

CENTER FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

online learning

Online Field Courses:

[Cursos en Línea sobre Desarrollo—en español](#)

OL 2.1 From the Ground Up: Designing Community-Centered Projects with Sustainable Solutions **PDF**

March 2, 2010 - May 3, 2010: 8 Weeks



From the Ground Up: You will leave this course with practical field tools and develop a range of skills: needs assessments, community workshops, and discovering evidence-based activities. The course is designed to be used as a vehicle for you to develop a real project, in real time, during this course.

From the Ground Up is a course in international development where we will each develop our own project—hopefully a real one—from the ground up. It is an online version of our 8-day, Hands-On Field Course '[Bridging the Gap](#).' In our [Field Courses](#), we actually work in villages—difficult to do online you say?

We have found a solution: Each class assignment is a concrete step in developing a project for use in the field. Some of the assignments are done within the communities you serve: take your assignment into the field, do it as a solution-oriented activity together with the community, and thereby finish a component of your class project. And there you have it: an online field course with tangible, concrete results.

We will connect class assignments to your field work by encouraging you to conduct a participatory needs assessment, share your preliminary project concept with your community, and share a draft version with a donor.

We will supply two levels of mentoring. Each week's assignment will be accompanied by a clear, professional example of what we want you to achieve that week. It is yours to use as a template for your assignment—and for developing future projects. We will also provide comments, suggestions and encouragement for each one of your assignments individually. We want you to develop high quality project components, and we also want you to understand the hows and whys.

You will learn to incorporate community-identified need into the design of your project and research activities to incorporate that have shown evidence of having worked. The course is designed to be used as a vehicle for you to develop a real project, in real time, during the course.

In the next course in the module, [OL 2.2: Project Architecture](#), you will transform it with the real management tools of logframes and fact sheets into a project ready to share with a donor.

The classes are designed to be fun and interactive: you will be collaborating with colleagues from around the globe.

Who should attend? Southern and Northern development students, field staff, grant writers, project managers, directors, and donor staff. You will only need to have functional knowledge of Word, Excel, email, and the Internet.

A special rate is available for organizations who would like staff members to take the course and focus as a group on strengthening a single project. This is great for team building and seeing how different departments can work together to create impact.

If you already have a grant award with defined goals and objectives—use it as your class project. These courses can magnify project impact by introducing you to evidence based interventions, lesson plans for effective workshops, and by fine tuning your logframe.

If you are a donor in Chicago, an INGO Grant Writer in Wellington, or a student in Manchester—rather than an NGO Staffer in Nairobi—where will you turn for a project idea? We will show you [how to connect](#) to a tangible project—or we can set you up with a real-life, virtual project.

Some of the assignments below suggest doing them in a community. This is not a requirement if it impractical for you, but this is where partnering with a classmate in the field can add depth to your experience.

Course Syllabus

Week 1. Learn to navigate course website, download the week's documents, and form partnerships.

Week 2 & 3. Read the document on participatory needs assessments and conduct an informal assessment with a few community members to uncover a real challenge. List the needs identified and organize them into a clearly described challenge—a development challenge that you are going to solve with your project design. We want this as real as possible.

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Week 4. We will clarify your project's challenge, develop a theory of how you plan to solve it, and research 3 intervention activities that would fulfill the premise of your theory.

Week 5. Research one peer-reviewed paper for each of the three activities and see if scientists have found evidence that they are effective in solving your project's challenge. Write a one paragraph summary of the papers' findings.

Week 6.

1. Share your proposed project concept locally with colleagues to gain feedback and constructive criticism.
2. Return to the community with your project concept and get their feedback and hopeful buy-in.
3. Pick one of your evidence-based activities and write a simple one page guide on how a field staff person could implement it.

Week 7. Write a workshop lesson plan for introducing this activity into a community, and then make an illustrated, How-to card to give to community members.

Week 8.

1. Share your project with someone that you would like to sell it to: a donor, your boss, your professor, someone in the development world for feedback.
2. Lay out your challenge, proposed solution, activities and the materials that you will need to launch the project into a simple matrix that I will supply. This will prepare you for the next course: OL 2.2 where you will transform your project into something that can formally be presented for funding.

The Course will also Provides the Following Resources

- Documents on course topics by contemporary experts.
- Books, posters and manuals available online for download.
- Internet development links organized by sector.
- Class blog for sharing your project stories and photos from the field.
- Class forum for posting questions to your classmates.
- Access to tools and resources on the Center site.
- There are no books to buy—all course materials can be linked to, or downloaded from the course site.

In Summary

From the Ground Up will give you an insight into contemporary methods of developing community-centered, impact-oriented projects. You will leave the course with practical field tools and develop a range of skills: needs assessments, project design, community workshops, and discovering evidence-based activities. The course is designed to be used as a vehicle for you to develop a real project, in real time, during this course.

[OL 2.2 Project Architecture: Planning for Impact.](#)

Course Fees

The 8-week course is being offered at the following fees for both local citizens living in developing countries and citizens of developed countries:

1. \$75.00 for developing country citizens: register by February 19, 2010
2. \$100.00 after February 19, 2010
3. \$125.00 for developed country citizens: register by February 19, 2010
4. \$150.00 after February 19, 2010

In-country NGOs. Up to ten staff all working on the same class project

5. \$500.00 by February 19, 2010
6. \$650.00 after February 19, 2010

Registration and Payment

To pay by bank transfer or Western Union, please write us for our transfer information.

To pay by debit or credit card, select the correct course cost below, enter your nationality, and click 'Add to Cart.'

When you are ready to pay, click 'Proceed to Checkout.' PayPal membership is not required to submit the payment, in the lower left you will see 'Don't have a PayPal account?' Click 'continue' and you will be linked to a form for non-PayPal members.

You will be sent your Login username and password, and instructions for starting the course on Monday, March 2, 2010. We look forward to meeting you!

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The online course will be led by Tim Magee, CSD's Executive Director, who has over 30 years experience in both working with nonprofits and leading training workshops.

Registration closes on March 5, 2010.

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