

## Chapter 6 Project Implementation and Monitoring

Someone must be responsible for coordinating the implementation of the workplan, and if you are reading this manual, chances are that person will be you. The most important thing to remember is to follow your plan. Regular assessment of your project's progress toward achieving the goals set out in the plan is essential. Remember that the workplan was developed before you began your work. This plan will now become your **implementation plan**. We would like to begin this section with a discussion of some things you should keep in mind as you implement your project and monitor its progress. Some of this chapter may seem redundant since we discussed many aspects of implementation when planning our programme. However, it is at this point that many projects fail due to lack of consistent monitoring of the plan. The work/implementation plan is a living document that can be changed in response to the realities of working in the field. Be prepared to review and revise your plan regularly—weekly if possible. You will quickly see if the plans you made prior to implementation are realistic and how things need to be adjusted in order to fulfill the objectives of the programme.

### Task Definition

During the process of developing the timeline for the workplan, a number of tasks were identified. For each task defined, a person should have been identified and made responsible for the task. At this point, you will want to be more detailed in your definition of the tasks necessary to complete each activity. Review the timeline you developed when planning the project and make sure you have not left out any tasks. Revise it if necessary. A time schedule should be agreed upon for each task. This process of task definition should be conducted by the project manager who should meet separately with all the project personnel and key actors to discuss tasks. This will provide both the manager and the staff with an in-depth understanding of the role each participant will play in the project and the sequence of events to be followed for each activity.

## **Development of Initial Implementation Plan**

Once the process of task definition has been completed the project manager should put together all the task definitions and construct a project implementation plan. This will greatly resemble your workplan, but has now been revised according to the realities of working in the field. Again, this activity should be conducted in collaboration with all the project key personnel.

You should have regular staff meetings (at least monthly) to go over the plan. At these meetings, you will assess your progress, and if you are not proceeding as planned, you must identify what is impeding your progress. Maybe you were not realistic when you developed your plan, and need to adjust the plan to reflect what you can realistically achieve in the given time using the given resources.

In our project, we were sometimes held back because of unusually heavy rains or petrol shortages. Always give advance notice and reminders to the women about project activities. Remember that there may be times of the year when they are less accessible. For example, we found that many women leave town for the planting season, festivities and public holidays. There may be other factors that stand in your way. In these situations, you must review your workplan and revise it accordingly.

## **Staff Training**

Training is an important component of project success. You should make sure that individuals have the education/instruction necessary to do their job. You may not be able to find people who have the formal education and experience necessary to assist you with the implementation of the project. In this case, you will be responsible for providing them with the necessary training—either on the job or in a more formal setting. You must remember to include this training time in your workplan.

## **Supervision**

A good job requires some supervision. When your staff is hired, their responsibilities should be clear. However, experience in the field has shown that often lines of responsibility change, and people end up performing tasks in a random manner—whatever they think needs to be done. While they may be well-intentioned, this departure from the plan can be disastrous. It can mean that important tasks (that were carefully planned) get left undone. In addition, your staff will not remain clear about their responsibilities,