guide for the team and can be used in writing a proposal that can be sent to potential donors. This is also when the MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN is developed and agreed (see page 10 &11).

CONCLUSION

Step 1 is when you develop an idea into a viable project plan. Involve as many stakeholders in that process from the start and remain open to their ideas and suggestions. Involve them in the practicalities of the project from the very start as well. This way, your idea for a project will be more likely to have the support of a larger group or community.

CHECK-OUT BOX

A Project Plan containing:
- **the goals of the project**
- **the expected results and impacts**
- **the target group**
- **the potential partners**
- **the location of the project**
- **the duration of the project**
- **the period of the project**
- **information about the budget and the available resources**
- **the target artistic skills / disciplines**
- **names of potential project team members**
- **a basic plan for how the project will be monitored, evaluated and reported**
- **a sustainability plan**