

# PROPOSAL WRITING

- before you begin writing -

**Believe that someone wants to give you the money!**



**Create a plan not just a proposal!**

**Do your homework: Research prospective donors!**

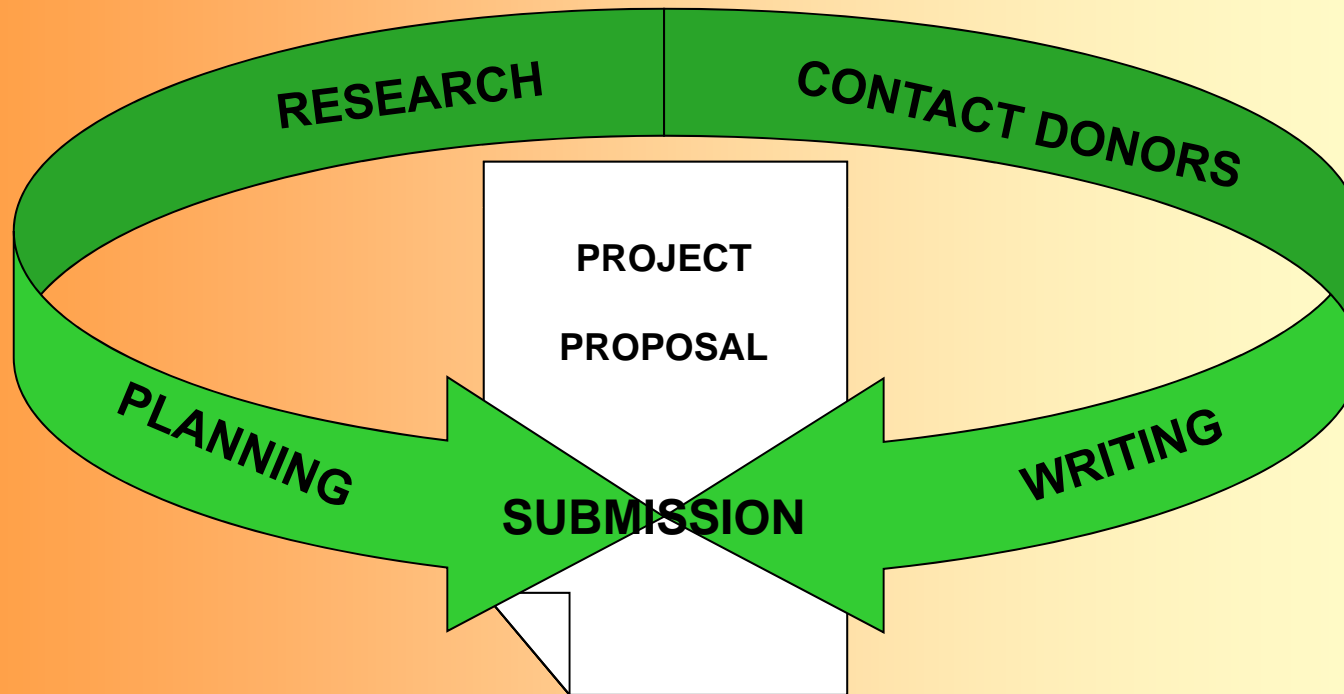


**If you need the money now, you have started too late!!!**



# PROJECT PROPOSAL WRITING

- create a plan -



TIME AND PERSISTENCE

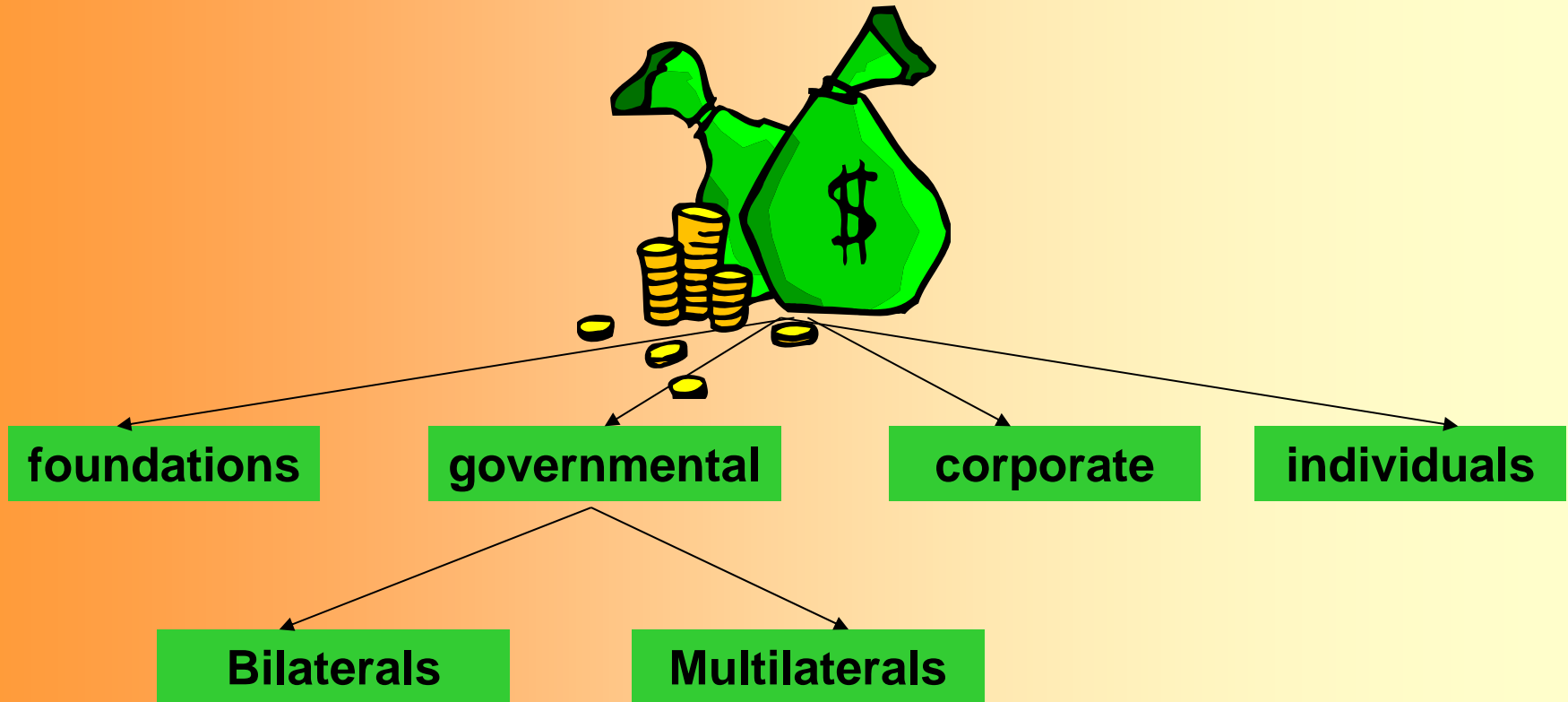
# RESEARCH BEFORE WRITING

## grant-making organizations/donors



1. Which are the most appropriate ones for your project?
2. Check internet, directories, catalogs, etc;
3. Obtain their guide books, guidelines, application procedures
4. Determine if they provide the type of resources you want;
5. What is the “usual” amount they disperse to a successful applicant?
6. Have they supported similar projects in the past?
7. Make sure they provide support to projects in your region;
8. Network with the donors;
9. **MAKE SURE YOUR PROPOSAL FITS WITH THE MISSION OF THE DONOR**

# TYPES OF GRANT MAKING ORGANIZATIONS



# FOUNDATIONS

- **Non-governmental, non-profit institutions created for the purpose of contributing to common good;**
- **Examples: Rockefeller, Mellon, Ford, Rufford, etc;**
- **Have own requirements for application, clear deadlines for various themes;**
- **The review processes are different from one foundation to another – SO PLEASE RESEARCH!!!**
- **COMMUNICATE WITH THE “CONTACT PERSON” TO ENSURE YOUR PROPOSAL FITS WITH THEIR MISSION;**



# GOVERNMENTAL - BILATERALS

- **Government of Angola has bilateral agreements with a number of governments (Examples: USAID, NORAD, DFID, DANIDA, etc.);**
- **The agreements usually provide an umbrella framework for the priorities that the two countries agreed to work on in various sectors;**
- **Each bilateral agency has its own set of application procedures;**
- **Usually offer support directly to the Government; however there are instances where there are specific grants for NGOs or where the bilateral prefers to work via non-governmental institutions;**
- **RESEARCH THE BILATERAL DONORS AND THEIR STRATEGY FOR SUPPORT TO ANGOLA;**
- **FIND OUT ABOUT UNSOLICITED PROPOSALS OR REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS;**
- **ORGANIZE MEETINGS WITH THE PERSON IN CHARGE OF ENVIRONMENTAL NATURAL RESOURCES.**



# GOVERNMENTAL - MULTILATERALS

- **WORLD BANK, UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, EUROPEAN UNION, etc.**
- **They work based on a Country Assistance Strategy, or similar documents;**
- **Each multilateral has its own set of application procedures and requires in most of cases Governmental endorsement;**
- **Usually offer support directly to the Government; however there are instances where there are specific grants for NGOs;**
- **The most popular financing instrument for biodiversity projects in this category is the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), which can be administered by WB, UNDP or UNEP;**
- **GEF offers: enabling activities grants, small, medium-sized and full size grants;**
- **CONTACT THEIR OFFICES IN LUANDA TO FIND OUT MORE!!!**



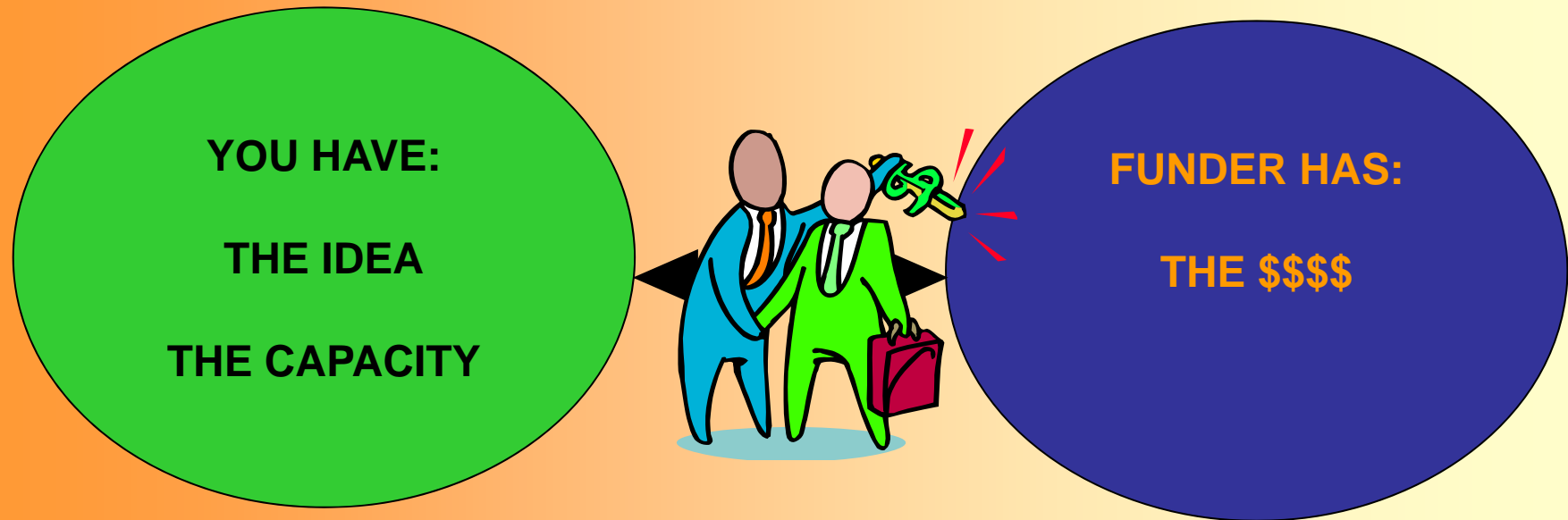
# CORPORATE DONORS – PRIVATE COMPANIES

- **Examples: Shell, BP, Texaco, Hewlett Packard, Microsoft, etc;**
- **Only fund projects that meet their needs and interest;**
- **Show the company a return in its investment;**
- **HAVE A SERIES OF MEETINGS WITH THE RELEVANT PEOPLE IN THE COMPANIES;**
- **ESTABLISH A PARTNERSHIP!!!**





# ESTABLISH PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE DONORS



# TYPES OF SUPPORT

**Project grant:** supports a specific project;

**Operating grant:** provides operating expenses for a specific project;

**Challenge grant:** provided only if the applicant secured matching funds;

**Technical assistance:** non-cash; skills development services, etc.

**Fellowships:** given to individuals; are educationally oriented;

**Awards and prizes:** are given on a competitive basis rewarding accomplishments or achievements.

# PROJECT PROPOSAL

## - General purpose -

- To persuade the reader to do something;
- To make the reader believe that the solution is practical and appropriate;
- Any proposal offers a plan to fill a need;
- The reader will evaluate your plan according to how well your written presentation answers the following questions:

WHAT you are proposing,  
HOW you plan to do it,  
WHEN you plan to do it,  
HOW MUCH it is going to cost.

# PROJECT PROPOSAL

## - Tips for writing -



- **Use the active, not the passive voice wherever possible;**
- **Write clear, concise sentences;**
- **Be careful in your use of language. Have a relative or friend outside of your area of expertise, read your proposal to make sure that the language is readable;**
- **Minimize the use of: jargon, trendy words, abbreviations, etc;**
- **Facts must lead logically and inevitably to the conclusion and/or the solution presented.**

# PROJECT PROPOSAL

## - Tips for writing -

- Give evidence in a *descending order of importance*, beginning with the most important evidence and ending with the least important;
- Anticipate and answer any questions that the reader might have;
- Consider all sides of the argument --- provide other alternative solutions and show how the one chosen is superior to the others included.



## GRANT PROPOSAL

- THERE IS NO ONE STANDARD FORM OF A GRANT PROPOSAL;
- EACH DONOR HAS ITS OWN FORMS AND GUIDELINES;
- MOST OF THEM INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING INFO (SECTIONS MIGHT BE CALLED DIFFERENTLY)

# GENERAL SECTIONS OF A PROJECT PROPOSAL

1. COVER PAGE/PROJECT TITLE
2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: **Umbrella statement**
3. PROBLEM STATEMENT: **Why is the project necessary?**
4. PROJECT DESCRIPTION: **How is the project implemented?**
  - 4.1. GOAL
  - 4.2. OBJECTIVES
  - 4.3. ACTIVITIES
  - 4.4. BENEFICIARIES
  - 4.5. SUSTAINABILITY
  - 4.6. MONITORING AND EVALUATION
5. BUDGET: **How much it will cost?**
6. INFORMATION ABOUT ORGANIZATION

# 1. COVER PAGE/PROJECT TITLE

- Usually the Title/Cover Page includes signatures of key people in your organization;
- If your proposal is built on collaborating with other groups/ organizations - include their names on the Title/Cover Page;
- Your cover should look professional and neat;
- Do not use fancy report covers, expensive binding, which will send the wrong message to the potential donor. You are trying to impress the potential donor with how you really need funding, not that you do things rather expensively!
- The title should be clear and unambiguous (do not make it "cute").



# 1. COVER PAGE/PROJECT TITLE

- **The words you use in your title should clearly reflect the focus of your proposal. The most important words should come first, then the less important words;**
- **Try and use only a single sentence for your title. If the sentence is getting too long remove some words;**
- **Do not attempt to use the title as an abstract of your entire proposal.**

## **2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- **The most important section of the entire document;**
- **The first part of the proposal package seen by the donor;**
- **Could be the only part of your proposal that is carefully reviewed before the decision is made to consider the project any further;**
- **Outlines the project proposal and summarizes all key information;**
- **Provides the reader with a snapshot of what is to follow;**
- **Should "paint a picture" of your proposal in the mind of the reader;**
- **Is a sales document designed to convince the reader that this project should be considered for support.**

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### GENERAL PRINCIPLES TO FOLLOW IN WRITING IT:

- Prepare it after you have completed the entire proposal (and you understand all aspects of your proposal very well);
- Keep in mind that someone will be reviewing your proposal and you would like to have this person be very positive about what you have written;
- Work on it so that you can avoid giving the reviewer the opportunity to say things like:

*Not an original idea*

*Rationale is weak*

*Writing is vague*

*Uncertain outcomes*

*Does not have relevant experience*

*Problem is not important*

*Proposal is unfocused*

*Project is too large.*

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

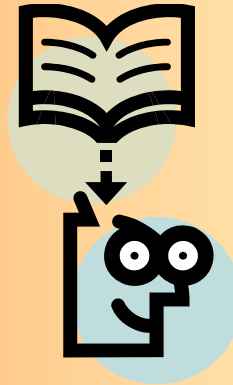
### GENERAL PRINCIPLES TO FOLLOW IN WRITING IT:

- **Be specific and concise;**
- **Do not go into detail on aspects of your proposal that are further clarified at a later point in your proposal;**
- **Highlight the interests of your collaborating institutions (if any).**

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### WHAT TO INCLUDE?

- **Problem** — a brief statement of the problem or need your organization has recognized and is prepared to address (one or two paragraphs);
- **Solution** — a short description of the project, including what will take place and how many stakeholders will benefit from the program, how and where it will operate, for how long, and who will staff it (one or two paragraphs);
- **Funding requirements**— an explanation of the amount of grant money required for the project and what your plans are for funding it in the future (one paragraph); and
- **Organization and its expertise**— a brief statement of the name, history, purpose, and activities of your agency, emphasizing its capacity to carry out this proposal (one paragraph).



**If the funder reads beyond the executive summary, you have successfully piqued his or her interest. Your next task is to build on this initial interest in your project by enabling the funder to understand the problem that the project will remedy.**

### **3. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

- **Key element of a proposal;**
- **Clear, concise, well-supported statement of the problem to be overcome using the grant funding;**
- **Include data collected during a needs assessment that would illustrate the problems to be addressed.**

### **3. PROBLEM STATEMENT (cont)**

#### **General principles to follow:**

- **Cite previous projects and studies that are similar to what you are proposing;**
- **Show the funding agency that you know what you are proposing;**
- **Show that your proposed project is definitely needed and should be funded.**



### **3. PROBLEM STATEMENT (cont)**

**Position your project in relation to other efforts and show how your project**

- a) will extend the work that has been previously done;**
- b) will avoid the mistakes and/or errors that have been previously made;**
- c) will serve to develop stronger collaboration between existing initiatives; or**
- d) is unique since it does not follow the same path as previously followed.**

### **3. PROBLEM STATEMENT (cont)**

**Try answer the following questions:**

- 1. What are the pressing problems that you want to address?**
- 2. How do you know these problems are important?**
- 3. What other sources/programs similarly support these needs as major needs?**

### **3. PROBLEM STATEMENT (cont)**

**Check to see that the potential funding agency is committed to the same problems that your proposal addresses.**

- **Indicate how the problems that will be addressed in your project will help the potential funding agency in fulfilling their own goals and objectives;**
- **The funding agency should be your "cooperating partner" committed to the same concerns that you are;**
- **Is there a special reason why you and/or your organization are uniquely suited to conduct the project? (Geographic location, language expertise, prior involvements in this area, close relationship to the project beneficiaries, etc.)**

**THINK LIKE A LAWYER AND ASSEMBLE ALL  
THE ARGUMENTS.**

**THEN PRESENT THEM IN A LOGICAL  
SEQUENCE THAT WILL READILY CONVINC  
THE READER OF THEIR IMPORTANCE**

**CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING SIX POINTS:**

## **3. PROBLEM STATEMENT (cont)**

### **1. decide which facts or statistics best support the project**

**Be sure the data you present are accurate. It is embarrassing to have the donor tell you that your information is out of date or incorrect;**

**Information that is too generic or broad will not help you develop a winning argument for your project;**

**Information that does not relate to your organization or the project you are presenting will cause the funder to question the entire proposal.**

## **3. PROBLEM STATEMENT (cont)**

### **2. give the reader hope**

- **The picture you paint should not be so grim that the solution appears hopeless. The funder will wonder whether an investment in a solution will be worthwhile.**
- **Avoid overstatement;**
- **Don't be too emotional!!!**

## **3. PROBLEM STATEMENT (cont)**

### **3. decide if you want to put your project forward as a model**

- **Don't try to make this argument if it doesn't really fit;**
- **Funders may well expect your agency to follow through with a replication plan if you present your project as a model;**
- **If the decision about a model is affirmative, you should document how the problem you are addressing occurs elsewhere. Be sure to explain how your solution could be a solution for others as well.**

## **3. PROBLEM STATEMENT (cont)**

### **4. determine whether it is reasonable to portray the need as acute**

- You are asking the funder to pay more attention to your proposal because either the problem you address is worse than others or the solution you propose makes more sense than others.**



### **3. PROBLEM STATEMENT (cont)**

**5. decide whether you can demonstrate that your program addresses the need differently or better than other projects that preceded it**

- **Don't be critical of others!!! It may cause the funder to look more carefully at your own project to see why you felt you had to build your case by demeaning others;**
- **Make it clear that you are cognizant of others doing work in your field. Funders are very interested in collaboration.**
- **Describe how your work complements, but does not duplicate, the work of others.**

### **3. PROBLEM STATEMENT (cont)**

#### **6. Avoid circular reasoning.**

**In circular reasoning, you present the absence of your solution as the actual problem. Then your solution is offered as the way to solve the problem.**

## **Example of circular reasoning:**

**"The problem is that we have no environmental education center in our community. Building a center will solve the problem."**

**A more persuasive case would cite what center has meant to a neighboring community, permitting it to offer programs, training, recreation activities.**

**The statement might refer to a survey that underscores the target audience's planned usage of the facility and conclude with the connection between the proposed usage and potential benefits to enhance life in the community.**

## **4. PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

- **GOAL**
- **OBJECTIVES**
- **ACTIVITIES**
- **BENEFICIARIES**
- **SUSTAINABILITY**
- **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

## **4.1. GOAL**

**Large statements of what you hope to accomplish;**

**Usually aren't very measurable;**

**Are conceptual, more abstract;**

**“Ideal world”;**

**Create the setting for what you are proposing.**

## **GOALS – EXAMPLES:**

- **Conservation of globally significant biodiversity of maiombe forest in Cabinda province.**
- **A National Protected Area system comprising a representative sample of Angola's ecosystems is effectively safeguarded through effective management partnerships.**
- **To enhance the economic and environmental role, biodiversity conservation value and representation of protected areas in Angola.**
- **To secure the long-term conservation of the African manatee in Angola.**

## **4.2. OBJECTIVES**

**Must be tangible, specific, concrete, measurable, and achievable in a specified time period;**

**Are operational, tell specific things you will be accomplishing in your project;**

**Are the measurable outcomes of the program;**

**Form the basis for the activities of the project;**

**Serve as the basis for the evaluation of your project.**

# TYPES OF OBJECTIVES

## **BEHAVIORAL: A human action is anticipated**

One hundred rangers attending the training course will learn how to use basic field equipment.

## **PERFORMANCE: A specific time frame within which a behavior will occur, at an expected proficiency level**

One hundred rangers will learn how to use basic field equipment within three weeks and will pass a basic ranger skills test administered by the Wildlife College.

## **PROCESS : The manner in which something occurs is an end in itself.**

The project team will document the training methods utilized, identifying those with great success.

## **PRODUCT : A tangible item results.**

A ranger training manual for Angola will be developed to be used in training for all rangers.



# OBJECTIVES – EXAMPLES:

## GOAL:

**The globally significant biodiversity of maiombe forest in Cabinda province is conserved;**

**Objective 1:** To design and establish the Cabinda Maiombe Forest National Park

**Objective 2:** To strengthen the capacity of the Cabinda provincial government for biodiversity conservation

**Objective 3:** To reduce pressure on natural resources by designing alternative livelihoods for the local communities

**Objective 4:** To build local support for biodiversity conservation in Cabinda province by designing and implementing a comprehensive public awareness campaign;

**Which are the specific activities that will take place to achieve the objectives?**

**This will enable the reader to visualize the implementation of the project.**

**It should convince the reader that your agency knows what it is doing, thereby establishing its credibility.**

## **4.3. ACTIVITIES**

- **Present a clear link between the ACTIVITIES and the OBJECTIVES!**
- **Be explicit and state exactly how the activities you have chosen will fulfill your project's objectives and help deal with the needs identified in the problem statement;**
- **Clearly present the innovative aspects of your idea;**
- **Include any collaborative relationships your project will be developing with other cooperating groups;**
- **Indicate how the activities will allow the outcomes of your project to have value for others beyond your project.**

# ACTIVITIES

- **How:** Describe in detail what will occur from the time the project begins until it is completed. The activities should match the previously stated objectives;
- **When:** Present the order and timing for the tasks. Useful to provide a timetable with milestones;
- **Why:** Defend your chosen methods, especially if they are new. Why will the planned work lead to the outcomes you anticipate?

# ACTIVITIES - EXAMPLES

**GOAL: The globally significant biodiversity of maiombe forest in Cabinda province is conserved;**

**Objective 1:**

**To design and establish the Cabinda Maiombe Forest National Park**

## **Activities**

- 1. Conduct a biodiversity survey of the maiombe forest;**
- 2. Conduct a socio-economic assessment of the communities using the resources from the maiombe forest;**
- 3. Review the existent legal and regulatory framework for conservation in the province and at the national level;**
- 4. Design a zonation system for the Park in collaboration with all stakeholders;**
- 5. Prepare a full package for submission of the National Park proposal to the government**

## **4.4. BENEFICIARIES**

- **All stakeholder groups which will benefit from your proposal;**
- **Present a matrix with the stakeholders and how are they going to benefit;**
- **State what type of contact you had with the beneficiaries;**
- **Show that you have the support of the stakeholders to move ahead with the project;**
- **Show the stakeholder involvement in the preparation of the proposal;**
- **Indicate how assisting your beneficiaries is in the best interests of the funding organization.**

## 4.5. SUSTAINABILITY

- Explain how your project is considering sustaining the activities beyond the end of the project;
- Institutional sustainability;
- Financial sustainability;
- Social sustainability:

## **4.6. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

- **Describe how you will decide whether or not your project has been successful, achieved its objectives, etc.;**
- **The Evaluation Plan will tell the donor at the end of the project that their investment in you was a good one;**
- **Does not have to be elaborate or expensive;**
- **Begin the evaluation with the beginning of the project.**



# MONITORING AND EVALUATION

**The evaluation component is two-fold:**

**(1) Product/summative evaluation – AT THE OBJECTIVE LEVEL:**

- addresses results that can be attributed to the project, and the extent to which the project has satisfied its desired objectives;

**(2) Process/formative evaluation – AT THE ACTIVITY LEVEL**

- gain feedback on the project while is conducted;
- addresses how the project was conducted, in terms of consistency with the stated plan of action and the effectiveness of the various activities within the plan;

## 5. BUDGET

- **Make your budget realistic** - Have someone else in your organization review your budget to see how realistic you are;
- Consider a phased approach: This can suggest to the donor that they can terminate the relationship easily if your project is not successful (and it is essential for you to make sure the first phase IS successful);



**Check with the agency to see if they have suggested/required budget categories that they want you to use.**

**If not consider the following items:**

# BUDGET – ITEMS TO CONSIDER

- **Personnel (local, international; full-time; part-time; consultants; etc);**
- **Travel (flight tickets, bus, vehicle rental, fuel);**
- **Facilities (rental, etc.);**
- **Equipment (office and field; binoculars, GPS, etc);**
- **Supplies (office and field; paper, cartridges; etc);**
- **Workshops (training, consultations, etc);**
- **Land purchase;**
- **Constructions;**
- **Overheads**



## BUDGET - COFINANCING

- **Local resources go unnoticed and are difficult to see.** Look carefully around you because there are certain to be resources that you have available that you may not be noticing. In-kind resources can show a potential funding agency that you are strongly rooted in your community

(time that volunteers donate to your project, local experts who can provide help/advise when needed, a friend who is willing to do some word processing, etc.).

- Provide letters from local resources supporting the project.

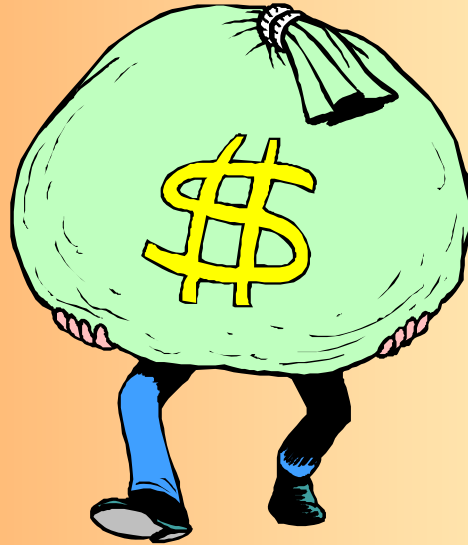
## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- **SUBMISSION - IS NOT THE END** of your involvement in the process;
- **REVIEW** process can take from a few weeks to a year or more (check donor guidelines).
- **During the review process, the donor may ask for additional information either directly from you or from outside consultants or professional references.**

## **IF YOU DON'T GET THE FUNDS:**

- **It is not the end of the process;**
- **If you're unsure why your proposal was rejected, ask;**
- **Did the donor need additional information?**
- **Would they be interested in considering the proposal at a future date?**
- **THERE IS ALWAYS NEXT YEAR!**

## **IF YOU ARE SUCCESSFUL:**



- **Acknowledge the support with a letter of thanks.**
- **Find out whether the donor has specific forms, procedures, and deadlines for reporting the progress of your project.**



**GOOD LUCK!!!**

