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ABSTRACT

A portion of an Indonesian educational development project, designed to enhance university science lecturers' access to materials and assessed from three perspectives. The program involves the development of a Self-Access Resource Center (SARC) at the English Language Training Center, Cenderawasih University, Manokwari. The project aims to provide discipline-related self-study materials in English to aid lecturers preparing for postgraduate studies. The perspectives presented are those of three stakeholders: the program manager/advisor representing the Canadian agency executing the project; the head of the center; and an Indonesia Australia Language Foundation consultant providing technical assistance. Their views address their roles in, contributions to, and assessments of the self-access resource center approach. Results are reported concerning perceived successes, constraints, and areas in which action should be taken to sustain the development initiative. In conclusion, the process has been a blending of top down and bottom-up initiatives, collaboration among the stakeholders has been crucial to success, and it is too early to say if SARC will be successful. (MSE)

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## Managing Self-Access in Development: Three Perspectives

Dr. Rita Kafudji

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# MANAGING SELF-ACCESS IN DEVELOPMENT: THREE PERSPECTIVES

BY

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## Abstract:

*The major aim of the Eastern Indonesia Universities Development Project (EIUDP) is to develop and strengthen the basic science teaching capability of targeted universities in eastern Indonesia. Recognizing the need for English Language training to support this aim, in the first 5 year phase of the Project (1988-1992) English Language Training Centres were established at 4 campuses, specifically to upgrade the English language ability of university lecturers who were nominated for a science degree in Canada at the masters or doctorate level. In the second phase of the Project (1993-1998), one of the ELT program objectives is to develop fully-functioning self-access resource centres to support the teaching program, to provide English language self-study materials, and eventually to provide discipline-related self-study materials in English to aid lecturers preparing for postgraduate studies, as well as the staff of other university support units (e.g. library and science laboratories) who need job-related English language skills. This paper focuses on the development that has taken place at the English Language Training Centre, Cenderawasih University (UNCEN), Manokwari and examines the perceptions of 3 stakeholders - the EIUDP English Program Manager/Advisor (representing the Canadian executing agency for the Project), the head of the English Language Training Centre and the IALF consultant contracted by the Project to provide technical assistance - concerning their roles in, contributions to, and assessments of the process of self-access resource centre development that they have been involved in. Each stakeholder was asked to respond independently to a set of questions in 4 main categories which were designed to explore the above issues, as well as examine the contexts within which they are operating. The paper identifies perceived successes, highlights perceived constraints, and suggests areas where action might optimally be taken, and at what levels, if future sustainability of the development initiative is to be achieved. Some general conclusions are made regarding the process of managing innovation.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The amount of literature concerned with the successes and failures of educational innovation\* and, more specifically, with the management of the innovation process itself, often within the context of donor funded ELT projects, has been growing rapidly. This literature seems to fall into two major areas:

1. analyses of aspects of a particular innovation that were successful, of those that were not, and a conclusion which suggests strategies that would have ensured more successful outcomes;
2. a focus on trying to gain an understanding of the actual *process* of innovation itself; why it happened, how it happened and, most importantly, evaluating whether or not real innovation has actually taken place.

\* Following Ron White (1993), we prefer the word *innovation* to the word *change*. Although innovation involves change, it is 'a deliberate effort, perceived as new and intended to bring about improvement'.

We thought it would be interesting to examine the process of developing a Self-Access Resource Centre [SARC] at the English Language Training Centre (ELTC), UNCEN Manokwari by asking three stakeholders to answer a number of questions which examine their roles in, contributions to and assessments of the process presently taking place. Each person has a direct interest in promoting the development but operates within a different organisational and cultural context; one is the head of the English Language Training Centre at UNCEN Manokwari (a representative of the Indonesian target organisation); one represents the Canadian executing agency for the Project (a representative of the donor agency), and the other is a consultant contracted by the Project to provide technical assistance. For the purposes of this discussion they will be referred to as the beneficiary, the donor and the consultant.

An analysis of their responses should help to illustrate the processes that have been operating during the inception and implementation of the development, and also indicate how far we are from its actual adoption\*. Since we are concerned with the management of an innovation, we decided to organize the sets of questions into four categories which we thought represented four major stages in the process. These stages are very similar to the ones proposed by Fullan (1991) which he calls 'initiation, implementation, continuation, and outcome'.

i **Background:** Here we wanted to explore each persons' perceptions and understanding of the rationale behind the proposed innovation, their initial thoughts concerning its feasibility, their roles in the development of the implementation plan, and comments on what they considered to be its important features. We also wanted each person to identify whom they thought were stakeholders in the innovation since this would indicate to what extent each stakeholder was aware of the power structures and cultural contexts that were going to effect its overall management.

ii. **Implementation:** Each stakeholder was asked to try and categorise the activities that had taken place to date in the implementation of the plan. We attempted to slot activities into the following four broad categories: i) institutional development; ii) staff development; iii) resource development and, iv) program development (for our purposes this is the 5 year self-access resource centre development plan). We wanted to explore whether we had followed a fixed order of implementation (Marpaung, Marlyn P. and Tim Kirk (1993) referring to Crocker's (1987) model for project management) and if not, what had been the reasons for the order of implementation that was actually followed. We also wanted to re-confirm the earlier data about stakeholders and examine how their roles were perceived during the implementation stage, and at the same time look at what aspects of the plan were considered successful, which were not and why.

iii **Monitoring and Evaluation:** This set of questions asked for views on what aspects of the implementation plan have been monitored and evaluated and how. Again, we were interested in looking at perceptions of the roles of other stakeholders in this process. It is our view that the results of monitoring and evaluation are supposed to initiate follow-up action of some kind (i.e. we are not interested in a mutual confirmation exercise) and it was of interest to solicit opinions about what the monitoring and evaluation had accomplished.

iv **Sustainability:** The final set of questions explores the issue of adoption of the innovation (see point #2 above). We wanted to find out what each of the three stakeholders thought were necessary conditions for adoption, or future sustainability. Related to this was the identification of issues that were particularly problematic, how they were being addressed, if at all, in the implementation plan and their opinions about the level at which some of the issues needed to be addressed and by whom. The sets of questions are given in the **Appendix**.

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\* The word *adoption* here refers to the extent to which the innovation has actually occurred and is related to the concept of sustainability after the life of the Project.

## 2. DISCUSSION

### 2.1 Background

#### 2.1.1 Rationale & Feasibility

Responses in this category are summarized in Table 1 on the next page.

All three stakeholders shared the same perception that the innovation was primarily intended to overcome some of the constraints of running intensive English language courses for lecturers and staff which were identified in Phase I of the Project (e.g. low levels of staffing in the ELTC; difficulties in securing funding for courses; lack of release time for lecturers; no facilities available for learning English outside the classroom, whether in support of courses or to assist in 'maintaining' levels of proficiency already attained). An additional 'development' perspective was provided by the donor who saw the innovation as an exercise in planning and management for the ELTC staff.

Views about the feasibility of the innovation were mixed.

		RATIONALE	FEASIBILITY
P e r s p e c t i v e	Beneficiary	Need for lecturers, who wanted to continue studies abroad, to improve self-study skills	'Convinced with idea, positive and excited' and saw usefulness to the campus community. Admits to not having given a great deal of thought about its feasibility and the difficulty of the work for ELTC staff
	Donor	An exercise in the planning, implementation and management of a new service. Would raise the awareness of ELTC staff of the range and complexity of the tasks involved	Subscribed to the logic of the 'external rationale' but worried about: (i) potential demands that would be made on the time, energy and creativity of the ELTC staff, (ii) the provision of an adequate institutional support framework (iii) degree of 'cultural' adaptation that would be required on part of both lecturers and teachers for an autonomous mode of learning to gain acceptance and adoption.
	Consultant	Same perspective as beneficiary	Same perspective as donor
	Shared	Consensus and awareness of a context-sensitive 'problem-solving' rationale underlying the innovation	

Table 1: Rationale & Feasibility

#### 2.1.2 Stakeholders

Table 2 shows that all three respondents had a common perception of the range of stakeholders but each had a different order of priority. The beneficiary prioritized her list in terms of her perception of who was responsible for developing and keeping the Resource centre up and running. The donor did not give any priority but the list is more top-down in nature. This might be explained by the fact that in the initial stage of the innovation, official approval for the planned development had to be sought at higher levels of Project management. The consultant divided the stakeholders into two categories; a top-down list of implementers (as in funders, planners, doers) which ended with the users; and another list beginning with the users as beneficiaries and expanding bottom-upwards to other beneficiaries of the innovation.

Some stakeholders, naturally, are both implementers *and* beneficiaries.

Beneficiary	Donor	Consultant
ELTC staff ELP Coordinator SARC consultants (IALF) FAPERTA BSU lecturers and other academic staff EIUDP - supplier of resources (financial, technical, training) FAPERTA/UNCEN Universities/colleges receiving students who have benefitted from RC	EIUDP CIDA FAPERTA (institution) DIKTI ELTC Lecturers Students LPIU IALF	CIDA/DIKTI Participating unis EIUDP ELP Coordinator (IALF) ELTC staff University lecturers/users EIUDP Project leaders LTA/STAs in basic science SFU/ other receiving institutions Participating unis DIKTI Indonesia
<b>Basis for Ordering</b>		
Grassroot level to institutional levels	Top-down; supply oriented	Mixture of top-down (implementation) and bottom-up (those who will benefit from Project)
<b>Abbreviations:</b> ELTC : English Language Training Centre      CIDA : Canadian international Development Agency RC : Resource Centre                                      IALF : Indonesia Australia Language Foundation FAPERTA: Faculty of Agriculture                      LTA : Long-term Advisor DIKTI : Department of Higher Education          STA : Short-term Advisor SFU : Simon Fraser University		

**Table 2: List of Stakeholders**

### 2.1.3 The SARC Development Plan

#### *Stakeholders' roles in its design*

All 3 stakeholders felt they were closely involved in the process of drawing up the self-access resource centre development plan and see the key event as the assessment visit made to all campuses by the consultant.

The beneficiary stated that her involvement commenced before the visit, when the subject of improving existing resources was first raised by the donor, and also through visits to Resource Centres at other Language Centres in Jakarta and Bandung arranged by the Project.

The donor also felt closely involved in pre-assessment visit 'awareness raising' activities which were aimed at stimulating the beneficiary to think about the feasibility of SARC development in the context of her own campus, as well as gain an appreciation of the various tasks involved in running a functioning SARC. She felt she played a key role in organising the assessment visit and appointing the consultant who was tasked to: (i) assess the feasibility of, and the commitment to, the proposed development with the beneficiary and, (ii) draw up a 5 year development plan, in close cooperation with the ELTC staff. The terms of reference for the assignment were drawn up by the donor and they stipulated several key features that should form the basis of the plan's underlying rationale: i) time sensitive 'milestones' should be established and the degree to which these were met would determine further action to be taken; ii) the plan should comprise clear implementation stages; iii) the plan should take into consideration the present levels of expertise of the ELTC staff; iv) all development work would be done by ELTC staff themselves, with EIUDP sponsored short-term training initiatives specifically tailored to assist staff in acquiring and using the skills necessary to carry out the work; v) the establishment of cooperative mechanisms between ELTCs, especially on materials production; vi) a collaborative approach to planning and on-going monitoring between campus-based implementers, EIUDP and the consultant.

The consultant considers that she played a central role in trying to work out the most feasible model for Resource Centre development by translating data collected from the visits into concrete strategies, objectives, time scales and training inputs and outputs.

Another important feature of the pre-implementation stage in which the **beneficiary and the donor** felt they had important roles was the inclusion of a Resource Centre into the organisational structure of the ELTCs and the appointment of Resource Centre Coordinators and administrative assistants. This required a formal commitment at the institutional level and direct action by the heads of the ELTCs.

*Important Features of the Development Plan*

Table 3 gives comments from all 3 stakeholders concerning their perceptions of the important features of the development plan (now, of course retrospective and based on actual experience).

Beneficiary	Donor	Consultant
Involvement of ELTC staff in process of writing up the development plan which made us feel part of whole process; sense of responsibility	Learn-by-doing	Involvement of ELTC staff in process of developing plan therefore realistic targets & time-frame
Systematic breakdown of plan into workable units that suit each Centre's specific conditions (staff & resources)	Systematic	Key cut-off points to determine further resourcing
	Strategic training initiatives	On-going staff development
	Role of monitoring	Less detailed after Yr 2 to allow further planning to come from implementers
		On-going monitoring

**Table 3: Important Features of the Development Plan**

**2.1.4 SARC Development as a Project Objective**

Only the beneficiary and the donor were able to comment on how the development of self-access resource centres actually became a Project objective. Interestingly both responses identified a *process* rather than a *decision* made by an institution or person (perhaps this is a problem with the wording of the question which asks 'how' rather than 'who'. However, responses could have simply stated that X decided). The beneficiary considered it to be the result of discussions between the Head of the ELTC and the ELPM/A, as well as a result of the assessment visits made by the consultant. The donor considered it to be the result of the Phase II Project design and approval process where agreement was sought for Phase II program objectives from Indonesian and Canadian stake-holders at a number of institutional and governmental levels.

**2.2 Implementation**

An attempt was made by the beneficiary and the donor to identify and categorize the activities that have taken place to date during the implementation stages of the innovation, as well assign an implementation order. For each activity, stakeholders were identified and their roles in supporting the activity were highlighted. The categories used were taken from Crocker's (1987) model for project management referred to earlier.

**2.2.1 Activities and Order of Implementation**

We experienced difficulty in deciding how we should define each category and also in assigning activities to each of them because of considerable overlap. However, for i) institutional development, the institution was taken to be the ELTC, UNCEN Manokwari and the category was defined as development of its organisational structure and 5 year development plan; ii) staff development was defined as the training of ELTC teaching, administrative and technical staff; iii) resource development was defined as the development of physical resources [building, hardware and software] and the *addition* of human resources and, iv) program development was defined as the development of SARC services. Table 4: Activities & Order of Implementation is our effort at consolidating the data gathered:

Category	Activities & Order of Implementation	Roles of Stakeholders
Institutional Development	1 management infrastructure established 2 assessment visit/design of long-term development plan 8 monitoring visit	Beneficiary: planner; implementer; evaluator ELTC teachers: input Donor: promotor; monitor; evaluator Dean, FAPERTA-SK & TOR for ELTC Consultant: planner; advisor; monitor; evaluator
	1 project annual ELTC work plan	Beneficiary: planner; promotor; negotiator; implementer Donor: planner; promotor; negotiator; monitor; approver LPIU: financier EIUDP: approver; financier FAPERTA: approver; finance
Staff Development	3 management course 4 technician training 7 SA mats development workshop 9 SA learner orientation & training workshop	Beneficiary: needs analysis; planner; trainee; staff training; monitor; manager; evaluator Donor: planner; implementer; supplier; evaluator Consultant/IALF: program design; implementer EIUDP: financier LPIU: financier; supplier ELTC staff: trainees; implementers
Resource Development	1 allocation of space 1 addition of 2 new teaching staff 5 equipment purchase 6 book purchase	Beneficiary: planner; manager; implementer Donor: promotor; implementer; supplier UNCEN-FKIP: supplier FAPERTA: supplier; employer ELTC staff: managers; users
Programme Development	3 RC library services 7 RC use by course participants only 7 materials development	Beneficiary: planner; manager; implementer; monitor; evaluator Donor: evaluator Consultant: evaluator ELTC staff: implementer; monitor; evaluator FAPERTA: financier; evaluator ELTC users: learners; evaluators

**Table 4: Activities and Order of Implementation**

The table clearly shows the large number of stakeholders involved and the different levels at which they operate. The complexity and mutuality of the roles that each plays in the implementation process is also evident. The order of implementation is in no way linear and activities go back and forth between different categories. It would seem that those involved in the implementation process have identified 'critical paths' throughout the process based on the on-going evaluation of developments in all 4 categories and have had to make decisions on: (i) when, and in which category, an activity or intervention is required, and ii) who among the stakeholders (depending on their institutionally subscribed roles) are most usefully involved. One important point to note, which is not highlighted on the table, is the fact that staff development activities often overlap with other categories; during the RC Management and Administration course, for example, RC Coordinators and Administrators modified, refined and expanded the 5-year development plan drawn up as a result of the consultants' assessment visits.

### 2.2.2 Perceived Successes in Implementation

A number of perceived successes in the implementation of the innovation were identified by all 3 stakeholders and we have reproduced the list produced by the beneficiary since she is perhaps the closest to 'grassroots' development:

- SARC physical development
- SARC organizational structure
- Improved library collection of ELT materials & journals
- Borrowing systems established
- Ability to process library collection
- Materials packages produced (45)



- Improved understanding & appreciation of RC use
- Ability to produce packages
- Improved management and admin. skills of RC coordinator & admin assistant
- Support of FAPERTA: supply of temporary teaching staff; stationary; maintenance (AC units); supply of furniture

The donor and the consultant considered that the demonstrated commitment of teachers and the level of institutional support of FAPERTA should be classed as successes.

All 3 respondents were unanimous in their opinions that increased awareness and recognition on the part of FAPERTA, local Project and ELTC staff of the role that the ELTC and its Resource Centre can play in improving English language ability of university staff and students has been a key factor in the achievement of the above results.

### **2.2.3 Perceived Problems in Implementation**

Major problems were perceived to be delays in implementation because of the loss of staff and poor access to funds and supplies from the Local Project Implementation Unit (LPIU), which is responsible for the provision of GOI Project counterpart funding (ELTCs are unable to control their own budgets). Materials development has been very slow, partly because teacher hours spent on this activity do not receive financial recognition from the LPIU in the same way as classroom teaching hours do and teachers are often unpaid for their work.

Comments made by the donor and the consultant on communication problems that have affected implementation are worth noting here, although they are not specific to Manokwari. Communications between the other SARCs involved in the Project have been poor and this has affected the speed of building up the collection of self-access resource packages, which was planned collaboratively by the Resource Centre coordinators themselves. Problems were also perceived to exist in internal communication between ELTC Heads and SARC Coordinators, and between the ELTC and the LPIU. Delays in implementation at the other centres are often caused by staff time constraints since all the teachers have a workload outside the ELTC, and by lack of clarity in areas of GOI financial responsibility (i.e. what is financed by the LPIU, university, and the ELTC itself from its self-generated income).

### **2.3 Monitoring and Evaluation of the Implementation Plan**

There are three main channels for monitoring and evaluation of the processes and the products of the innovation: (1) broad, project-level channels established during Phase I of the EIUDP; (2) specific channels built into the 5 year development plan through the identification of time scales and 'mile-stones' which require on-going assessment and, (3) internal monitoring on a regular basis as part of ELTC operations.

All 3 stakeholders considered that they had played an active role in monitoring and assessing all the activities which fall into the 4 project management categories discussed in section 2.2 above, and identified mechanisms by which this had been done. The donor identified established mechanisms at the overall Project planning and management level, namely the annual review meeting and the annual coordination and planning meeting which are concerned with the monitoring and evaluation of all Project components. A checklist and written reporting system has been established between the beneficiary and the donor, monitoring visits have been conducted by the donor and the consultant, and the beneficiary mentions her internal role as monitor and evaluator. In the area of staff training, training reports, which are completed by trainers and/or the training institution, identify individual areas of strength and weakness, as well as make recommendations for further training.

#### ***Did the respondents identify any changes to the development plan as a result of monitoring and evaluation?***

Two changes cited at UNCEN-Manokwari were readjustment to the targets set (i.e. number of packages), as well as time schedules, for self-access materials production.

A more significant change occurred at one of the other Centres where a planned training input was postponed because of lack of institutional support. One other significant change was the bringing forward of a meeting for RC Coordinators and Administrators from 1996 to mid 1995, in recognition of the need to strengthen the mutual support network and possibilities for joint planning. The decision for the changes was stated by all 3 stakeholders to be on the basis of joint consultation and also discussion with the ELTC staff.

## 2.4 Necessary Conditions for the Sustainability of SARCs

The discussion here should be considered in the following context:

- the initial concerns expressed by the stakeholders in Section 2.1.1 Rationale & Feasibility (i.e. to what extent do these concerns seem to have been borne out);
- experience gained to date in the implementation of the development plan, especially focusing on the problems that have been identified in Section 2.2.3.

Necessary (but not sufficient) conditions that were identified as being important for the future sustainability of self-access resource centres can be summarized as follows:

- adequate levels of staffing
- staff who are aware of what is involved and committed to updating, expanding and promoting resources
- infrastructure and financial support by the university
- new definition of financial responsibilities required because of lack of budgetary control on part of ELTCs
- active involvement by university management and academic staff in planning Resource Centre services
- motivation of campus community to improve their English language skills
- ability of academic staff to adapt to an autonomous mode of learning
- ability of teachers to provide services in autonomous language learning
- communication networks between other ELTCs involved in the Project

Aspects that were considered to be particularly problematic centred on the issues of staffing (lack of time and difficulties in recruiting new members of staff); deeply engrained teacher-orientated learning styles; generally low motivation of academic staff to spend time on professional development if it involves sustained effort and time commitment; and difficulties in accessing timely funding and supplies from the university.

The development plan was considered to contain a number of strategies for addressing these issues:

- i) cut-off points for further development if staffing levels are not adequately met;
- ii) staff training in SDL and in strategies for encouraging learners; SDL orientation for users;
- iii) design of more needs-based ESP materials;
- iv) subscription for use of Resource Centre services to earn outside revenue;
- v) Resource Centre Coordinators meeting to encourage networking

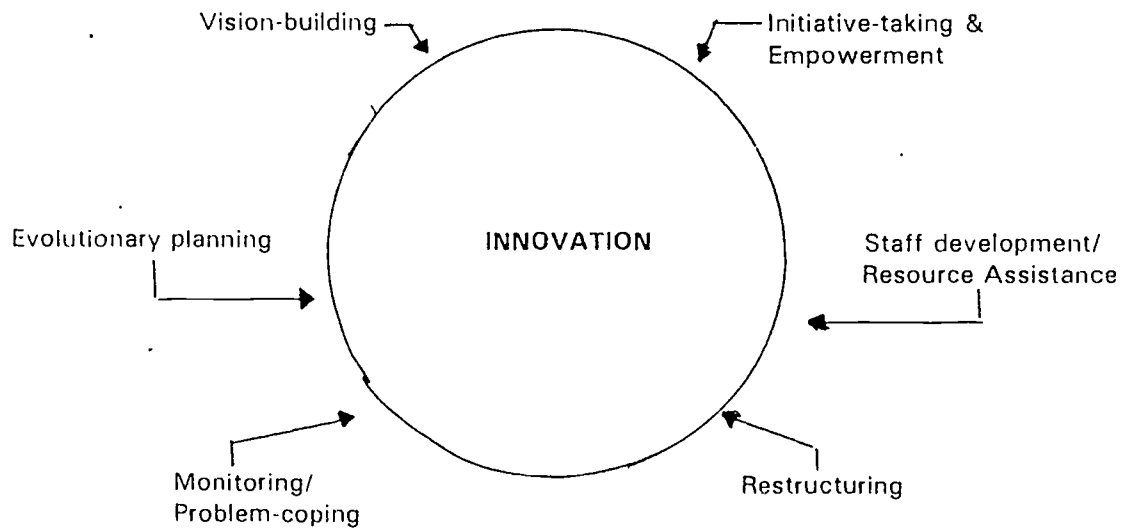
What, as yet, has not been addressed in any detail, is a promotion strategy to open up the Resource Centre to the campus community, and to plan activities which will involve these potential users in the planning and development of its services. The relevance of the product, the services offered, will be a crucial factor in sustainability.

## 3. CONCLUSION

Through the process of reflection and evaluation of progress to date and of potential developments, what we have been doing is determining critical paths, identifying where efforts have been, or should be, focused at any one time. The categories we have used have proved to be somewhat arbitrary and it is clear that during implementation stakeholders have been working across several categories simultaneously and at different levels. The process has been a blending of top-down and bottom-up initiatives, and regular communication and collaboration between the various stakeholders has been crucial to progress.

It is too early to say whether the development of a self-access resource centre in UNCEN Manokwari will be successful. However, based on the experience to date, we would like to offer a framework for managing innovation proposed by Fullan (1991) in which he identifies key themes in successful innovation efforts which seems to reflect the issues discussed in this paper. This is presented as a diagram.

FRAMEWORK for MANAGING INNOVATION  
(Fullan 1991)



## LIST OF QUESTIONS ADDRESSED

## BACKGROUND

1. Why is the development of a self-access resource centre a Project objective?
  2. How was this decided?
  3. What were your original thoughts about the idea?  
(Feasibility? Practicality? Usefulness? Difficulty? Improved ELTC services?)
  4. Who do you consider to be the 'stakeholders' \* in this development?  
Can you prioritise the names in the list that you have drawn up?  
What are the reasons for your decisions?
  5. How would you define your role in the design stage of the development plan?
  6. What do you consider to be the important features of the development plan that was drawn up?
- Notes: \* stakeholder = an entity or individual with its own purposes and a stake in the purposes and fate of the development

## IMPLEMENTATION

1. Can we use the table below to characterize what has been done so far? Where an activity falls into multiple categories, we should try and cross-reference it.

Category	Activities	Order of Implementation	Your role	Role of other stakeholders
Institutional Development				
Staff Development				
Resource Development				
Programme Development				

2. What have been the main successes in carrying out the development plan to date?  
What specific factors do you think have contributed to this success?
3. What have been the main problems in carrying out the development plan to date?  
What specific factors do you think have been responsible for these problems?

## MONITORING &amp; EVALUATION OF IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

1. What aspects of the development plan have been evaluated? How has this been done?
2. What has been your role in this? What has been the role of other stakeholders?
3. What aspects of the development plan changed as a result of monitoring and evaluation?  
Who has been responsible for deciding on the changes?

## SUSTAINABILITY

1. If we talk about the future sustainability of a self-access resource centre, what particular things do you think of as being necessary conditions for this to happen?
2. What, if anything, makes these particularly problematic?
3. What strategies for addressing them are in your development plan?  
If none, what should be there?
4. In your opinion, at what level and by whom should the problems be addressed (can you refer to 'stakeholders'?)

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