



Chapter 5

Project Readiness Checklist

1. Introduction

Project readiness is key to successful project implementation. Projects that start up promptly after funds are available are much more likely to be implemented efficiently and effectively. Lessons from MAP projects highlight the need to have essential analyses, designs, organizational aspects, staffing and implementation, financial management and procurement and monitoring and evaluation plans in place prior to funding approval.

The objective of the checklist is to ensure that effective project implementation can commence immediately after funding approval. This means there will be few, if any, conditions of project effectiveness. The table on the following page identifies the most important aspects of the project that should be ready when the project commences. The milestones represent major decision points within the World Bank approval process (see next page).

2. Lessons learned and recommendations

- Project implementation delays are almost always directly linked to inadequate project preparation
- Clear communications among stakeholders is a key to success during project preparation and implementation
- Stakeholders, including development partners, need to participate in project design and preparation and those involved in preparation should remain involved in implementation. In addition to having a basic right to be involved in decisions concerning their future, project implementation is enhanced by this participation
- Fiduciary architecture and essential manuals need to be developed with and tested by key implementation stakeholders
- Clear institutional arrangements and Terms of Reference for different important posts and responsibilities should be agreed during preparation; this can be facilitated by institutional assessments, especially for communities and civil society stakeholders. The capacity of implementing agencies needs to be carefully assessed and capacity improvement measures built into project design, especially with regard to financial and progress reporting and documentation
- Availability of first year programs for both public and civil society organizations accelerates overall MAP implementation
- Recruit NAS staff early and from diverse sources, especially from the private sector and civil society organizations and from the public service outside the Ministry of Health. This should be done transparently using a competitive process to ensure quality and objectivity
- Implementing agencies need to prepare a social impact assessment when they are preparing their programs
- The provision of a PPF (Project Preparation Facility) is important to pilot activities and accelerate project effectiveness

Table 5.1 - MAP-Project Readiness Checklist⁹

Key Project Preparation Elements		Milestones for Readiness		
		By Appraisal	By Negotiation	By Board Approval
1	Letter of commitment and policy from government received and NAC established at start of project preparation. REQUIREMENT			
2	National HIV/AIDS strategic plan that reflects a multi-sectoral approach to be in place and adopted by NAC. REQUIREMENT	Adopted		
3	NAS established and NAC Councilors or / Commissioners and the NAS Director appointed by preparation. REQUIREMENT	TOR of professionals agreed, office established.	Other key staff appointed and office established	Remaining staff selected and appointed
4	Key NAS staff trained in procurement, financial management, & monitoring & evaluation as required. REQUIREMENT	Training plan established	Training of key staff begun	
5	Operations Manuals, Project Implementation Plan (PIP) and First Year Procurement Plan (PP) developed including detailed implementation schedule, and detailed budget plan (and local budget), and required TOR. REQUIREMENT	Draft Operations Manuals, PIP and PP discussed	Final documents agreed	Operations manuals, PIP & PP issued
6	Operations manual prepared. REQUIREMENT	Draft document	Final document agreed	
7	Medical Waste Management Assessment. REQUIREMENT	Completed		
8	Operations to be contracted (eg, financial management, procurement, procurement audit, internal audit, M & E, community mobilization, technical evaluation of grant proposals, capacity building) agreed. REQUIREMENT	Agreement reached between government and donor and TOR approved	Pre-qualification and shortlist completed	Contractors appointed
9	Appointment of mandatory external auditor. REQUIREMENT	Agreement reached between government and donor and TOR approved	Pre-qualification and shortlist completed	Auditor appointed
10	Institutional Assessment. REQUIREMENT	Completed		
11	Training plan prepared for general NAS staff and other institutions and communities. DESIRABLE		Draft plan discussed	Agreed
12	Financial management, procurement & monitoring & evaluation system established at NAS. REQUIREMENT	Requirements determined	Hardware and software in place	Systems functional
13	Bidding documents for 1st year of project prepared. Documents issued after effectiveness. REQUIREMENT			Bid packages, standard bid documents discussed and agreed
14	Special Account opened and local funds available. REQUIREMENT		Accounts opened and funded.	
15	Preparation of first year programs for public agencies and of initial civil society program submissions, including social assessments by implementing agencies. HIGHLY DESIRABLE	Draft	Final document agreed	NAC approval

⁹ Checklist assumes that: (a) there will be few, if any, conditions of effectiveness; and (b) the agreed period for fulfilling the Readiness Checklist tasks is realistic. Funds to undertake the tasks noted in the Checklist are available from sources such as PHRD grants, PPF funds, grants from other donors, and counterpart funds.