

Creating and Strengthening the Education Coalition

A Guide for Project Management Teams

What is a Project Management Team?

A project management team (PMT) is a band of able individuals who make decisions and coordinate activities for a bigger group of people, in pursuit of a particular goal. The project management team provides guidance and oversight to all activities of a given project. Its members include stakeholders who represent all sectors of its community, harnessing wide-scale participation and interest in the project.

The PMT performs several key functions. It:

- Designs and develops a work program
- Coordinates activities and disseminates information to key people
- Mobilizes, manages and raises needed resources
- Identifies and liaises with possible partners and networks
- Evaluates and benchmarks the progress and impact of the project

The success of a project depends greatly on the capacity and commitment of the PMT to carry out its tasks. The most effective PMTs are those which are dynamic, diligent and highly collaborative.

PMT --- the Guiding Coalition

Synergeia is a diverse coalition of individuals and institutions working to improve the quality of basic education. Active in more than 90 municipalities, Synergeia programs are built on the philosophy of collaboration and multi-stakeholder partnership. Thus, each reform program involves the active participation not only of the Department of Education (DEPED) but also of parents, local officials, businessmen and the whole community. It is a partnership on equal terms: each stakeholder has a vital role to play in bringing about quality education in the community.

How do Synergeia communities achieve this synergy?

A coalition of passionate and driven individuals leads the community. These key leaders initiate and spearhead the reform. They are organized into a project management team, which is represented by all stakeholders in education. The PMT mobilizes and empowers constituents to be active partners in the project. It should not only have the capacity to lead but also the dedication to ensure lasting reforms.

Who is part of the Project Management Team?

The PMT is led by the local chief executive and managed by a full-time project coordinator. Other members of the team are as follows:

- DEPED Official (Superintendent, Supervisor)

- Parent Representative
- Representative from Academic Institutions
- NGO Representative
- Representative from the Business Community
- Other Members that the Team consider important (City Health Officer, Senior Citizens, etc)

In special programs, where only a specific school is the target beneficiary, the composition of the PMT is adjusted to include representatives of the program's stakeholders such as the following:

- School Principal/Administrator
- Teacher-Representative
- Parent-Representative
- Barangay-Representative
- NGO Representative
- Other members of the community that the team consider important

What tasks does the PMT fulfill?

The main role of the project management team is to handle the implementation of a community-owned education reform program. It performs several tasks. The PMT:

- **Sets goals for the project.** What is our dream for our children in school?
- **Consults and involves the community in designing the education reform program.** The PMT organizes a summit where parents and the community are considered as 'doers', partners, and participants in education reform.
- **Develops the work program.** The PMT translates community priorities into specific and doable tasks. It sets timelines, budgets and outputs for those programs.
- **Coordinates the activities of the program.** The PMT forms committees among the participants of the summit and conduct regular meetings with them. It dedicates staff and resources from the LGU and DEPED to assist the groups in planning and implementing programs.
- **Mobilizes, manages and raises needed resources.** It can use priorities set by the community as a basis for allocating the SEF revenues (and if needed, the LGU budget). The PMT also thinks of creative means to raise funds and support from the community.
- **Implements activities that will foster a team spirit, communication and a support system.** These can include training programs, social activities, annual retreats, sharing success stories, and recognition of good work through small tokens of appreciation.
- **Identifies and liaises with other possible partners and networks.** The PMT can coordinate with Synergeia and its program partners with regard to specific activities such as teacher training, parent training and instructional materials development. It

also taps socio-civic groups as well as businessmen in the community to support the program.

- **Monitors and evaluates programs and activities regularly.** Regular PMT meetings provide opportunities for feedback on progress and difficulties in project implementation.
- **Provides constant access to information.** The PMT makes information available to the public through the LGU website, through pamphlets and the local newspaper. The goals and strategies should continuously be communicated in forums, meetings and assemblies.
- **Serves as advocates of education reform.** Members of the PMT are champions of education reform in their community. They take the lead role in moving their fellow citizens to take a proactive stance in improving the quality of education for all their children.

What is the role of each member of the PMT?

Each member of the PMT has a unique role to play:

- The **local chief executive** (Mayor/Governor) provides leadership and mobilizes additional funds for the program. He calls for regular PMT meetings and supervises the initiatives and activities of the PMT.
- The **project coordinator** manages the operations of the program. He is in regular contact with PMT members who implement specific programs (DEPED, parents, teachers, etc) and facilitates collaboration among them. He keeps track of all program activities and holds records of PMT discussions and meetings.
- The **DEPED**, with the help of **private academic institutions**, provides the technical expertise in teacher training and development of instructional materials.
- **Parent** representatives mobilize their peers to provide support to the learning system. They work in collaboration with teachers and school heads.
- **Local businessmen** share managerial principles and best practices to ensure the efficient implementation of the different activities. They also provide support in resource mobilization.
- Other **community members** (NGOs, socio-civic orgs) serve as advocates for the reforms.

Together, they will form a learning circle that would plan and implement processes for an effective reading program.

Key characteristics of the PMT:

An effective PMT is one that is highly consultative, proactive and collaborative.

- **Consultative.** Members of the PMT must consult regularly with their peers (DEPED sector, parents, teachers, etc) to ensure that the needs and issues of the whole group are brought to the table. The sector representatives also share information on program activities to the group.
- **Proactive.** The PMT thinks out of the box (beyond the traditional system) and takes the initiative to develop new measures that would reinvent old processes of delivering education. It engages the whole community to be involved in the program and is the catalyst for change. The PMT has a progressive outlook and assumes a proactive approach in the reform.
- **Collaborative.** Members of the PMT work together and complement each other's strengths in implementing the reform program. They maintain openness and a team spirit in solving problems and developing new initiatives.

On conducting PMT meetings:

The PMT conducts regular monthly meetings for obtain feedback on developments in project implementation. Professionalism must be developed in conducting meetings:

- Work with an agenda
- Record minutes of meetings
- Develop accountability by assigning a point person for each task.