GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE ALLIANCE:
PACIFIC SMALL ISLAND STATES PROJECT

IMPACT EVALUTION OF
PROPOSAL PREPARATION USING THE LOGICAL FRAMEWORK APPROACH WORKSHOP IN POHNPEI

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PACIFIC RESEARCH & EVALUATION

ASSOCIATES

Introduction

Pacific Research and Evaluation Associates (PREA) delivered training on 'Proposal Preparation Using the Logical Framework Approach' to government staff in Pohnpei between 3-7 February 2014.

The training formed part of the Global Climate Change Alliance: Pacific Small Island States (GCCA: PSIS) project funded by the European Union (EU) and implemented by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP). The Coping with Climate Change in the Pacific Island Region program (CCCPIR) implemented in partnership with Deutsche Gesellschaftfür Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) also assisted with the provision of logistical support for the training in Palau.

The aim of the training was to strengthen the capacity of national government staff to develop successful and integrated climate change adaptation project proposals. This will allow PSIS and donors to work together to ensure a more effective and coordinated aid delivery to address climate change at the national and regional level.

This report evaluates the impact of the training four months following the workshop.

Impact evaluation

The impact evaluation framework was informed by the anticipated short and medium-term outcomes from the training workshop.

The anticipated short and medium-term outcomes are summarised below:
- Participants submit quality funding proposals informed by the Logical Framework Approach
- Funding proposals submitted would address PSIS climate change adaption requirements
- Increased number of quality funding proposals are funded by Government and external donors
- Implemented projects assist countries to adapt to climate change impacts
- Components of the LFA would be used in other daily work duties resulting in an increased quality of work produced

About the training workshop

The training workshop was delivered over four consecutive days. This was followed by an optional half-day of mentoring where participants could work on their project proposals.

The objective of the training was to build participant capacity in proposal preparation using the logical framework approach.

At the end of the workshop participants were expected to be able to:
- Describe and perform all the steps of the Logical Framework Approach and to develop a logframe matrix
- Describe and complete the key components of a funding application by pulling relevant data from the logframe matrix
- Be more aware of the donors and grant funding programmes that can be accessed by PSIS to fund climate change adaptation projects.

The key topics covered during the workshop included:
- A background on the project management cycle

- A detailed look at the logical framework approach
- Proposal writing (informed by the LFA) and
- A brief summary of climate change donors active in the Pacific region.

The effectiveness of the training workshop was evaluated through a post-workshop survey that was completed by participants on the last day. Results from the evaluation were documented in the post-workshop report submitted to SPC.

The Pohnpei workshop had a large number of participants. Thirty-three people attended the training over the four day workshop program representing various departments of the Federated States of Micronesia and Pohnpei State Governments, and some NGOs.

The post-workshop evaluation indicated that the workshop was very successful in building capacity and motivation of participants to use the logical framework approach to design projects and inform the preparation of proposals. The participants noted the benefits of thinking through projects at the design stage rather than jumping straight to solutions or actions. Informal feedback from participants during the training indicated that the material presented resonated with participants and that there was a strong likelihood for some, or all elements, of the LFA, to be used both for proposals as well as for planning in the workplace.

Methodology

The impact evaluation took place in June 2014, four months following the training. The evaluation consisted of:
- An online survey issued to all participants.
- Phone calls to remind participants to complete the survey, or to complete the survey over the phone.

The online survey was sent to 31 participants with contact details. A number of group email reminders were sent following the initial invitation to complete the online survey. This was followed by personally addressed reminders and phone calls which proved successful in getting more participants to complete the questionnaire. The calls also revealed that at least four participants were 'off island' on work trips and thus not able to complete the survey. One participant was on annual leave and one participant had left their organisation and was not contactable. The evaluation team provided a MS Word version of the questionnaire to participants and a number of the respondents took up this option.

Results

There were a total of 12 respondents for the Pohnpei impact evaluation, from a total of 29 participants with valid contact details giving a response rate of approximately 41% for participants with valid contact details.

Workshop resources

Eight of the 12 respondents (67%) indicated that they still had both their training learner guide (hardcopy) and USB flash drive with workshop resources. Three respondents only had their learner guide, whilst one respondent indicated that they only had the USB drive. There were no cases of respondents not having access to either the learner guide or the USB drive.

Three respondents had referred to the resources more than three times since the training. (Table 1). Five respondents used the resources between two and three times. This totals 67% for respondents who accessed the resources more than two times since the training. This may indicate that the respondents saw a need to use the LFA either in their work duties, or to prepare a proposal, and referred to the learning resources to guide them in the process. Three respondents indicated that they had only referred to the resources once, and one had indicated that they had never referred back to the workshop resources.

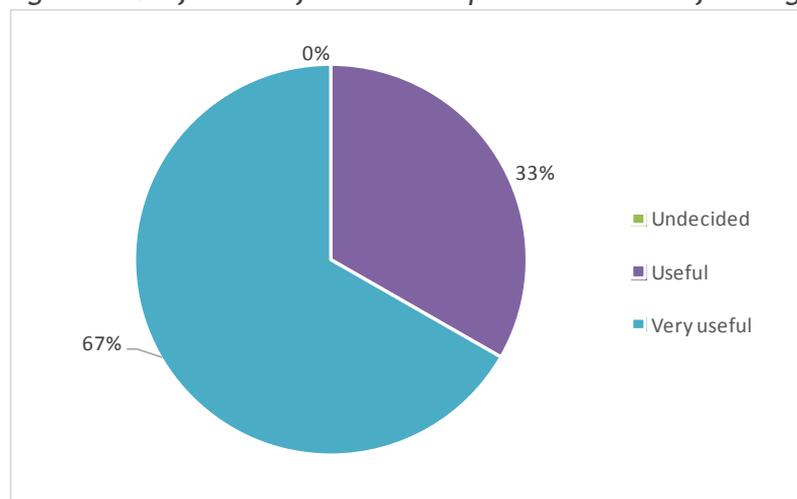*Table 1. Use of learning resources post-workshop*

	Number	Percentage
Never	1	8%
Once	3	25%
Two or three times	5	42%
More than three times	3	25%

Though most of the respondents had access to the workshop's learning resources, and had referred back to them at least once, SPC may consider providing an electronic version of the revised learner guide and resources to a central contact in Pohnpei (e.g. grant coordinator) so that they can place the resources on an internal server, or intranet/internet in the same manner that the Cooks Islands has done[1]. This will ensure that all participants have access to a copy of the resources, as well as expanding the reach beyond those who attended the training. The addition of the updated resource can then be communicated to all participants as another reminder about the training and supporting resources.

Use of LFA steps

All of the respondents indicated that they had found the LFA steps and tools useful in informing future project proposals (67% very useful, 33% useful- see Figure 1). This indicates that the training topic was valued, and that the training was delivered in a manner that communicated the importance of the LFA as a useful tool to the local context.

Figure 1. Usefulness of the LFA steps and tools in informing future project proposals

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[1] http://www.mfem.gov.ck/58-development/aid-resources/295-logical-framework-approach-training-material-and-resources

Nine of the 12 respondents indicated having used at least one of the LFA steps for proposal preparation, or in general work duties. The number of respondents using the LFA steps is outlined in Table 2. Participants reported having used the LFA steps more in preparing proposals (27 times across all steps) than in performing general work duties (23 times across all steps). This demonstrates that the LFA training has built capacity of staff in proposal preparation whilst also increasing the performance of their role in government, and emphasises the benefits of the LFA process in planning for both work and proposals.

Table 2. Use of the LFA steps in proposal writing and other work duties - Niue

LFA Step	Used or performed since training for a project proposal	Used or performed since training for general work duties
Conducted a stakeholder analysis	3	3
Developed a problem tree or solution tree	4	4
Developed a logframe matrix	6	2
Developed a monitoring and evaluation plan	3	2
Created a timeline or Gantt chart (Activity Schedule)	4	6
Created a budget (Resource Schedule)	7	6

Proposals prepared since the training

Six of the 12 respondents provided details of seven proposals that they had contributed to developing or submitted (Table 3). An additional two proposals was added to the list based on reporting by the Pohnpei State GCCA representative. Three of the nine proposals are noted to have been successful, and the remainder are pending. Elements of the LFA process had been used in eight of the seven proposals. This indicates that the respondents have been able to put into practice the skills learnt in the workshop.

Table 3. Funding proposals prepared following the training

Donor / Grant Name	Were you successful	Did you use LFA	Short Proposal Summary
Global Greengrants Foundation	Yes	No	Youth Summer camp $5,000
New Zealand Aid	No decision yet	Yes	Water access improvement to 3,000 villagers, $14,000
UNDP	Yes	Yes	Seidonokowa Water Clean up in Pohnpei (Stream clean up) $50,000
US Health Resources And Services Administration (HRSA)	No decision yet	Partially	Requesting supplemental funding to expand of services currently offered at the Pohnpei community health center. $400 K over 2 years
Global Environment Fund	Yes	Yes	Food security & livelihood project with Pohnpei Women's Council $50,000.00

| People's Republic of China | Being the FSM National Gov't before submission to People's Republic of China Embassy. | Yes | 500 pre-fab homes for the residents in Pohnpei, The objective of this project is to improve and provide quality living to Pohnpei citizens and residents at a reasonable cost.   Pohnpei State Housing Authority with ZTT Econova Homes have agreed to supply interested citizens or individuals with high-quality prefabricated housing units. With the pre-fabricated and ready to own homes, it would take less than 6 months for the citizens and residents of Pohnpei to own a well-developed, environment friendly housing unit at a reasonable cost with a long-term energy cost savings, a built in solar system. pre-fab homes, $75M. |
AusAid	No decision yet	Yes	Food security, $10,000
WHO	No decision yet	Yes	Salt Reduction strategy (Food Labeling & School based education) $15,000
Keepers of the Earth Fund	No decision yet	Yes	Capacity development & reduction of trash in Kolonia

Future proposals

Five survey respondents indicated they had plans to submit additional funding proposals in the next six months. Six respondents were unsure and one respondent had no plans. Eleven survey respondents indicated that they would use the LFA, or parts of it, in preparing future project proposals and one respondent was unsure.

Whilst less than half of the respondents indicated the intention to submit proposals, the benefits of the training are likely to continue into the future given that nearly all participants would use the LFA in future proposal writing activities. This confirms that the impact of the LFA training in motivating participants to use a clear, logical process to design better projects, leading to better-prepared proposals.

Survey respondents indicated an overall high degree of confidence in using all the LFA steps following the training (Figure 2). Whilst there was some variability, most participants indicated they could either lead the process of using the LFA steps (confident) or they could perform the LFA step with some assistance (limited confidence).

Overall, the results are positive in that there was a good balance between respondents indicating confidence, and those with limited confidence, with only minimal numbers indicating no confidence. There is the potential for the development of an informal network or community of practice to support the use of the LFA in Pohnpei. This should be encouraged so that the skills can be practiced, reinforced and maintained over time.

Figure 2. Level of confidence in using the LFA, M&E and proposal writing following the training – Pohnpei
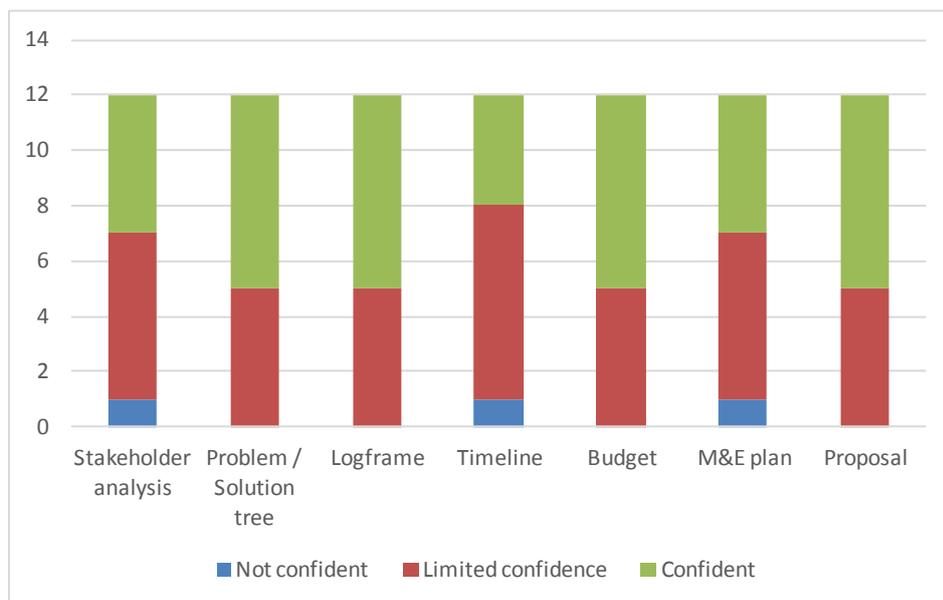
Additional capacity building

Participants were asked to nominate any additional training they needed to support them in their work. Their responses were categorised in Table 4.

Only seven of the 12 respondents nominated the need for any additional capacity building. The most popular request for additional training was focused on the LFA refresher course. The refresher course would help reinforce the learning from the first session and provide another opportunity for participants to demonstrate what they have learnt by working on a real-life project proposal. One participant also expressed interest in M&E and another in proposal writing.

Participant Feedback
"THE BEST FOLLOW-UP TRAINING FOR ME WILL BE THE SAME KIND OF TRAINING WITH MORE TIME ADDED AND MORE OF A ONE TO ONE INSTEAD OF A GROUP."

Pohnpei Participant Feedback
"Refreshing course would really help so I can be confident next time" *"the same kind of training with more time added and more of a one to one instead of a group."* *"Writing Concept notes & M&E."*

Table 4. Additional training requirements- Pohnpei

Capacity building area	Number of nominations by participants
LFA refresher course	4
Monitoring and evaluation	1
Proposal writing & Concept note writing	1

As noted earlier, future training could also be provided on writing proposals. The LFA training focusses on the LFA process to guide the content of the proposal, rather than focussing on the writing element of a proposal. A focus on proposal writing could be done through providing participants with examples of well written, and poorly written proposals. This could be achieved through online, or remote training, or through mentoring. Developing skills in proposal writing itself can also come from practice, with feedback on draft submissions (e.g. through mentoring).

> **Participant Feedback**
>
> "ONE MOST USEFUL RESOURCE TO PROVIDE IS MORE TEMPLATES ON ACTUAL PROPOSALS ON PROJECTS THAT WERE APPROVED FOR IMPLEMENTATION"

Feedback on the workshop

Eight respondents provided additional feedback about their reflections of the training. There was a larger mix of responses with no clear themes emerging. Most respondents were grateful for the opportunity to attend the training and reported having benefited from attending. One participant indicated that the workshop focus are (LFA / Proposal writing) should have been evaluated prior to conducting the workshop. Whilst this participant may have preferred training on another topic, the GCCA funding was focused on proposal writing and thus there is little that could have been done to address this concern. Another participant thought that time was a still a barrier to preparing project proposals. This view came from the fact that most staff attending the training are in full-time paid positions where proposal writing was not their core focus area. Finally, there was a request for more one-on-one mentoring to support the group based training.

Respondents also provided positive feedback about the training. Suggestions for improving the workshop were made and focused on:

- Post-workshop follow-up involving linking participants with donors
- Having more grant writers present from different sectors to share key proposal writing tips. It could be argued that the donor panel session during the training fulfilled this need
- A first-hand report of the new LFA knowledge and skills being applied in real life to write funding proposals.

> ***Pohnpei Participant Feedback***
>
> *"This was an awesome workshop. My only suggestion is to link the conceptual part with the hands on. So when you identify participants you also link them to a donor that would fund their project. Thank you so much for the valuable information:)"*
>
> *"Grant writers from different sectors to share key points on developing a winning proposal."*
>
> *"The training was very instrumental to my new line of work, Aid Coordination with the Pohnpei State Government. Recently the State hired a private consultant to work with our Office to create some State needed project based proposals that were needed to be send to U.S Dept. of Interior, and due the training I was able to do some inputs and have a better understanding of what is needed to developing quality proposals. Last week I was tasked to do a short summary proposal and send to the National Government and due to the training (my fist training in proposal writing) and the guides that was given to me, I was able."*

Conclusion

The Pohnpei workshop was successful in increasing the knowledge and skills on the use of the LFA for both proposal writing and general work duties.

The training led to a high number of respondents using some of the LFA steps in their work duties or project proposals within four months of the training. Though only six respondents had submitted proposals, five of them had used the LFA steps. In addition, nearly all respondents indicated that they would use some of the steps in future proposals. Though the success of the proposals cannot be directly attributed to the LFA training, the open feedback from Pohnpei respondents indicates the positive impact of the training. This is supported by several respondents indicating that they would like refresher training on the LFA.

The respondents have provided constructive feedback on training improvements, including requests for more examples of completed funding proposals, more input from grant writers and follow-up support that would result in participants being paired with a donor to progress a funding proposal.

Overall, the impact of the Pohnpei training was positive. The evaluation concludes that the GCCA-funded training is contributing to achieving the core objective of the development of better funding proposals. Additionally, the benefits have extended beyond proposal preparation with LFA being incorporated into regular work duties.

Recommendations

Updated LFA training resources (e.g. electronic copy of learner guide, slides and templates) should be made accessible to all participants, either downloadable from an internet/intranet site, or emailed directly.

LFA refresher training should be provided to workshop participants to increase their confidence in specific areas of the LFA.   More real-life examples and templates should be presented during this training

Forming a network of local LFA practitioners, or a community of practice, would provide support for participants who do not yet feel they have enough confidence in undertaking the steps of the LFA. Alternatively, designating a local or regional LFA focal point as a mentor could also provide the required support.

Providing a mentoring service so that participants have a person to review their draft proposals and provide feedback. This provides a means to practice and improve the written component of proposal preparation.

The delivery of monitoring and evaluation training should be considered in the future. M&E is a critical skill required in projects and one that cannot be effectively covered as part of a four day course on proposal writing.