SUMMER SCHOOL 2018
Assignments, Deliverables, Timeline and Evaluation

One of the primary objectives of the summer school on ‘future leaders in development’ is to enable and equip the participants to understand, appreciate and proactively meet the challenges of development organizations in addressing the unmet basic needs of communities, while also getting a first-hand and detailed look into these communities’ situations, experiences and aspirations. To accomplish these objectives, it is important that the students learn about the goals that their assigned organization pursues (i.e., every student group will be associated with a specific development organization), the programs that they run, their functioning, and the extent to which the activities of their organization translate into tangible outcomes for the local communities. In parallel, students will gain new insights into village communities’ situations through field visits. Using the tools of development inquiry discussed in the classroom, they will identify an important unmet need in their village community (particularly, a need that is broadly experienced).

The expectation is that at the end of the program, the students will come up with a detailed report that not only enhances their understanding of the sector, but will also help the NGO pursue development goals more efficiently and effectively – while responding to the needs and aspirations of communities. This student project is a central component of the program and is a mandatory assignment for the successful completion of the course work.

Grading
20% for the social map and associated 1-page write-up
25% for the first presentation
35% for the second presentation, and
20% for the final 10-page paper

DESCRIPTION OF STUDENT PROJECT
You’re a team of consultants, hired by a grant-making operation to go out into the field with an NGO that’s doing good work, to help identify an important unmet need in your village and to develop a promising potential project that your NGO can take up in the future. (The NGO doesn’t have time to identify new opportunities). Your paper is a
persuasive case for doing this project. It will have the following parts: what you researched and what it showed about an important uncovered need; what has been done in the past to address this need and why it has not worked adequately; what you propose to do to address this problem (a project description and budget); why your NGO (given its goals and its organizational profile) will find this project a good fit; an implementation and monitoring and evaluation plan with the element of participation built into it that is appropriate given the scope and ambition of the project; and, a cost-benefit analysis (CBA) and sensitivity analysis.

The project will be developed in stages, through a series of meetings with NGO mentors, discussions, field investigations, and interim products. These are described below.

The Process

Students will design their projects with the needs of village communities in mind, in consultation with NGO mentors. The host NGO visits are crucial for students to gain the practitioner’s perspective – both on the nature of the problems communities face and on the kinds of programs that have been attempting to address these problems. Field investigations happen in a phased manner, and the course work will progress sequentially and cumulatively. There is an equal focus on (a) investigating problems and experiences on the ground, and (b) understanding, in more depth and detail, the specifics of NGOs and their service delivery. For both aspects, the guidance and inputs of the NGO mentors will be crucial.

Timeline and Assignments

**Phase 1:** Student meeting with NGO mentor (June 19 - 2.30 pm onwards) + Field visit (June 22-24)

Tasks: a) learn about the organizational profile (background, objectives, vision, mission, chart of organizational structure, activity, resource profile, etc.) and detailing of programs implemented in the geographical region containing your village; b) construct a social map – understanding your village, its institutions (formal and informal), and how economic, social, and political relations are expressed; and, (c) offer a preliminary identification of a specific unmet need that you intend to study.
Deliverables: Write-up (MGT CLASS - 2.5 pages*) + Social Map (DEV CLASS). Both assignments will be discussed in the respective classes.
Evaluation score: 10% MGT + 10% DEV = 20% (of 100%)
Submission due date: Write-up - June 25 (Monday), 12 pm. Social Map to be brought to class and displayed in Debrief class of June 26.

**Phase 2:** Student meeting with NGO mentor (June 26- 2.30 pm onwards) + Field visit (July 2 - 7)
Tasks: a) Further enhance your knowledge about your host NGO, including consideration of donor expectations, internal processes, impacts on communities, and the overall objectives of the organization. Consider how your project idea can be nested within this framework of strengths and opportunities; b) Community gap assessment and solution identification (this would involve a delineation of the community needs and program outcomes- through interviews, focus group sessions, and survey instruments); and (c) the fit between community needs and aspirations and NGO capacity, present and future.
Deliverable: First Presentation on July 13 (10 minutes + 5 mins Q & A=15 mins for each team)
Evaluation score: 25% (of 100%)

*What is needed in the first presentation?*
Each team will make a 10 minute presentation in which they explain the following: 1) their project proposal; and 2) how the project aligns with the NGO’s mission and previous work.

Teams are expected to justify their project proposals through their field research, and may refer to external research relevant to their topic. Questions to be considered during these presentations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Why is the project important to the villagers?
- What justifies this conclusion?
- Why has the problem that the project attempts to resolve so far remained unaddressed or inadequately dealt with?
- Why is this a good project for your NGO?

* Please use single line spacing and 12pt font Times New Roman
Teams can justify their project’s organizational fit by discussing their NGO’s profile (mission statement, organizational structure, relationship with the community, etc.), as well as current or prior activities related to the proposed project. **An overview of all the programs and activities of the team’s NGO is not relevant to the presentation of your project.** Teams should instead focus on the aspects most relevant to their proposed project. (Note: Students need to critically assess whether the proposed intervention is reflecting the felt needs of the community or if it is subjective and driven by their own preconceived views.)

Presentations are capped at 10 minutes per team. The judges will stop presenters once they reach the time limit, regardless of whether or not they have finished. Teams should thus prioritize the information they wish to convey accordingly. Each team member must speak during the presentation.

Practice makes perfect. While not explicitly included in the grading rubric, presentations are expected to be **well-rehearsed and professional.** Teams should treat this presentation as if it were a pitch to a potential donor or venture capitalist. A sloppy presentation will negatively affect the grade for this assignment, even if the content meets rubric specifications.

**Evaluation:** Explanation of the project proposal – and the investigations that underlie its justification – will account for 60 percent of the grade for this assignment. The remaining 40 percent will be based on the project’s fit with the host NGO’s mission and organizational profile.

**Phase 3:** Student meeting with NGO mentor (July 16 and 23 - 2:30 pm onwards) + Field visit (July 20-24)

Tasks: a) Assess the formal and informal structures of the NGO, cultural artifacts, philosophies, deep assumptions, etc., and how these factors influence the service delivery of the organization, b) Flesh out the identified solution, c) Describe how the project would be implemented; and d) Explain whether and how monitoring and evaluation of that implementation should be conducted.

**Deliverables:**
1. Final presentation (20 minutes + 5 mins Q & A= 25 mins for each group).
2. Executive summary of the project (10 pages – double-spaced)

**Evaluation score:** 35% (presentation) + 20% (report) = 55% (of 100%)
Submission due dates: July 27, 8:45 onwards (presentations) + July 27, 12 pm (executive summary)

What is needed in the final project?

See the previous “Description of Student Project” section, which describes the different parts of the project that should be included in your report. These are:

- Context setting (lay out the scene in the village you observed, and provide a little background motivating the unmet need you identified);
- Your investigations (methodology, how you did your research, and why you employed particular tools);
- Findings based on your research (including the contours of the problem, and your identification and evaluation of alternative solutions);
- Project description and implementation plan (the process, the organization that will carry it out);
- Proposed monitoring and/or evaluation plan that is appropriate given the scope and ambition of the project (rationale for the plan – what one would ultimately want to measure and how one would measure it; how such an exercise will be conducted in a participatory fashion, drawing on the values important to the community; and how to balance rigor vs. likely cost of that monitoring plan, given the scope of the project)
- Organizational fit of the proposed project with your host NGO;
- Cost-benefit analysis (CBA) and sensitivity analysis. In the CBA, list broad categories of expenditures, estimates of benefits and costs (there are lots of ready-made estimates of value of lifetime earnings from education, disease incidence reduction from vaccines, etc.) Sensitivity analysis: being upfront about your assumptions, consider how circumstances can change, and discuss how these changes may affect your project if they happen (one at a time).

Evaluation: each of these parts will count equally toward the grade for the presentation. Remember that the quality of your presentation is an important consideration.