GUIDEBOOK ON

HOW TO DESIGN AN IMPACTFUL ENTREPRENEURSHIP SUPPORT PROJECT

LESSONS LEARNT & RECOMMENDATIONS
FROM THE "PROJECT SUPPORTING YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS"
IMPLEMENTED BY THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION
FOR MIGRATION IN THE GAMBIA (2019-2021)

IOM
UN MIGRATION

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INTRO

„(...) each person has an important perspective to share, but each person also has certain blinders that need to be peeled away – that can be peeled away if they're in a room with others who have other perspectives as they do."

Patrick Awuah Jr, educator and entrepreneur

INTRODUCTION

Why this publication?

Creating and implementing a project can be compared to taking a journey. First, you make plans. Depending on the resources you have in your pocket, you may travel with a horse, or an old and rumpy car, a speed train or a space rocket. Depending on your lifestyle, you may travel fast, on a business trip, or slowly with friends, enjoying the view or you may even buy an all-inclusive package. After the journey, you share your impressions and photos with family and friends. No matter what you like and how much you prepare, you never really know how this journey will turn out. You can only make the best possible plans, dreaming about wonderful experiences and beautiful destinations.

In this publication we (and by "we", we mean the project team) invite you to an imaginary journey with us. This is because we have just finished the whole process of designing and implementing an innovative entrepreneurship support project. It was an adventure… We faced obstacles, sweat, tears, but also moments of great satisfaction and laughter. Now, we would like to share with you the most important lessons we learnt and recommendations we have. We have transformed them into a guidebook to help you go through the different stages of project design and implementation, step by step.

What was our project about?

This booklet is based on the evaluation and lessons learnt of a programme called "Supporting Young Entrepreneurs in The Gambia" (#Standing4Youth).
It was a comprehensive entrepreneurship support project implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in The Gambia between 2019 and 2021. The programme incorporated the best incubation and acceleration practices for 400 young Gambian entrepreneurs (18-35 years old), providing professional training on the necessary skills and know-how, as well as financial support, to help them overcome the challenges associated with launching a business in the country.

The programme was created as an answer to the needs that we identified when working and talking with youths in The Gambia. Insufficient job opportunities are pushing young people to migrate or to seek self-employment. The proposed intervention aimed at increasing self-sufficiency among Gambian youth and, in the long-term, at creating new employment opportunities for others as their businesses grow. Given the high mobility of the target group, this project was also expected to contribute to safer migration by boosting economic opportunities locally.

After many iterations, the incubation and acceleration programme lasted eventually for ten weeks. It consisted of weekly activities such as small group trainings (masterminds), group mentoring sessions, individual coaching as well as two rounds of cash grant distributions. Throughout the programme, there was also a number of online webinars supporting participants in the process.

The project was innovative and experimental; it involved extensive research components and its training curriculum was designed through the human-centred design methods. It was also complex, involving many stakeholders, risks and dependencies. Both its design and its implementation had to adapt to many challenges and barriers, including the COVID-19 pandemic. However, it brought interesting results. This is why the team decided to transform this rich experience into a guidebook which can be used by other organizations with similar projects.

Who can benefit from this guidebook?

Our project was designed and implemented by the IOM regional office in West Africa, the IOM country offices (in Senegal and The Gambia), in close cooperation with the donor (The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office - FCDO), the research team (the Birmingham University and Agent Based Modelling team), and was delivered by two local implementing partners (the Innovators Space and GYIN Gambia) and a wide range of experts.

The guidebook can therefore be useful to international organizations but also to institutions and individuals who wish to launch or boost an entrepreneurship programme in a given country, region or community.

Are you…

- **a national, local or intergovernmental institution?**
- **an incubator, an accelerator or an innovation hub?**
- **an entrepreneur with a social impact project?**

This guidebook can help you find inspiration and innovative methods to foster economic and social change!

How to use this guidebook?

In this booklet, we are taking you on a journey through project design, preparation, implementation and follow-up activities. The guidebook follows a step-by-step approach and is structured around four chapters, each representing a crucial project design 'question':

START — **How to start an entrepreneurship support project?**

PREPARE — **How to prepare for an entrepreneurship support project?**

DESIGN — **How to concretely design and implement an entrepreneurship support programme?**

FOLLOW UP — **How to follow up on an entrepreneurship support programme?**

Answering these questions will maximise the project's impact and help you create a systemic change.

EACH CHAPTER IS DIVIDED INTO CONCRETE STEPS, AND EACH STEP COMPRISES:

- A short **Introduction**
- **Guiding questions** on which to reflect with your team
- **Lessons learnt and recommendations** i.e. our most important learnings transformed into a set of recommendations and tips
- **A checklist** to help you determine the outcomes of each implementation stage.

You will also find in this guidebook the **"Journey Experience Map"**, a visual summary of the design and implementation journey explained in this toolkit. It will help you monitor the process and take the participants', trainers' and other stakeholders' experience into account throughout the project.

The guidebook is designed on the basis of a list of questions to which you will need to find responses with your team. We do not provide "one-size-fits-all" solutions as we know, from experience, that such solutions do not exist. The complex social and environmental problems we are facing today can only be solved through a systematic approach focused primarily on the beneficiaries' needs, which vary according to context. This means that the project you will design will have to be customised to the local realities, taking into account the system you are trying to impact and the needs

of the people you are targeting with your actions. This can optimally be done working with system thinking and human-centered design approach.
Although presented in a linear way here, the process of starting, preparing, designing, implementing and following up on your project will involve many design loops, back and forths, and iterations. This dynamic and interactive process is at the heart of constant learning and improving.

We believe that the time spent on answering these questions will help you design truly innovative, valuable and impactful solutions to the problems you are trying to solve.

LET'S GET THIS JOURNEY STARTED!

YOUR PROJECT JOURNEY

An organizational demand?
An idea based on the needs you identify in the community?
A response to a donor's request?

YOUR PROJECT JOURNEY STARTING POINT

How to START an entrepreneurship support project

form a TEAM – define a core and an extended team, your expertise and knowledge needs, and integrate

define APPROACH – understand innovation, research, system thinking and human-centered methods

create PROCESSES – set communication and design flows, understand organizational procedures

prepare a PROJECT PLAN – decide about project management tools, prepare a project plan

How to PREPARE an entrepreneurship support project?

explore the SYSTEM – understand the entrepreneurship ecosystem you are trying to impact

map STAKEHOLDERS – define main stakeholders and main target groups

find GOOD PRACTICES and DATA – dig into existing literature looking for data and good practices

define the NEEDS – go out, talk and empathize with your beneficiaries and stakeholders

mainstream DIVERSITY – create an inclusive programme and a safe environment to work and learn

apply SUSTAINABILITY lenses – decide about programme sustainable practices and regenerative approach

How to DESIGN & IMPLEMENT an entrepreneurship support programme?

design the PARTICIPANTS' programme – design concrete solutions for the participants' training programme

design the TRAINERS' programme – design concrete solutions for building the trainers' capacity in the programme

design the STAKEHOLDERS' experience – understand your stakeholders and design an ideal project experience for them

prepare LOGISTICS and MONITORING & EVALUATION – prepare venues, equipment; monitoring & evaluation activities

How to FOLLOW UP on an entrepreneurship support programme?

create FOLLOW-UP and LEGACY – do not forget to design the follow up to your programme, this is your legacy element

evaluate LEARNINGS & DISSEMINATE RESULTS – take time to reflect, draw conclusions, learn and disseminate results

THE PROJECT JOURNEY DESTINATION – a solution that helps to achieve your organizational goal, responds to the beneficiaries' needs and contributes to the desired systemic change

START

HOW TO START AN ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROJECT

- PREPARE YOUR TEAM
- DEFINE YOUR APPROACH
- CREATE PROCESSES
- PREPARE A PROJECT PLAN

PREPARE
DESIGN
FOLLOW UP

HOW TO START AN ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROJECT

This is where you start your project journey. The idea might come as an organizational demand based on your mission or mandate, a reaction to the needs you identified in your community or a response to a donor's request.

No matter why you start, your initial project challenge can be summarized in this generic way:

> **"How can we design an entrepreneurship (support) instrument that will help us achieve our organizational goals (mission), respond to the beneficiaries' needs and contribute to the systemic change we desire?"**

Formulating your goal in this way will help you link your organization's goals, the needs of the people you target, and the specific context you operate in.

Merging three perspectives into one challenge is important as it helps you address a number of potential project pitfalls, that are described in this guidebook and thus design an impactful project.

At this first stage of your project journey, you have four important tasks and objectives:

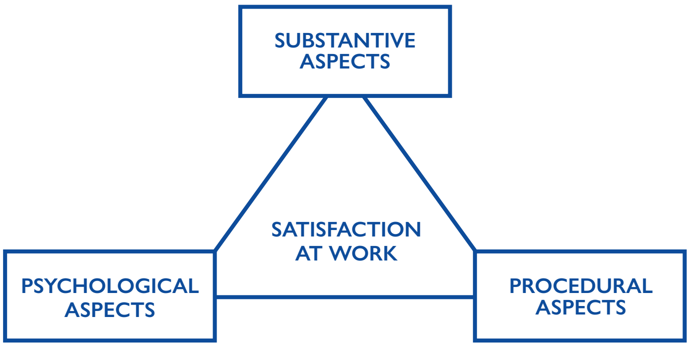
TEAM	**PREPARE YOUR TEAM** - build your team, assess needs, and prepare to work together
APPROACH	**DEFINE YOUR APPROACH** - define your approach to design solutions
PROCESSES	**CREATE PROCESSES** - transform your team's needs and your approach into processes
PROJECT	**DESIGN THE PROJECT** - design the parameters of your project and translate the approach, processes, roles and responsibilities into your logic of intervention, milestones and tasks

PREPARE YOUR TEAM

1

A team is a group of people who are working together to achieve a common goal. But teamwork is more than that. It is about bonds, values, group roles, emotions and human interactions. Our experience taught us that taking the time to build the team, to integrate its members, and to understand each other's roles and responsibilities is not to be underestimated. This stage is crucial for the smooth-running of the entire project.

We often remember to define responsibilities and the content of our project, but we tend to forget about the emotional side of workingin teams. The researchers on mediation or group interactions like for example Ch. Moore and P. Lencioni highlighted that satisfaction at work and successful outcomes depend on all three aspects of relationships: substantive (related to result), procedural and psychological. This is why one of your first goals should be to define and integrate your core team as well as prepare all team members to work together throughout the next months (or years).



GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. Who should be in your core team and your extended team?
2. Which expertise will you need in your team and where will it come from?
3. How can you make sure your team is diverse enough to gain from different perspectives and views?
4. What are your team's knowledge needs?
5. How can we integrate and prepare to work as a team?
6. What values and rules can we set to ensure cooperation?
7. Who will do what, when, where and with whom?
8. How can we design an ideal team experience journey throughout the project?

LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

DEFINE YOUR CORE TEAM

Usually, in your core team you will need:

- **A project manager** – Make sure to recruit a very skilled main project manager. This person will be a leader and a coordinator for the project. She or he will alternately be a coach, a teacher, a trainer, a moderator, an advocate, a quality supervisor, and a mediator in times of difficulties.

- **The project team members** (country or regional teams) - You will need a reliable team in the community, region or country in which you want to implement your project. Our learnings show that changing an entrepreneurship system requires a strong decentralization context and adaptation to local realities. The regional or local partners will play a key role in helping you achieve these goals.

- **Donors** – Although donors are outside your organization, you will need to maintain a strong link with them. It is very likely you will need to negotiate project changes with the supervisor in order to adjust to unforeseen events affecting the programme.

- **Researchers** – Our project was very innovative as it involved a robust research component. If you include research in your project, the researchers should become part of your core team, with regular collaboration and exchanges.

Other members might join your extended team. It will depend on the expertise you need in your project.

DEFINE EXPERTISE NEEDS

Our experience shows that in such projects, you will need the following roles and expertise:

- **Administrator and project plan guardian** who creates the processes, communication lines, reminders, supervises the project's timetables. This role is usually taken on by a project manager.
- **Facilitators** who are skilled in moderating and facilitating teams and in designing iterative processes.
- **Procurement, legal, finance colleagues** who have to be informed in advance on the processes and timelines. They should be in the core team. Make sure you have a contact person in each of these areas. These are crucial to ensure a smooth project flow.
- **Communication and dissemination experts** who are responsible for disseminating the results of the project.
- **Knowledge management and documentation professionals** who help the team to document all project phases, materials, findings, keeping in order the documents versions and folders.

- Expertise in **entrepreneurship, labour** (including employment and unemployment), **human mobility** and related local challenges.
- Expertise in **innovative project design**, including:
  - a system thinking analysis, the human-centred design and expertise in transforming them into organizational processes
  - gender and diversity mainstreaming - to make the programme fully inclusive, ensuring that all stakeholders are involved in a safe, open and diverse environment
  - sustainability - to make sure the project is sustainable, offsetting the carbon footprint
- Expertise in **building innovative entrepreneurship instruments**, tools and training programmes (accelerators and incubators) including outreach and communication, recruitment, designing training curricula, motivation, etc.
- Experts in **proposal design, monitoring, evaluation, learning** (so called MEL) or organizational MEL team, including translating the findings into a logic of interventions, inputs, outputs, key performance indicators (KPIs), designing surveys etc.
- **Graphic designer.**
- **Proof-reader, editor.**
- **Translation services** (including into local languages).

Having an early mapping and creating a pool of experts will make your work much easier.

DEFINE THE TEAM'S KNOWLEDGE NEEDS

A team will scarcely have all the necessary expertise, skills, knowledge and know-how from the very beginning of the project. Therefore, our recommendation is to dedicate time and a part of the budget for trainings and workshops such as:

- Introduction to **labour issues and entrepreneurship** – Paradoxically, but not surprisingly, the project team might not have enough knowledge about this subject. Plan a workshop that will help the team members to understand what entrepreneurship is all about.
- **Research** – If your project involves a research component, like ours did, organize a workshop with researchers and a local monitoring and evaluation team who can explain what is research (what are the main concepts, methods and terms used). This will enable you to 'speak the same language', understand and support each other.
- Introduction to **system thinking** – How to use its tools to analyse the ecosystem and design impactful actions.
- Training on **human-centered design method and tools** – Your core team should be trained to facilitate a design thinking process, especially conducting interviews, analysing data, defining main framing questions and understanding the human-centered design mindset.
- **Facilitation and moderation techniques** – In such lengthy and complex design processes, you will need skilled internal or external moderators to facilitate the entire design process,

design sprints, weekly meetings, evaluation workshops, co-creation workshops etc. This will greatly hep you to achieve concrete results in the defined times periods.

- Training on **gender and diversity mainstreaming** to understand and implement the project in a fully inclusive way.
- Training to understand the sustainability challenges in the local ecosystem and to design a **regenerative approach**.
- Short training or orientation sessions on **creative tools** supporting participative team work and communication throughout the project like Slack, Jamboards, Miro, Murals etc.

We highly recommend planning the training activities in the preparation phase, and securing the trainers, time and budget.

INTEGRATE YOUR TEAM: SET VALUES AND RULES FOR COOPERATION

Our experience is that you should never underestimate the power of team integration. Take enough time to integrateand get to know each other, to build a team. You will be working long hours, days and months on this project. Setting a proper team spirit and rules for collaboration is key. Dedicate time to set foundations, to discuss what values are important for you and what needs you have in terms of teamwork.

Also, plan regular integration and collaboration workshops with your team, on-boarding sessions for new members, reflection meetings, monitoring and evaluation sessions (retrospectives),

DEFINE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Our experience leads us to conclude that, at this early stage of the project preparation, you need to clearly define the roles and responsibilities within the team. Having an early planning session and conversation will help you to timely recruit experts, either in your organization or external ones.

TIP

Why not organize an orientation week where all team members (from the core and the extended team) can join? It could be moderated by a skilled facilitator to:

- Introduce each other, integrate, set common rules for cooperation
- Discuss initial challenges in the organization and project, and how each person can contribute to them
- Discuss and divide internal roles and responsibilities in accordance with the estimated timelines
- Voice out expectations, fears and hopes
- Have a 'questions and answers' sessions
- Agree on approaches and processes (see in further sections of this Guidebook) like communication lines, regular coordination meetings, a storage place with accessible information for all team members
- Be trained in system thinking, design thinking, gender mainstreaming, sustainability etc
- Go through diverse organizational requirements in terms of research, monitoring and evaluation, contracting, procurement, finance, communication guidelines, etc.

INSPIRATION Patrick Lencioni, "The Five Dysfunctions of a Team" (2002)

CHECKLIST

- The team is integrated and motivated to work together.
- The team members have the adequate know-how, skills and attitudes towards the project and towards each other.
- The team is aware of the approach you are choosing and fully accepts it.
- The team that has a clear understanding of the division of roles and responsibilities, as well as the expected level of engagement.

DEFINE YOUR APPROACH

2

At this point of your project, you need to define what approach you choose to design your solutions. Our project was experimental, with a research component set from the beginning and human-centered methods to design the training programme.

This gave us much flexibility to test out different approaches but was also a source of frustration as it entailed a complex design process and many back and forth in building the concept. That is why we strongly recommend agreeing and setting the approach from the very beginning of the project design.

This will help you recruit adequate team members and experts, design proper processes as well as plan appropriate resources in terms of budget, time and people.

As said previously, we recommend using both the system thinking method and the human-centered method to design the project as they enable to link three important perspectives: the organization's needs (a goal, a mission), the beneficiaries' needs, and the realities of the ecosystem.

By exploring, linking, synergising and embedding these three perspectives, you increase your chances of designing a solution that is:

- technically possible
- organizationally justified
- desired and valued by users
- adapted to the local context
- tackling the real problems
- having a long-lasting and sustainable impact, with the minimum necessary means
- contributing to regenerating the social and environmental ecosystem you operate in.

WHAT IS...

INNOVATION

Innovation (latin: innovatio, i.e. renewal) – Activities leading to the creation of new or improved products, processes or systems.

RESEARCH

Research – (Oxford dictionary) The systematic investigation into and study of materials and sources in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions.

SYSTEM THINKING

System thinking – A way of helping a team to look at the ecosystem of a project from a broad perspective. That includes considering the overall structures, the stakeholders and the systems' patterns and cycles. This approach enables the project to consider the ecosystem in order for it to have the maximum impact with the minimum necessary resources.

HUMAN CENTERED DESIGN

Human-centered design – An approach that integrates the beneficiaries of a project in the problem-solving process in order to ensure the adequacy of the project with their needs. With this approach, the project team is in immersion with the problem, the ecosystem and the community through constant interactions. These interactions can involve interviews, observations, solution co-creation, prototyping, giving and receiving feedback. Design thinking, service design and user experience are some of the methods that help ensure taking the beneficiaries' needs into account when designing the desired change.

DESIGN THINKING

Design thinking – One of the human-centered approaches to innovation. It revolves around an iterative and co-creation process based on five main components:
1) empathy with users in order to understand their needs, 2) analysing and diagnosing,
3) generating creative solutions based on the identified needs, 4) rapid prototyping and
5) testing with the users.

SERVICE DESIGN

Service design – A project design approach meant to create sustainable solutions and optimal experiences both for users and the service provider. Service design concerns: people delivering the service (e.g. trainers, coaches, recruiters etc.), location (e.g. training venues), props (e.g. a training equipment, training manuals provided to participants), associates (e.g. service provision like implementing partners, catering etc.) and processes (e.g. workflows to deliver the service).

USER EXPERIENCE

User experience (UX or UE) – Within the service design approach, user experience focuses on taking into account the users' experience and interactions with the programme in order to include them in its design. It analyses the users' perception of utility, user-friendliness, efficiency, etc. User experience is based on the assumption that a negative experience will cause negative effects on the provider.

In the context of entrepreneurship programmes, negative experiences may cause a limited number of applications (if the application system is inadequate for example), a high drop-out rate among participants (which may be due to an unsatisfactory interaction with a coach) or trainers' resignation (if they have a bad experience with the employing organization).

EXPERIENCE MAPS

Experience maps – One of the UX tools which illustrates how users experience the process to achieve their goal. They help identify users' needs, pain points, and opportunities in a systematic way. You can find Experience Map templates for participants, trainers and stakeholders in chapter 3 of this guidebook.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. What is the purpose …? Why (and how) do we want to build an innovative project? Do we want to include any specific components into the project? (for example: social inclusion, migration, conflict sensitivity or research)
2. What is the system thinking? How can it help you make an impactful change?
3. How can the human-centered methods help us design a meaningful project?
4. How should all these methods be synergized in our project?

DEFINE THE PURPOSE

ANSWER FOLLOWING QUESTIONS

Innovation:

- What is the purpose of innovation? What do we want to achieve? What would 'success' mean for our project?
- What human, technical, organizational resources do we need to put in place innovative approaches?
- Is the donor willing to support it?

Research (if you include this component):

- What is the purpose of research and data collection?
- How does research impact our project and how does the project impact research?
- What capacities and resources do we need to help the research team design and implement the research?
- How will we translate the data into knowledge?
- Who could help us answer these questions in the most objective way?

> **"Everyone needs data right now, but nobody specifies: what for? why we are doing this? Are we doing this for the right audience?"**

a project member

UNDERSTAND SYSTEM THINKING

No matter what direction you will take, your programme will have an impact. In order for it to be as positive as possible, it is best to design it in advance. Your entrepreneurship programme, any tool and intervention you put in place, are all means to an end – the social change you desire.

System thinking is helpful to view issues holistically, get insights into non-obvious connections, identify trends, patterns, interactions and thus define the leverage point where you can have the maximum impact with the minimum necessary resources.

ANSWER FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- What is the vison of the world that we would like this project to contribute to? (What is our organizational vision? What is the vision of the different stakeholders?)
- What change do we want to achieve through this project?
- How does our project and programme contribute to the wider systemic change?
- How do our activities impact other sections of the entrepreneurship ecosystem and how do they, in return, impact our area of intervention?
- What legacy will our project / programme leave? In which areas?

OUR STORY

We designed a training programme for young people to be able to successfully launch their business and thrive on the market. The main objective was to impact their migration decisions by creating economic opportunities in The Gambia. But knowledge and skills are not the only factors influencing the success of one's business. Entrepreneurs evolve in a wider ecosystem that influences them and interacts with them. This can be the regulatory framework, the community's or family's attitudes toward running a business, the cultural context (some participants need their family's permission to participate in the programme), the access to information, the accessibility of quality service providers, the offer and demand for the products, the market trends and fluctuations, etc. All of the above will strongly impact these young people's ability to innovate, to run a business, to be sustainable and successful, and hence their decisions to stay in the country or migrate. Designing an entrepreneurship programme cannot be done in isolation from the local ecosystem and realities. It needs to serve a wider systemic change.

UNDERSTAND THE HUMAN-CENTERED DESIGN

We recommend using the design thinking and other human-centered methods like service design and user experience in order to:

- help you structure and organize the design process
- give time for the team to reflect, analyse and diagnose
- help better understand the beneficiaries' needs
- help link the organization's needs and constraints with the beneficiaries' needs and constraints
- create a positive experience for participants and trainers, thus maximise the impact of the project
- involve stakeholders and beneficiaries at all stages of the process to create a feeling of ownership towards the programme.

> **"When you have two coffee shops right next to each other, each selling the exact same coffee for the exact same price, Service Design is the reason you go into one coffee shop and not the other."**

Marc Fonteijn, a service design expert

Analogically, if you have two very similar training programmes for entrepreneurs, and each offers the exact same programme at the exact same time and space, service design is what makes your participants choose yours and not the other. Therefore, don't forget to explore and train your team on the human-centered design methods. People will need to develop the skills and mindset to design an innovative project. For further information on human-centered methods, we recommend you to read the toolkits e.g.: **"The field guide to human-centered design. Design Kit"** (available online).

CHECKLIST

- The team understands what innovation is (and research, if relevant) and what implications it has for the project.
- The team understands what system thinking is and how it helps design a wider systemic change in the entrepreneurship ecosystem you operate in.
- The team understands what human-centered design methods are and how to use them.
- The team is motivated to use both top-down (system thinking) and bottom-up (human-centered design) methods to design the project, and has the adequate mindset, knowledge and skills to do so.

CREATE PROCESSES

3

Once your team understands the methods and agree on the approach, it is time to translate them into processes.

> **" The innovative project elements need to be translated into processes and embedded into project timeline. We had so many people involved in the project coming from inside and outside the organization, at different levels (regional, local), from different backgrounds, and so many interactions. This needs to be reflected in the process and the project timeline. The team needs to have an opportunity – space and time - to work together in co-creation processes, to reflect, discuss and design together. That was what we really needed and it was often scarce. "**

a project member

Q

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. Which communication processes and flows should we set?
2. How are we going to organize the design process?
3. What do we need to know in terms of administrative procedures for procurement, hiring, contracting with experts, etc.?

SET COMMUNICATION PROCESSES AND FLOWS

OUR LEARNINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- First consult the team on their ideas and needs for communication lines and flows – this can happen during the first team workshop.
- Based on this needs assessment, establish communication channels and processes, for example: emails, Slack, WhatsApp, common drives, weekly coordination calls or meetings etc.
- Establish user-friendly, accessible storage place for common co-creation work – you will need a place to store and revise documents.
- Establish and plan tools for creative work, brainstorming sessions, prototyping, testing for workshops (like Jamboards, Miro, Mural or other creative tools).
- Create a system for updates and naming the subsequent versions of documents including project concept, programme content, evaluation reports etc.

ESTABLISH A PROJECT DESIGN PROCESS

OUR LEARNINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Have a clear design process established from the beginning, for example having a design sprints, where certain elements are designed, tested with stakeholders and revised if necessary.
- Plan regular design and team workshops. Dedicate time to reflect, discuss, and take decisions.
- Establish clear, step-by-step processes for the:
  - top-down analysis of the entrepreneurship ecosystem (system analysis, desk research etc.)
  - bottom-up approach with beneficiaries' interviews and analysis (design thinking iterative process)

LEARN ABOUT PROCEDURES

OUR LEARNINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Take time to talk with your colleagues about Finance, Procurement, HR, Communication.
- Consult them and prepare the contracting, procuring, recruitment procedures in advance.
- Liaise with them from the very beginning to design and plan realistic timelines in advance.

CHECKLIST

- Communication lines and flows are decided on and set.
- Your design process (including the innovative approaches and internal procedures) is defined and agreed upon.
- Team members have the adequate knowledge, skills, and attitude (mindset) to implement these processes.

PREPARE A PROJECT PLAN

4

Once you have your team ready and set, once you explored the possible innovative approaches and translated them into processes and procedures, it is time to prepare your project plan. This will help you start and manage the project, which involves a complex network of stakeholders.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. Which project management practices will best serve us to design the project? Which project management tools will be the most adequate to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate regularly the project?
2. What should there be in our initial project plan?
   - What is our vision and mission?
   - What are our goals, our logic of intervention?
   - What is the scope of our project? What are our project boundaries? What is out of our reach?
   - What are the main risks and how can we mitigate them?
   - What resources do we need to implement this project? What do we need to budget for?

DECIDE ON PROJECT MANAGEMENT TOOLS

Countless project management tools exist and are described in specialised books. We will not go through all of them but rather give you specific recommendations on how to choose them and monitor your logic of intervention, your risks and your budget.

LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

MANAGEMENT TOOLS

When working on innovative projects based on human-centered design, you may consider mixing a waterfall project management methodology with agile practices. This means having a well-established project plan with major milestones, tasks, dependences as well as people and resources assigned to these tasks. At the same time, organize your project design and implementation around regular design sprints and retrospectives, allowing for regular monitoring, evaluation and iterations in the process.

"I would like to have much more time to sit together, reflect and use the outcomes of these conversations to iterate"

a project member

LOGIC OF INTERVENTION AND THEORY OF CHANGE

- Make sure the logic of intervention is not too limited.
- Use the systemic analysis to define the biggest leverage points for change.
- Include the participants' knowledge, skills and competences, as well as their mindset, attitudes and behaviours. Moreover, keep in mind that the classroom (formal) learning is usually a small part of the learning process. Make participants go outside, train, prototype and test their new skills as well as their business models, products and services. Ensure relevant feedback mechanisms.

RISKS

You can find below the biggest risk categories that we identified in our project. Take them into account when developing entrepreneurship support projects, especially for training, incubating and accelerator programmes. Other risks will be context-specific and you will identify them in the course of your design process.

RISK	LESSON LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS
Lack of ownership, motivation and engagement among stakeholders, implementing partners, participants and coaches / trainers.	Lack of ownership means that the programme you offer is not valued by the users. To avoid it: ▪ Adapt the programme to the local context through systemic analysis and human-centered design, researching the local context, observing, interviewing, etc. ▪ Involve the stakeholders, trainers and participants in co-creation at all stage. ▪ Adapt the training materials by using local study cases, local names, local business names, sectors, local terminology. ▪ Design at early stages an ideal stakeholder experience through experience maps.

RISK	LESSON LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS
Underestimation of resources – the staff, time and budget – needed to prepare and develop the project.	■ Design the project from the beginning with diverse team members. Together, define step by step the project's objectives, roles and responsibilities, approaches, concepts, etc. Make sure the plan is reviewed by experienced project design experts. ■ Take into account the so-called "planning fallacy" bias: always add at least 20 % reserve in all planning categories (time, finance, staff). ■ Ensure regular monitoring and evaluation through retrospectives, learnings and iterations.

RISK	LESSON LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS
Limited impact of the project.	■ Use a systemic analysis and human-centred design, addressing challenges and needs in your programme offer, formula and structure. ■ Undertake a thorough diversity analysis in order to avoid addressing only a small section of the population's needs. ■ Diversify stakeholders and partners in order to integrate different points of view in the project's design and risks evaluation. ■ Make sure that the logic of intervention addresses enough aspects for change. In the context of entrepreneurship support programmes, this means you need to enhance knowledge and skills, but also positive behaviours. Formal classroom training should be complemented with practical experiments, possibilities to practice skills and receive feedback (for example, so-called on-the-job trainings). ■ Plan follow-up activities with the participants, such as putting them in contact with relevant organizations.

RISK	LESSON LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS
Lack of skilled or experienced trainers and coaches.	■ Research the human resources capacity at an early stage of the process. ■ Work with local organizations that could help to reach, select and recruit trainers. ■ Prepare thoroughly a "train-the-trainers" programme for the trainers, coaches and mentors. ■ Design an experience maps for trainers, coaches and mentors.

RISK	LESSON LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS
Drop-out among participants, coaches and trainers.	■ Tailor the programme to the participants' needs. ■ Address the key challenges related to participation: technical problems, availability, family obligations and permissions, level of education, language barriers, transport limitations, gender inequalities, etc. ■ Design in advance an ideal journey experience for participants, trainers and coaches taking into account these challenges. ■ Communicate the programme requirements clearly and timely. ■ Keep a reserve list of qualified personnel and a surplus on the final lists. ■ Be open to different training styles.

BUDGET

One of the most time-consuming activities is preparing your budget. Apart from your regular costs associated with the project, you should think of the following aspects:

LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Administration and Project Management

- Trainings for internal team (see the list in Chapter 1)
- Creative tools for design workshops (Miro, Murals)
- Internal or external facilitation for workshops
- External experts for parts of the project you do not have expertise on (see the list in Chapter 1)
- Research activities (if relevant)
- Monitoring and evaluation activities, interviews, workshops, field trips

Project design

- Design process moderator (if you do not have this capacity internally)
- Stakeholders' involvement in co-creation (time, transport, reviewing of documents, participation in workshops…)
- Buying intellectual property rights and permissions to use or modify existing entrepreneurship support toolkits
- Coaches' involvement in co-creation (time, transport, daily allowance, reviewing of documents, participation in workshops…)
- Participants' involvement in co-creation (time, transport, reviewing of documents…)

- Gender and diversity mainstreaming activities (including the diversity and gender analysis)
- Sustainability measures (including trainings, measuring the carbon footprint and offsetting activities)

Programme implementation

- Communication and outreach campaign
- Recruitment - including the venues for the interviews and the recruiters' salary
- Budget for training equipment and training materials both for participants and coaches

Programme for coaches (trainers and mentors)

- Coaches' involvement in co-creation (time, transport, daily allowance, reviewing of documents, participation in workshops, preparation of sessions…)
- Training for coaches (fees, daily allowances, accommodation, catering). For extensive accelerator activities, you will need at least a week-long training and a refresher
- Coaches' competitive salaries
- Coaches' catering in the training venues (water, snacks)
- Coaches' transportation
- Coaches' certificates

Programme for participants

- Participants' transport allowance
- Technical equipment for participants
- Water and snacks for participants

CHECKLIST

- The team understands and agrees with the approaches and methods, including the system thinking and human-centered design methods as well as the research framework.
- The team translates these approaches and methods into processes (the project plan).
- The team agrees on the project management tools, participates in the project outline and proposes concrete milestones and tasks.

START

PREPARE

HOW TO PREPARE FOR YOUR ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMME

- EXPLORE THE SYSTEM YOU ARE TRYING TO IMPACT
- DEFINE STAKEHOLDERS AND MAIN BENEFICIARIES
- CONDUCT DESK RESEARCH – DO NOT REINVENT THE WHEEL
- PUT HUMANS IN THE CENTRE
- UNDERTAKE A THOROUGH GENDER AND DIVERSITY ANALYSIS
- APPLY SUSTAINABILITY LENSES

DESIGN

FOLLOW UP

HOW TO PREPARE YOUR PROJECT DESIGN

Now, you have a strong team with whom you share common approaches and methods, and a project plan. Before jumping to solutions, you first need to prepare for the entrepreneurship programme. This means you have to gather all important pieces of information that will help you design the final solutions.

At this stage of your project journey, you have six important tasks and objectives:

SYSTEM	**DEFINE THE SYSTEM CHALLENGE YOU WANT TO TACKLE** – explore the system you want to change and operate in
DESK RESEARCH	**CONDUCT DESK RESEARCH** – do not reinvent the wheel; gather all the existing best practices on the topic you are working on
STAKEHOLDERS	**MAP STAKEHOLDERS** influencing or being influenced by your project
NEEDS	**DEFINE THE BENEFICIARIES' NEEDS YOU WANT TO ADDRESS** by doing an extensive needs assessment
DIVERSITY	**UNDERTAKE A DIVERSITY ANALYSIS**
SUSTAINABILITY	**APPLY SUSTAINABILITY LENSES**

> **"Remember, always, that everything you know, and everything everyone knows, is only a model. Get your model out there where it can be viewed. Invite others to challenge your assumptions and add their own."**

Donella H. Meadows
author of "Thinking in Systems: A Primer"

EXPLORE THE SYSTEM YOU ARE TRYING TO IMPACT

1

There are many books and resources on how to employ a system thinking in the context of development work. You may want to take the time to go through them. You can also take a free course on system thinking (with, for example, The Acumen Academy). You will find below the most important steps we identified to apply system thinking in entrepreneurship programmes. They are based on the Acumen Academy System Practice and the EIT Climate KIC course toolkits.

LAUNCH YOUR SYSTEM ANALYSIS

- Gather your team.
- Plan your system process.
- Set your area of intervention, your goals and your "why" – the purpose of the project.
- Define the systemic challenge you want to tackle.

> **"Imagination is an ability to see things as if they were otherwise"**
>
> John Dewey
> philosopher, psychologist, and educational reformer

EXPLORE YOUR SYSTEM TO GAIN CLARITY

- Draw your vision – an aspirational state which will serve as your guiding star.
- Explore the problem, the status quo, the dominant solutions, the lock-ins and their consequences on the community you operate in.
- Identify the key economic, cultural, social, environmental, communication forces and trends that fuel your systemic challenge.
- Identify the stakeholders, institutions, regulation and other structures influencing and or being influenced by the problem.
- Explore challenges and drivers, forces, interactions and patterns in the system, between different elements of the system, analyse causes and effects creating the so-called 'feedback loops' and the deep structure.
- Identify innovations, alternative solutions and niches to explore (read more about it in the "Desk research" section)
- Find opportunities for leverage – the most effective actions with the minimum necessary means.

Then...

REDEFINE YOUR PROBLEM STATEMENT BASED ON WHAT YOU FOUND OUT.

ACT STRATEGICALLY, DEVELOPING KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR FURTHER PROCESS.

LEARNINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We identified at least six elements of an entrepreneurship ecosystem which you should take into account during the systemic analysis:

Institutional system & regulatory framework

- business support strategies, regulations, standards, incentives, support organizations, etc.

Business culture & Mindset

- perceptions of business in the society, collaboration culture, networking styles, level of innovations etc.

Access to information

- accessibility of information and data on regulations, market analysis, etc.

Access to quality service providers and components

- accessibility of reliable service providers and raw materials

Skills, competences

- level of knowledge on the necessary soft and hard skills to run a business

Availability of support

- level of support for business (mentoring, accelerators, chambers of commerce, availability or access to financial support, etc.)

INSPIRATION Donella H. Meadows, “Thinking in Systems. A primer” (2008)

DEFINE STAKEHOLDERS AND MAIN BENEFICIARIES

2

Working with stakeholders is a crucial part of the project. They are the main source of information and inspiration and are key to test and validate your initial assumptions.

LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Stakeholders should be involved at all stages of the project. Take time to map them and get to know them better. This way, you can ask them about:

- their vision on the needed systemic change
- their understanding of the scope of the project, its goals, their roles and responsibilities as well as their needs
- their perspective on beneficiaries' reality, challenges and needs regarding entrepreneurship, business set-ups etc.
- their perspective on beneficiaries' learning needs and learning styles, to understand the educational culture in the country.

We have identified the following important stakeholders in our project:

- Core and extended team
- (Other) international organizations and development funds working with youth entrepreneurship, including cash grants programmes
- Active stakeholders in the field of entrepreneurship support – either public, private or non-governmental. This includes ministries, employment centres, entrepreneurship support organizations, chambers of commerce etc.
- Civil society, including local NGOs, youth movements, youth entrepreneurship movements
- Training institutions, education centres and universities
- Recruitment institutions to select and hire coaches for the project
- Financial institutions that offer support to entrepreneurs
- Other stakeholders offering support to entrepreneurs (diaspora and diaspora associations)
- Business owners who can influence young people through their success stories
- Business clients who can inform the entrepreneurs on their perception of the existing good and services, as well as on the adequacy of the market with their expectations (demand)
- Coaches, trainers and mentors who will be recruited and trained to train and support the young entrepreneurs
- Project beneficiaries and their family members who can give direct information and perceptions on the entrepreneurship landscape.

CONDUCT DESK RESEARCH – DO NOT REINVENT THE WHEEL

3

Conduct extensive desk research and review the existing literature to identify:

- Resources, data and evidence
- Entrepreneurship toolkits
- Good practices

This will support you in designing better solutions. Many good practices are already available, could inspire you or simply be adapted to your project. Do not "reinvent the wheel".

LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Review the following resources:

- Existing research papers and publications on labour entrepreneurship, project effectiveness, etc.
- Local and international trainings toolkits and learning methods
- Data on employment and unemployment rates entrepreneurship in the country, in the region, etc.

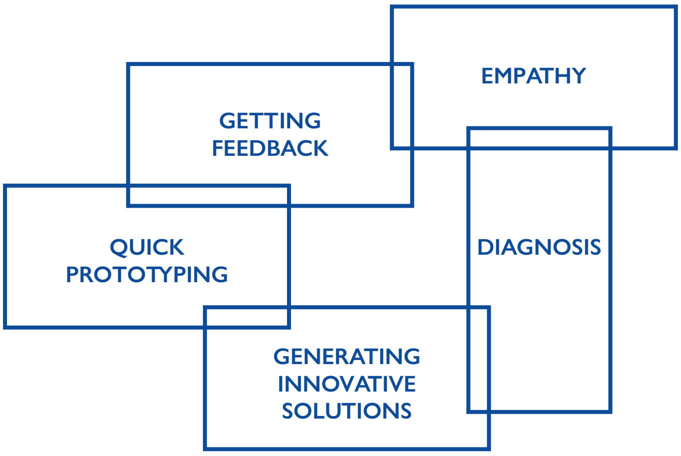
> **"You need to consider the socio-economic environment and cultural influencers. For example, your family or the community might ask you for money. Or you might have a wedding. You need to incorporate it into your budget, consider how much you can give and spend."**

key informant during the needs assessment

PUT HUMANS IN THE CENTRE

4

Once you have a top-down view on the system you are trying to impact, the next step is to travel to the other side - to your beneficiaries and stakeholders. When designing the project, you need to take into account all the people and organizations who will impact and be impacted by the programme. Design thinking offers an iterative and co-creative process involving the team, stakeholders and beneficiaries all along the way, organized into five major stages:



1. **Empathy:** the needs assessment with the organization, stakeholders and beneficiaries
2. **Diagnosis:** based on the needs assessment and the systemic analysis
3. **Generating innovative solutions:** to respond to the needs
4. **Quick prototyping:** of the desired solutions
5. **Getting feedback:** from stakeholders on:

- the project scope, concept and process
- your solutions to the problems (for example, your training programme design)

INSPIRATION

"The field guide to human-centered design. Design Kit" [online] available at https://www.ideo.com/post/design-kit (accessed March 2021)

LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ensure enough timing for an extensive needs assessment with a full range of stakeholders, including the in-depth interviews with the potential beneficiaries, trainers, implementing partners and the team itself.
- Include observations methods whenever possible, visiting potential beneficiaries' businesses, observing similar trainings, visiting the organizations.
- Document thoroughly the needs assessment so it becomes your source of knowledge and inspiration, and a reference point to design solutions throughout the project.

"Programmes I took part in not always took into account my needs as an entrepreneur".

an applicant to the programme

UNDERTAKE A THOROUGH GENDER AND DIVERSITY ANALYSIS

5

When designing a project meant to contribute to a desired change, you need to spend time on the gender and diversity analysis. It should be mainstreamed into the context, trends, opportunities, and risk analysis. The goal is to identify how your solution will affect different social groups: women and men; people with disabilities; people of different ages, ethnicities, religions, beliefs, sexuality; with different levels of education, literacy, wealth; people located in different regions, urban people, rural people, etc.

This is very important as your programme cannot and will never be neutral; it will create new power balances in society, even at a very small scale. In return, diversity and gender factors will impact the way you achieve social change. Therefore, you have to assess that impact and how it can manifest during your programme. This assessment will also enable you to reveal any inequalities within your project, which are often hard to perceive at first sight.

LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

PLEASE REFLECT ON THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

Project design

- Have men and women been equally consulted during the design and context analysis?
- Have other vulnerable groups (people with disabilities, a low economic status, minorities…) also been consulted?
- Did you disaggregated the data you gathered during the designing phase by gender, age, and other significant factors?
- How does the problem affect men and women, youths and elders, educated and illiterate people, people with disabilities?
- What are the positive and negative implications of the programme for diverse groups?
- Does the project benefit men and women (and other groups) to the same extent? If not, why? Is it intentional?
- Does the project's objectives and methods reflect the needs and concerns of all vulnerable groups?
- How does the project mitigate gender and diversity inequalities?
- Did the team and implementing partners receive the gender mainstreaming training?
- Are the existing power balances (in terms of gender and minorities) a potential risk for the programme? For example, could gender stereotypes prevent equal participation? If so, what mitigation measures can we undertake?
- Which activities require additional resources to ensure gender mainstreaming?
- Were some resources (time, people, knowledge, budget) specifically dedicated to gender and diversity mainstreaming activities (trainings, analysis, etc.)?

Project implementation and follow-up:

- Do our monitoring and evaluation activities consider men and women separately?
- Can we measure separately the impact of the project for different social groups? If so, which indicators will inform us?
- What will we do with the generated data? How will we use this knowledge to achieve our mission and goals?
- How will we disseminate this knowledge?

These questions were adapted from the OSCE ODIHR checklist on gender mainstreaming.

OUR STORY

In our project, we have learnt some important lessons about diversity.

One of the training centres was located one hour away from the city centre, without frequent transportation services. In the course of the monitoring and evaluation process, we discovered that it was a serious problem for some participants. Some could not afford the price of transportation. A woman, who was heavily pregnant, could not walk for 40 minutes under the sun. These participants started attending the sessions less and eventually almost dropped-out.

We also realized that some participants needed their family's permission (husbands or parents) to apply and participate to the programme. Had we realized this earlier, we should have addressed the applicants' families in the outreach phase with information on the project and its implications.

Furthermore, the training programme being exclusively given in English, some participants found it difficult to participate as they were not fluent in the language.

Lastly, we found out that some participants who could not read but were very motivated by the programme asked their literate family for support in the application process.

Of course, you can decide on the profile of beneficiaries you wish to target. However, keep in mind that you might be excluding more people than you intend to.

APPLY SUSTAINABILITY LENSES

6

Similarly, in view of the major environmental challenges we are currently facing, we recommend that your team respond to the following questions.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- Do we have any organizational strategy on sustainability (in terms of positive social and environmental impact)?
- Do the project activities comply with the local environmental law and other requirements? Can we set even higher standards for our project?
- Have we taken into account environmental challenges in the design of the project?
- What resources do we need to guarantee our project is sustainable and responds to the regenerative approach? Do we have the adequate skills, knowledge and attitude within the team?
- Have we considered the environmental, social, economic and political impact of the project?
- Do we have a framework to monitor the compliance of our activities with our sustainability goals?
- What positive environmental and social impact do we want our project to have? Which activities shall we undertake in order to achieve it? How do they impact other parts of the system?
- What carbon footprint do we leave with the project activities and outcomes?
- How can we offset our carbon footprint?
- How can we make the project activities more circular and sustainable (for example, consider water, electricity, paper consumption, waste etc.)?
- Where and how could we implement circular design and a zero-waste policy?
- Can we make sustainability one our criteria for procurement, for choosing partners and stakeholders we want to work with?
- How can we include the topics of climate change, sustainability and creating positive social and environmental activities in our training programme?

INSPIRATION

"Does carbon offsetting work?" (2020) [online] available at https://friendsoftheearth.uk/climate/does-carbon-offsetting-work (access March 2021)

LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

When designing your incubator, accelerator or any other training programmes, we strongly recommend to have sustainability and regenerative approaches as one of the training topics. This will contribute to raising awareness on climate challenges and enhancing the positive impact of the project.

An additional idea would be to prioritize, during the selection process, the entrepreneurship projects which have a strong positive social and environmental impact.

> **"Sustainability is a key concept when thinking about business success".**
>
> an entrepreneurship support expert

CHECKLIST

- The team analysed the system.
- The team mapped the stakeholders.
- The team conducted desk research.
- The team used human-centred design methods to identify the beneficiaries' and stakeholders' needs.
- The team applied diversity and sustainability lenses to design the project.

START
PREPARE

DESIGN

HOW TO DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT
THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP TRAINING PROGRAMME?

- DESIGNING THE PROGRAMME FOR PARTICIPANTS
- DESIGN PROGRAMME FOR TRAINERS / COACHES / MENTORS
- DESIGN THE STAKEHOLDERS' EXPERIENCE
- PREPARE LOGISTICS
- PREPARE RESEARCH, MONITORING & EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

FOLLOW UP

HOW TO DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP TRAINING PROGRAMME?

Only once you:

- explored the entrepreneurship ecosystem you wish to impact
- defined the change you want to achieve
- conducted extensive research on the existing good practises and mapped them
- talked with your stakeholders and beneficiaries to define their needs
- created diversity and sustainability checklists and strategies

… you can start shaping and implementing the entrepreneurship programme.

You and your team might have brainstormed many ideas on how to build your programme based on the needs assessment. That is why it is important for you to set the criteria that will help you choose from all the possible solutions.

These criteria could be following:

- **Leverage points and impact:** Does this idea enable the biggest leverage to change the system with the minimal number of resources?
- **Needs:** (How) Does this idea or solution respond to the identified beneficiaries' needs? In which ways?
- **Inclusivity and sustainability:** Does this solution check our sustainability and diversity criteria and helps us have a positive impact in this regard?
- **Resources:** Do we have resources (time, staff, budget, space etc.) to prototype, test and implement this idea?

Moreover, when building an entrepreneurship training programme, an incubator, an accelerator or innovation hub, you should design separate but integrated programmes: **1) for participants and 2) for trainers / coaches / mentors.**

Each of these programmes should comprise of some major components like: applicant and participant management, communication and outreach, recruitment, training and motivation programme, logistics and follow-up activities.

Finally, based on the needs assessment, you want to design an ideal experience for the (implementing) partners you plan to work with.

To sum up, at this stage of your project journey, you have the following tasks and objectives:

PARTICIPANTS — **DEFINE THE PROGRAMME FOR PARTICIPANTS** AND MAP THEIR EXPERIENCE

TRAINERS	**DEFINE THE PROGRAMME FOR COACHES, TRAINERS AND MENTORS** AND MAP THEIR EXPERIENCE
STAKEHOLDERS	**DESIGN THE STAKEHOLDERS' EXPERIENCE** AND MAP THEIR EXPERIENCE
LOGISTICS	**PREPARE THE LOGISTICS**
MEL	**DESIGN THE MONITORING AND EVALUATION ACTIVITIES**

> **"Embracing human-centered design means believing that all problems, even the seemingly intractable ones like poverty, gender equality, and clean water, are solvable. Moreover, it means believing that the people who face those problems every day are the ones who hold the key to their answer. Human-centered design offers problem solvers of any stripe a chance to design with communities, to deeply understand the people they're looking to serve, to dream up scores of ideas, and to create innovative new solutions rooted in people's actual needs.**
> **(...) Being a human-centered designer is about believing that as long as you stay grounded in what you've learned from people, your team can arrive at new solutions that the world needs."**

The field guide to human-centered design. Design Kit.

DESIGN THE PROGRAMME FOR PARTICIPANTS

1

This chapter describes the different components of programme implementation in a given sequence. This does not mean that you need to do it in the same order. On the contrary, you will probably design the training curriculum and activities first (motivational programme, cash grant, follow-up activities) and then design the outreach and recruitment as you will need to know what to communicate on.

Below, you will find the programme components presented here from the perspective of the participants journey through the programme.You will read about: the candidates' profiles, outreach and communication, recruitment, training, cash grant, motivation and follow-up.

CANDIDATES' PROFILE AND CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

At this stage, your target groups (beneficiaries of the programme) and their needs should already be defined. You can now start to design and later implement the different programme components.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- Who is our target group? Who do we want to impact the most? Why?
- What application criteria do we need to set to attract the target group we want to impact?
- How do our criteria affect different groups? Do we provide any facilities for disadvantaged groups (people with disabilities)? (see diversity mainstreaming in the previous Chapter)

LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Criteria adequacy - Consider how your criteria contribute to your desired impact. For example, do you want to intervene in a region with high unemployment rates and/or towards an age group who is prone to migrate?
- Education barrier - To avoid having a programme which is only accessible for the most privileged part of the population, adapt your communication channels and selection process. Consider applicants who have other educational backgrounds than formal education (for example: vocational trainings, volunteering experiences, etc.).
- Level of experience – Do you want to select people who already run a business, those who have a business idea, or both? This decision will greatly impact the content of the training programme.

- Language spoken – In some countries, there are official languages and local languages. Limiting your criteria to official languages might discriminate people with lower educational backgrounds. Consider translating the toolkits into local languages and hiring trainers who speak local languages.
- Level of literacy – If you want to include more disadvantaged groups, you need to adapt the programme (communication channels, training contents) to different levels of literacy.
- Diversity – In order for your programme to be as inclusive as possible, cross-check the adequacy of the programme contents, logistics and preparations with different profiles of people.

> **"Once the programme started, we realised we had a person who could not read or write but wanted so much to participate in the programme that they asked a family member to apply for them. They were so determined to set their own business and provide for their family that I could not say no. So I spent additional time after classes helping that person to understand the toolkits and prepare the homework."**
>
> a programme coach

OUTREACH & COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

In the design phase, you will need to conceptualize the outreach campaign and design the tools you will use to communicate with participants. With your team, consider the following questions.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

The outreach campaign:

- Do we want to have a programme logo and slogan?
- Do we need an outreach and communication campaign?
- How should this campaign look like (what are our communication objectives, who should we target, through which channels, with what content, when, etc.)?
- Will it be implemented in-house or do we need to outsource it?
- Do we know reliable communication agencies?
- Will we use any ambassadors for our campaign?
- Will we have an anchor page or platform?

GUIDING QUESTIONS

The communication tools

- How will we communicate with applicants and later with participants? (consider email, newsletter, social media, portal, participants' profile)
- Where will we store all the information the participants need?
- How will participants interact between themselves during the programme? (social media, our portal etc.)

LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Remember that outreach is one of the first "touch points" in the participants' experience map and it needs to be consciously designed.
- Define the core values of your programme and adjust all the activities accordingly (like: fairness, transparency, democratic, inclusive recruitment etc.).
- Manage the applicants' and participants' expectations throughout the programme, especially during the outreach communication campaign and the recruitment process. We advise to clearly communicate on: the objectives of the programme, the recruitment stages, the selection criteria, the programme format, the expected engagement and responsibilities, the awaited benefits, etc.
- Adapt the communication channels to all target groups, including the less privileged.
- Adjust the training contents to the target groups.

RECRUITMENT PROCESS AND EXPERIENCE

From the first moment you contact a potential participant, you generate a certain image of your organization and thus shape the participants' experience. The way you communicate, recruit, train and treat participants will influence their perception and motivation which impacts the success of whole programme. This means you have to engage in high quality interactions and provide high quality results at all times. Whatever the outcome is for the participants, their experience of the recruitment process has to be positive.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- How will the recruitment process look like?
- How should the application form be designed? What information do we want to obtain from the applicants? What barriers might they have when applying?
- Who will screen and evaluate the applications?
- How will we accept and reject the candidates?
- How will we manage the drop-outs?

LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- The recruitment process should be:
  - Open and inclusive: the selection process should be accessible to people who have no prior experience with trainings and business.
  - Diverse: ensure diversity among participants in terms of: gender, age, disability, language, ethnicity, etc.
  - Fair and transparent: communicate clearly and transparently on the acceptance criteria for the recruitment process in order to avoid confusion and disappointment among applicants.
- When designing the application process, consider the user experience criteria (utility, user-friendliness, efficiency) from the participants' viewpoint taking into account their language, level of literacy, level of education, age, technical capacities (internet connection and devices). The diversity mainstreaming analysis will help you be aware of any unconscious bias that can discriminate certain applicants.
- Ensure good and fair treatment for applicants. Manage their disappointment if they do not get accepted in the programme, and try to put them in contact with other relevant support organizations.
- Make sure to have a 'reserve list'. Initially accept more people into the programme than foreseen as it is guaranteed that some of the participants will drop out.
- Create a 'Frequently Asked Questions' document for the applicants.

TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR PARTICIPANTS

Participating in the training is the next step for participants. You need to design the training curriculum and also plan activities between the moment candidates are accepted and the beginning of the programme (to avoid disengagement).

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- How should participants be managed and prepared to participate in the training programme?
- How should the curriculum be designed?
  - How do people usually learn? What is the learning culture?
  - How long should the programme last? How highspeed, intense or demanding should it be?
  - What formats and training methods will you use? Coaching sessions, masterminds, trainings, mentoring, bootcamps, field trips, job shadowing's, on-line sessions?
  - What topics will you include? Consider soft skills, hard skills, toolkits.

- How should the materials be designed?
  - Which training materials will the participants need?
  - What will you do to adapt the materials to the local context? (language, sectors, cases)
  - Should the materials be translated to different local languages?
- What profile should the trainers have? (see this in the next section)

LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- The programme – its topics, format, methods - must be designed in response to the participants' needs.
- Ensure the participants', trainers' and coaches' engagement buy involving them in the co-creation process, asking them to test prototypes of materials, etc.
- Define your training strategy and objectives (concrete outcomes you want to achieve at each stage). The training is not only about formal education but about giving participants necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes to succeed in business. Think about different types of activities like: kick-off and orientation sessions, presentations, follow-up activities, immersions, internships, job shadowing etc.
- Create a culture of engagement for participants to be active, participate in co-creating the programme and take full responsibility for its implementation.
- Create a culture of exploring, experiencing and experimenting which is a crucial to boost innovations and creativity.
- Think about inclusivity when designing the training materials (the content, language, graphic design), when defining the workload as well as the formats and the methods.
- Have a common platform (storage space) with all the necessary materials and resources for the training. Make it accessible to all participants.
- Hand out the training materials in advance to the trainers and participants (in hard and soft copies) so they can read the toolkits and prepare the sessions.

CASH GRANTS – FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR PARTICIPANTS

Based on our desk research and interviews with entrepreneurship support organizations, we found out that entrepreneurship programmes tend to be more effective if they include a financial grant. Below, you will find some of the questions to answer with your team on this topic.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- Why do we want to offer the grant?
- How big should the grant be?
- What criteria should we set to receive a grant?
- How should the grant be distributed (moments and channels)?

LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establish criteria on who can receive the grant, how, when, and how it can be spent. Clearly communicate on these criteria with the participants.
- Make this process as inclusive as possible but impose some essential conditions (for example, attendance to the training, compulsory deliverables, etc.).
- Help participants prepare to receive and spend the grant. Provide early and understandable information on the criteria (especially if you require a prior business registration or a bank account), provide budget and spending plan templates, offer trainings on sound financial management and budgeting, ensure support of trainers and coaches.
- Facilitate, if possible, partnerships with other financial institutions in case participants are in need of larger investments. This can be done by providing a list of trusted insti tutions who offer loans and grants, facilitating contact with them, or helping participants to apply to them.

MOTIVATION AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Organizations should always design participants' engagement strategy in advance. Do not underestimate this phase! It helps to keep participants motivated and engaged, and to reduce the drop-out rate. Moreover, it may lead to a very positive long-term impact on the business landscape as active participants will create a network of trusted partners.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- How can we support participants' motivation and engagement throughout the programme? How should the motivational programme look like (taking into account participants' needs and our resources)?
- What benefits do we want to offer to participants?
  - Do we offer free transport or a transport allowance?
  - Do we offer water, snacks, on-site meals, or a food allowance?
  - Do we offer any gifts?
  - Do we offer a certificate?
  - Do we provide participants with any insurance (liability, accident)?
  - Do we want to provide networking or integration events?
  - What else do we want to offer?

LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Consider involving local stakeholders and successful entrepreneurs to deliver the motivational programme (networking events, meetings, talks, webinars), This way, you will create a wider legacy for the local communities (or the country) by creating quality relationships between the participants and other organizations.

- Create opportunities for participants to meet and talk informally in order to enable further business connections and develop social and human capital.
- Create a programme branding and design the participants' journey experience throughout the programme. Design actions for each stage, touchpoints contributing to the overall satisfaction of the participants. Every stakeholder involved in the programme should share this goal.
- Establish clear principles around the programme; for example, balancing benefits and responsibilities.
- Plan integration activities within the budget forecast such as:
  - on-line networking events
  - platforms where participants can introduce themselves, meet, socialize, hang-out, exchange ideas (for example, a closed group on Facebook and WhatsApp)
  - story-telling sessions with successful local entrepreneurs
  - motivational webinars with successful entrepreneurs
- Offer a certificate of completion that can be valued by local employers and other educational institutions. This will be very helpful especially for participants whose business project may not be successful and will need to apply for jobs.
- Include game-based activities in the programme to foster fun and positive competition.

CHECKLIST

- The candidates' profiles are defined.
- The outreach and communication strategies are defined.
- The recruitment and candidate management strategies are defined.
- The training curriculum is designed.
- The motivation strategy is defined.
- The cash grant process is established.
- All these strategies take into account the local system, the beneficiaries' needs and the organization's abilities.

PARTICIPANTS' EXPERIENCE MAP

Touchpoint	Participant's actions	Most common pitfalls	Opportunities for programme designers
Outreach & Communication	▪ sees, hears about or reads the advertisement ▪ tries to understand the requirements ▪ looks for further information	▪ lack of information on programme ▪ lack of clear requirements for the programme ▪ lack of information on the application process	▪ manage expectations ▪ reach the right target group ▪ build a brand for your programme
Application	▪ fills in the application form ▪ waits for the invitation to the interview	▪ technology, connectivity problems ▪ long and complicated application form ▪ incomprehensible application form (including bureaucratic or foreign language)	▪ prototype the application and get feedback from potential users ▪ make it easy ▪ confirm reception of application
Recruitment	▪ stresses about the interview ▪ does the interview ▪ waits for the confirmation	▪ unpleasant experience during the interview ▪ interview experience not aligned with programmes values	▪ make this meeting a positive experience for participants, independently of the final outcome
Receiving acceptance or rejection	▪ receives acceptance or refusal letter ▪ promotes or criticizes the programme	▪ no reserve list ▪ high drop-out rate ▪ rejecting candidates before accepting ▪ unpleasant language ▪ lack of information on rejection motives	▪ respect applicants ▪ plan for a reserve list ▪ accept more candidates due to drop outs
Orientation	▪ receives all info about the programme ▪ signs the agreement ▪ waits for the start	▪ no information for a long time ▪ no contact from organizer	▪ provide all info to help participants prepare ▪ distribute early materials ▪ fuel motivation ▪ monitor drop-outs

Touchpoint	Participant's actions	Most common pitfalls	Opportunities for programme designers
Training	▪ participates in the programme activities ▪ interacts with peers and trainers	▪ training materials unadapted to participants' needs (learning needs and others)	▪ prototype the training content and materials ▪ get feedback from potential users
Motivation	▪ engages or drops out ▪ participates in networking, integration events	▪ no motivational strategy for participants ▪ high drop-out rate	▪ design in advance activities based on the needs assessment ▪ involve stakeholders in delivery
Follow-up	▪ implements the learnings ▪ strives to succed in the market	▪ no follow-up activities for participants ▪ leaving participants without a final reflection time ▪ no evaluation on what worked and what did not	▪ design in advance activities based on the needs assessment ▪ involve stakeholders in activities ▪ dedicate enough time to reflect, evaluate and close

DESIGN THE PROGRAMME FOR TRAINERS, COACHES AND MENTORS

2

When designing an entrepreneurship accelerator, incubator or any training journey, you need to think about the people who will deliver the programmes. During your conceptualization phase, pay special attention to this part as it often requires extensive capacity building: mapping existing resources, creating a pool of trainers, coaches and mentors, preparing them to deliver the programme (through a train-the-trainers training).

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- **Needs assessment:** How will we research trainers' needs?
- **Capacity:** What is the capacity in the region?
- **Profiles:** What is our desired profile for a trainer, a coach, a mentor?
- **Outreach & Communication:** How will we reach to trainers? How will we communicate with them before and during the programme?
- **Recruitment:** How will we recruit the trainers?
- **Training:** How will we prepare the trainers?
- **Motivation:** How will we fuel their motivation and engagement?
- **Follow-up:** How will we follow up with the trainers?
- **Monitoring & Evaluation:** How will we involve them in monitoring and evaluation activities before, during and after the programme?

LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Partner with relevant and reliable local entrepreneurship organizations that are able to source, recruit, and train the trainers-coaches-mentors for your project.
- Involve the trainers, coaches and mentors at all stages of the project: in systemic analysis, in needs assessment, in prototyping the programme solutions - including the training materials - using their skills and know-how. Ask them to test the materials before the programme is finalized.
- Include the necessary resources for co-creation (time, space, daily allowances, fees) in the project plan and in the budget (see also Budget section in Chapter 1).
- Enable training materials to be tested at an early stage with coaches and final users. You want to ensure all parties feel ownership for the programme.
- Design manuals, guidelines, toolkits and training scenarios for trainers to help them deliver quality programmes.
- The train-the-trainers training should be organised much earlier than the beginning of the training with participants. This will enable you to incorporate the coaches' feedback in the training contents.
- Design a strong motivational programme: offer competitive salaries (this especially

important in countries where training or coaching can rarely be a full-time job), certificates, letters of recommendations, a quality training programme to build capacity and thus leave a long-lasting legacy.

- Provide clear and transparent information throughout the programme on the expected workload, responsibilities, schedules and timelines.

CHECKLIST

- The ideal profiles for trainers are defined.
- The criteria for recruitment are set.
- The regional capacity is mapped.
- The recruitment strategy is defined.
- The train-the-trainers curriculum is designed.
- The motivation strategy – including benefits for trainers – is defined.
- The trainers' experience map is designed.
- All these strategies take into account the local system, the trainers' needs and the organization's abilities.

TRAINERS' EXPERIENCE MAP

Touchpoint	Trainer's actions	Most common pitfalls	Opportunities for programme designers
Outreach & Communication	▪ sees, hears about or reads the advertisement ▪ tries to understand the requirements ▪ looks for further information	▪ lack of information on programme ▪ lack of clear requirements for the programme ▪ lack of information on the application process	▪ manage expectations ▪ reach the right target group ▪ build a brand for your programme ▪ provide coherent information
Application	▪ fills in the application form ▪ waits for the invitation to the interview	▪ technology, connectivity problems ▪ long and complicated application form ▪ absence of application form	▪ prototype the application and get feedback from potential users ▪ make it easy ▪ confirm reception of application
Recruitment	▪ stresses about the interview ▪ does the interview ▪ waits for the confirmation	▪ unpleasant experience during the interview ▪ interview experience not aligned with programmes values	▪ make this meeting a positive experience for coaches, independently of the final outcome
Receiving acceptance or rejection	▪ receives acceptance or refusal letter ▪ promotes or criticizes the programme	▪ no reserve list ▪ drop-outs ▪ rejecting candidates before accepting ▪ unpleasant language ▪ lack of information on rejection motives	▪ respect applicants ▪ plan for a reserve list ▪ accept more candidates due to drop outs
Orientation & Train-the-Trainer	▪ receives all info about the programme ▪ signs the agreement ▪ waits for the start	▪ no contact from organizer ▪ scarce info about the programme ▪ too short training ▪ lack of ownership on training materials ▪ too little experience	▪ provide all info to help trainers prepare ▪ distribute early materials ▪ fuel motivation ▪ prototype and test the training content and materials

Touchpoint	Trainer's actions	Most common pitfalls	Opportunities for programme designers
Training participants Monitoring	▪ delivers the programme activities ▪ interacts with participants and other trainers ▪ undergoes problems or enjoys the experience	▪ training materials not adapted to trainers' needs (experience, lear-ning style)	▪ prototype the training content and materials ▪ get feedback from trainers
Motivation	▪ engages or drops out ▪ participates in networking, integration events	▪ no motivational strategy ▪ trainer dropping out or not fully engaged (late, unprepared etc.) ▪ too low salaries ▪ no additional benefits	▪ design in advance activities based on the needs as-sessment ▪ involve stakeholders in activities
Follow-up Evaluation	▪ engages or drops out ▪ participates in evaluation and follow-up activities	▪ no follow-up activities for trainers ▪ leaving coaches without a final reflection time ▪ no evaluation on what worked and what did not	▪ design in advance activities based on the needs as-sessment ▪ involve stakeholders in activities ▪ dedicate enough time to reflect, evaluate and close

DESIGN THE STAKEHOLDERS' EXPERIENCE

3

Last but not least, you should design a positive journey experience for your key stakeholders: your research team (if your project comprises of a research component) and the implementing partners ("IPs" - any organization you will be working with to implement the programme).

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- **Needs assessment:** How will we conduct the needs assessment with the potential stakeholders, including the IPs?
- **Capacity:** What are the local entrepreneurship support organizations we could work with in the community/region?
- **Criteria and recruitment:** What type of organization do we want to choose to be our IPs? What criteria should we set to select them?
- **Communication:** How will we communicate with IPs before and during the programme?
- **Knowledge needs:** What do the IPs need to know about the programme? our internal procedures? On what aspects do they need to be trained?
- **Resources audit:** What resources do we need to provide ourselves? What should be implemented directly by the IPs?
- **Follow-up:** How will we follow-up with the IPs? What offer can they provide for participants after the programme ends?
- **Monitoring & Evaluation:** How will we involve IPs in monitoring and evaluation activities before, during and after the programme?
- **Co-creation & division of responsibilities:** How will we involve the IPs in the co-creation process? How do we divide responsibilities?

You can ask the same questions when preparing other stakeholders' experience maps.

LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Involve the entrepreneurship support organizations at all stages of the project: in systemic analysis, in needs assessment, in prototyping the programme solutions - including the training materials - using their skills and know-how. Ask them to test the materials before the programme is finalized.
- Assess if they can become your implementing partners later on. It will ensure greater ownership as they are implementing the project on-site.
- Include the necessary resources for co-creation (time, space, fees, intellectual

property rights on toolkits) in the project plan and in the budget (see also Budget section in Chapter 1).

- Design a sustainable work relationship: offer competitive salaries, letters of recommendations, a quality training programme to build capacity and thus leave a long-lasting legacy.
- Provide clear and transparent information throughout the programme on the expected workload, responsibilities, schedules and timelines.
- Clarify your expectations towards IPs: Which communication channels will you use? How will you maintain communication with IPs? How should they report to you?
- Enable IPs to have maximum independence in their way of implementing the programme. Set common key performance indicators (KPI) as well as reporting, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

CHECKLIST

- The criteria for choosing the implementing partners are set.
- The division of responsibilities between the mother organization and the mplementing partners is described.
- The knowledge needs are identified and the resources audit is done.
- The stakeholders' experience map is designed.

STAKEHOLDERS EXPERIENCE MAP

It provides generic touchpoints. It should be adapted to each stakeholder through a personalized needs assessment.

Touchpoint	Stakeholders' actions	Most common pitfalls	Opportunities for programme designers
First contact Info	▪ receives info about the potential project ▪ tries to understand the requirements / info ▪ looks for further information	▪ lack of all necessary info ▪ unclear requirements ▪ lack of local capacity to respond	▪ manage expectations ▪ reach right stakeholders ▪ provide coherent info
Scoping	▪ meets with the team and inquiries about the project ▪ expects clear information on the project (why, what, who, how, when and where)	▪ unclear projects parameters ▪ unclear or no information provided	▪ discuss all tasks, approaches and processes ▪ organize co-creation workshops ▪ research their needs
Agreeing	▪ expects co-operation and co-creation ▪ wants to present the organization, its objectives ▪ wants to be seen and heard	▪ lack of space to participate in co-creation ▪ lack of transparency ▪ stakeholders' experience irrelevant for the programme	▪ facilitate agreement reaching (professional moderation) ▪ agree on all tasks, approaches and processes
Applying	▪ applies to be a partner in the programme ▪ prepares the proposal	▪ long and difficult tender form ▪ unclear division of tasks and responsibilities before contract signature	▪ design an easy and understandable application form ▪ provide clear guidelines on how to apply
Contracting	▪ negotiates contract ▪ signs the agreement ▪ waits for the start	▪ lengthy and complicated procedures ▪ long negotiation process ▪ adding tasks after applying / changing and modifying the contract	▪ provide all info to help them prepare ▪ plan all the tasks and activities in the scoping and agreeing phase

Touchpoint	Stakeholders' actions	Most common pitfalls	Opportunities for programme designers
Working together	▪ delivers the activities ▪ interacts with the organization, the participants, the trainers ▪ undergoes problems or enjoys the experience	▪ unclear division of tasks and responsibilities after contract signature ▪ low engagement ▪ low quality services ▪ weak communication between parties	▪ plan and design all the activities in the scoping and agreeing phase ▪ ensure regular monitoring and evaluation
Monitoring	▪ monitors quality ▪ reports ▪ delivers KPIs	▪ no M&E strategy set and agreed on before contract signature ▪ lack of reporting ▪ little possibilities to monitor the implementation	▪ plan and design all the activities in the scoping and agreeing phase ▪ involve stakeholders in the monitoring phase ▪ have clear KPIs
Follow-up Evaluation	▪ reflects ▪ analyses ▪ evaluates ▪ disseminates	▪ no follow-up, reflection, learning, evaluation planned with stakeholders	▪ plan and design all the activities in the scoping and agreeing phase ▪ involve stakeholders in the evaluation phase ▪ dedicate enough time to reflect, evaluate and close

PREPARE LOGISTICS

4

Based on the needs assessment, brainstorm how the logistics of the programme should look like. This part is important to shape the participants', trainers' and IPs' experience.

!

Do not forget to apply your "diversity and sustainability lenses".

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- How should the venues look like? Where should they be located?
- How should the venue be equipped?
- What facilities should the venues have?
- What transport connections will participants be able to use to travel to the venues?
- Do we offer any drinks and snacks at the venues?
- How should the training materials be designed and printed to ensure inclusivity and sustainability?
- How can we diminish our carbon footprint and ensure proper waste management at the venues?

LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- In the needs assessment, we concluded connectivity issues were one of the major challenges. Which technical problems may your participants have? Think about access to internet, availability of computers etc.
- Consider equipment supplies for beneficiaries who have difficulties connecting to internet (mobile internet card, pen drives…).
- Plan, order and distribute in advance the training materials to the participants and the trainers (flipcharts, papers, pens, notebooks, printed toolkits, markers, post-its, etc.).
- Plan in advance which technical tools they will need for on-line sessions and webinars. Which platforms will they use? Which resources will they need?
- Venues should be easily accessible with public transport.
- Venues should be well-equipped and appropriate. They will be representing your organization's brand and values.
- Venues should be as "cosy" as possible (daylight, comfortable chairs and tables, colours, plants…) in order to foster creativity.
- Sessions with different groups must take place in separate rooms in order not to disturb each other.

CHECKLIST

- The venue's location and facilities are defined.
- The equipment needs are identified.
- The venue and equipment respect your diversity and sustainability criteria.

PREPARE RESEARCH, MONITORING & EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

5

Design your monitoring, evaluation, learning and dissemination activities in advance.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- How can we involve our monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) team, our communication and dissemination team, our research team into the project design process?
- How will we translate the needs assessment, the initial systemic analysis and the desk research findings into the logic of intervention?
- What role will different projects members have in monitoring and evaluation? Are they aware of these roles and responsibilities?
- How can we regularly review the process design? What can we do to regularly evaluate our teams' learnings and experiences?
- How will we collect data? What will be our data sources and baselines? Which tools will we use to gather data?
- How will we convert data into knowledge? How will this knowledge serve us?
- How will we document all phases, materials, findings?
- How will we monitor the quality of the project implementation?

LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- In your monitoring and evaluation processes, adopt a user-centred approach (user satisfaction is the final key outcome) with your team, the participants, the coaches, and the implementing partners.
- Develop your evaluation matrix, with the key performance indicators (KPIs), data sources and collection methods, baselines, targets, etc. Consult it regularly with all team members as well as with entrepreneurship experts.
- Ask team members, consultants, implementing partners to regularly evaluate the programme (processes, contents, teamwork…). Draw recommendations and iterate when necessary. Use sprints and retrospectives tools.
- Include in the ToRs (terms of references) and contracts for consultants the requirme-ment to evaluate their consultancy and experience in the project.
- Plan knowledge surveys and satisfaction surveys for participants and coaches all along the implementation process. Ensure rapid analysis and iteration if needed.
- Plan focus groups and supervision sessions with trainers, coaches and mentors whe-re they can ask questions or share personal challenges related to the implementation of the programme.
- Plan site visits with participants, coaches, and IPs to gather data for your KPIs (observe and interview).

- Organize monitoring activities at early stages of the programme. Make sure you are able to quickly adjust future activities to the feedback you receive.
- In the contract with the implementing partners, plan regular reporting and encourage regular communication.

CHECKLIST

- The MEL strategy is designed before the implementation starts.
- The MEL strategy respects your diversity and sustainability criteria.
- The MEL activities are user-centred.

START
PREPARE
DESIGN

FOLLOW UP

HOW TO FOLLOW UP ON AN ENTREPRENEURSHIP SUPPORT PROJECT

- DESIGN FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES
- REFLECT, LEARN AND DISSEMINATE RESULTS

HOW TO FOLLOW UP ON AN ENTREPRENEURSHIP SUPPORT PROJECT

Once the training programme ends, your project is not finished. When designing the programme, plan all the necessary resources (time, space, budget) to prepare people for follow-up, learning and dissemination activities.

You will have two main tasks and objectives linked to this phase:

FOLLOW UP	Prepare for **FOLLOW-UP** activities
RESULTS	**REFLECT, LEARN** and **DISSEMINATE THE RESULTS**

DESIGN FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

1

The majority of entrepreneurship and learning experts we interviewed highlighted the importance of follow-up activities for the project to have a long-lasting impact.
In order to achieve such an impact, ask yourself the following questions.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What possibilities will we give to entrepreneurs to implement their learnings and to receive feedback?
- How will we motivate participants to continue their efforts after the programme?
- How will we monitor the way they implement the results, use the programme and spend the cash grants?
- How can we support the sustainability of their businesses after the programme ends?
- How can we put them in contact with other institutions that can help them develop their business and scale up?
- What "legacy" do we want to leave for the region/country? How does this programme change the entrepreneurship ecosystem in the region/country? How does it contribute to the wider systemic change?

LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Fuel and support alumni networking.
- Connect alumni to institutions that can help them develop their business.
- Provide a list of financial institutions that can help increase their capital.
- Invite local organizations to design the follow-up activities for participants. On the one side, you will learn from them. On the other side, they will gain experience, recognition, and be strengthened in their capacities.

> **" Rather than a one-off event and programme, create a lasting ecosystem of support".**
>
> an entrepreneurship support expert

REFLECT, LEARN AND DISSEMINATE RESULTS

2

Take collective time, as a team, to reflect, learn and disseminate the project results.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What are the main learnings from the project? What worked well and what should be improved next time?
- How will we convert data into knowledge? How will this knowledge serve us?
- How will we involve our core and extended team (MEL team, communication and dissemination team, research team, experts and consultants) into the evaluation, learning, reflection and dissemination activities?
- How will we document all project phases, materials, and findings?
- How will we ensure that all the knowledge, experience and lessons learnt are useful for others?
- How will we evaluate the programme's effectiveness knowing that succeeding in business can take years?
- How will we use this learning? Which creative methods can we use?
- How will we disseminate the project's results within and beyond our organization?

LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Organize an evaluation after each stage of the project. It will help you write your final evaluation report.
- Dedicate space, time, and resources to enable the team to sit together and reflect on the project's learnings.
- Plan ahead the final evaluation.
- Plan ahead the way you will use and disseminate the project's results.
- Use creative dissemination methods: storytelling, visual communication, content marketing, etc.

CHECKLIST

- The follow-up activities are designed in collaboration with local stakeholders.
- The learning and dissemination strategies are designed in collaboration with your communication team, your MEL team, and the research team.
- Enough resources (space, time, budget and staff) are dedicated for these activities.
- The team has the adequate skills, knowledge and attitudes to implement the follow-up activities, the reflection process and the organizational learnings.

SUMMARY

If you only have **five minutes** to spend on this publication, here are **our top five recommendations:**

1. Be brave enough to innovate but keep in mind the purpose of your project at all times. Use innovative and management methods to implement your project in an organized and creative way.

2. Use top-down and bottom-up approaches to design your project, and iterate constantly. Think from a system perspective; talk to your beneficiaries and stakeholders, prototype, test and adapt in short design sprints.

3. Prepare ideal "journey experiences" through your programme for your team, the beneficiaries, the trainers and your major project stakeholders.

4. Make sure to contextualize and adapt the project to local realities. Co-create the programme with different stakeholders, involving them at all stages of the process: conceptualization, design, implementation and follow-up. This way, you will gain trust and ownership for the programme

5. Do not underestimate the power of beginnings and endings. Prepare your team, set the right mindset and dedicate enough time not only to design, but also to reflect, understand each other, evaluate, learn, disseminate the results and follow up.

We wish you to achieve an impactful project and a great team experience!

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