# Planning an Environmental Education Center – A Task Template

| Task Name | Description | Status | Due Date | Assigned To |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **INITIATE CENTER** | | | | |
| Vision statement (needed for funding proposals) | Answer major questions: Why is this EE Center needed? What are its goals? What are its major themes related to ecosystems, biodiversity, cultural heritage, etc.? Who are the target groups? What are the Center's expected outcomes? What are the materials, tools, and other resources needed to complete the Center? What are major milestones or phases in the completion of the Center? | | | |
| Team building | Get a multi-disciplinary team together (incl. rangers and EE facilitators) and explain the Center's goals and, preliminarily, assign specific tasks to individual team members. Identify who you need for additional assistance (e.g. architects, energy, waste, EE and other specialists). | | | |
| Resource plan | Create a resource plan identifying the people, materials, equipment, etc. (1) you already have or (2) you need to get/buy/recruit for the completion of the Center. | | | |
| Communication plan | Keep the team and major stakeholders (e.g. Aimag, schools, tour operators, local population) informed throughout the project in accordance with their role and involvement in the project. Use simple visualization tools to maximize the information you want to convey. | | | |
| **PLAN CENTER** | | | | |
| Project plan & timeline | A basic project plan & timeline should include 1-tasks/activities, 2-budget, 3-and other resources. If necessary and helpful, create a Work Breakdown Structure (WBS). | | | |
| Budgeting | Make sure you have enough budget to cover the cost for the Center, resp. its individual elements or stages. Keep your initial budget below the maximum budget that stakeholders or donors can allocate. This helps you save some extra resources to spare for contingencies. | | | |
| Fund raising | Start collecting information on funding opportunities for the Center: Which public and private donors/ stakeholders offer what maximum budgets related to an EE Center? What are related deadlines? Are there special proposal formats and7or other requirements to be used/observed? Who are the contact persons? Are there elements/aspects/ materials that the Center needs but cannot be covered by donors/stakeholders? concept development and detailed planning of the facility itself. | | | |
| Training | Make sure that the Center's intended educational activities match the management, didactical and pedagogical skills, etc. of its staff. Identify who can provide the training inputs, contents and materials needed (e.g. the SPACES ToolBox and related training workshop later in 2021 or 2022). Make a list of managerial and EE skills that the rangers and other staff running the Center have to master and learn. | | | |
| **PROPOSAL WRITING** | | | | |
| Research | Research thoroughly and understand well the donors' mission, goals and objectives, in what way your goals are a good match for the donor's mission and goals, what the donor funds and does not fund. Meet the requirements specified in the proposal and only provide the required documents. | | | |
| Proposal structure | A good proposal should be based on a consistent logical framework, incl. goal, purpose, results and activities related to each other. Good proposal comprise the following structural elements:  Cover Letter, Information Page, Executive Summary, Statement of Need, Project Description, Organization's Skill, Timeline, Budget, Appendix (see attached PP for logical framework and proposal writing). | | | |

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| Proposal format | In the proposal format, watch out for donors' differentiations between "hardware" (building, infrastructure, materials, etc.), "software" (e.g. content development of EE tools, ToolBox manual, curriculum development, etc.) or "human capacity development" or "staff costs" (e.g. staff and facilitator training). | | | |
| **DESIGN THE CENTER** | | | | |
| Interior floor plan | Prepare a detailed floor plan of the Center' interior, incl. all rooms, windows/doors and any existing or planned installations (e.g. water, electricity, ventilation, etc.). Next, assign each space a potential function (e.g. exhibition, training, storage, accommodation, kitchen, sanitary facilities, etc.). Try to assess and indicate in the floor plan the 'carrying capacity' for each space, e.g. how many visitors can enjoy an exhibition or how many participants can attend a training at a time, what and how many EE tools and materials can be stored, how many people can be accommodated in the dormitory, etc. | | | |
| Details of planned renovations & installations | Provide a list with all planned renovations and new installations of the main and adjacent buildings, e.g. construction of a separate kitchen, shower/washroom, underground greywater treatment system, (composting) toilets, electrical system possibly including solar roof panels, back-up generator and lighting, first aid system and emergency plan, waste management system, transport systems (for visitors/participants, waste, etc.) | | | |
| Technical & managerial specifications | Technical specifications concern, for example, the electrical and waste water system (How much electricity do we need? How many liters of waste water to we produce per day? How big do the systems have to be?) A detailed operation and maintenance concept should be developed, incl. management functions, annual budget requirements, detailed annual events calendar, risk & safety concept, etc. | | | |
| Exterior site map | Prepare a detailed site map of the Center's exterior, incl. all extra buildings and any existing or planned installations. Next, assign each space a potential function (e.g., outdoor training, storage, accommodation, sanitary facilities, camping, fire pit, etc.). Try to assess and indicate in the site map. Use the physical environment to enhance outdoor learning, e.g. through an EE or nature trail. | | | |
| EE objectives | Formulate objectives for cognitive, emotional and practice-oriented learning experiences for visitors and learners (who participate in EE courses/trainings) that are related to the ecosystem, biodiversity, and cultural heritage themes prioritized for the Center. | | | |
| Balance of EE activities | Make sure that EE activities connect to (1) the Center's ecosystem, biodiversity, and cultural heritage, (2) visitors' or learners' everyday life, (3) the facilitation of social learning among visitors/learners, and try to strike a balance between (3) the cognitive, emotional and practice-oriented dimensions of learning, (4) indoor and outdoor activities, and (5) passive (info board/poster, exhibits, learning aids, presentations, etc.) and (inter-) active (games, exercises, simulations, role plays, etc.) learning experiences. | | | |
| Selection of EE tools | Select EE tools such as games, exercises, role plays, cartoons, puzzles, etc. in line with the above mentioned balance of activities from national and international sources (see e.g. the SPACES ToolBox, WWF or WCS samples, etc.). Make a list what each tool implies in terms of (1) content development, (2) training needs, (3) curricula plans, (4) procurement of training materials, etc. Prioritize this list in accordance with needs and budget. | | | |
| Takeaways | Visitors/learners should take something away from the Center back into their everyday life, e.g. an informative flyer for visitors, or a summary of learning experiences for learners/participants in trainings, outdoor activity, etc. | | | |
| **DESIGN A NATURE TRAIL** | | | | |

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| Concept note | A concept note for the nature trail should explain, inter alia, what type of stations should be built/prepared, how the stations and the tolls/exercises/tasks positioned there are related to the Center's ecosystem, biodiversity and physical environment themes. | | | |
| EE objectives | Formulate objectives for cognitive, emotional and practice-oriented learning experiences for users that are related to the ecosystem, biodiversity, and cultural heritage themes prioritized for the Center. | | | |
| Balance of EE activities | Make sure that EE activities connect to (1) the Center's ecosystem, biodiversity, and cultural heritage, (2) and try to strike a balance between (3) the cognitive, emotional and practice-oriented dimensions of learningwhile prioritizing (inter-) active learning experiences. | | | |
| Selection of EE tools | Select EE tools such as games, exercises, role plays, cartoons, puzzles, etc. in line with the above mentioned balance of activities from national and international sources (see e.g. the SPACES ToolBox, WWF or WCS samples, etc.). Make a list what each tool implies in terms of (1) content and material development, (2) potential training needs for guides/facilitators, and (3) procurement of trail materials, etc. Prioritize this list in accordance with needs and budget. | | | |
| **SKILLS TRAINING** | | | | |
| Concept | The center's intended EE goals and activities should match the human resources and the managerial and didactical skills of its staff, etc. The facilitators (rangers or external resource persons from eco-schools, NGOs, etc. ) should be able to apply appropriate interpersonal, communication, visualization, methodological and logistical skills based on basic and advanced training inputs. | | | |
| Content development | Based on the concept, resource persons develop content, i.e. collect or create on their own games, exercises, text and visual inputs, as well as other media and materials that fit the concept, the center's objectives and target groups, and that will foster the managerial and didactical skills of the center's staff. | | | |
| Curricula or script development | Based on the concept and the existing content, resource persons develop matching curricula, i.e. put all the games, exercises, text and visual inputs, as well as other media and materials into a sequential and didactical order that will foster the managerial and didactical skills of the center's staff. If necessary, different curricula or scripts should be developed for different target groups. | | | |
| Staff training | Based on the curricula developed, the center's staff are trained to acquire interpersonal, communication, visualization, methodological and logistical skills in accordance with the center's objectives and target groups. If necessary, different training courses should be offered for different target groups. | | | |