

RED CROSS CLUBS: PLANNING YOUR OWN PROJECTS

As a Red Cross Club there are endless activities and projects you can do. When planning for the upcoming year, the first thing to keep in mind is: *How can you best represent and promote the Red Cross mission and fundamental principles through Club initiatives?*

In addition to doing the Red Cross mission-related service projects outlined in the *Red Cross Clubs: Service Project Ideas* Guide, you can also plan your own service projects. Remember to be creative!

Here are some tips for planning your own projects whether you use activity guides or decide to create a new project.

Steps to Starting to Plan Your Projects

Map out your Club's potential projects and initiatives

Before the beginning of the school year you should host a meeting with your Club members and come up with a realistic list of project ideas for the school year. If you cannot get all Club members together, make sure the Executive Board can attend.

As you brainstorm, think about if the potential projects fall within the Red Cross mission. Service projects should fall into one of the Red Cross lines of service: Preparedness and Health and Safety Services, Biomedical Services, Disaster Services, International Services, and Service to the Armed Forces.

Decide on the projects to be implemented by your Club during the upcoming school year

Depending on the project opportunities identified and the skills you have in the Club, you should decide on the final list of projects to be delivered by your Club. Consider the needs of your school community when determining which projects would be best. Remember: It's required to implement at least three mission-related activities per school year. Contact your Red Cross Unit to share Club activities and receive information on upcoming Red Cross initiatives and activities.

Develop a yearly calendar of activities

Once you have narrowed all projects, you should find the best timeframe for each project and develop a Club Calendar. The calendar will provide an "at a glance" perspective of your workload and your members' availability, and should help you plan for your specific projects. Working with your Red Cross Unit Contact, you can match your calendar to what your unit is focusing on for a given month.



Developing a Project Plan

When implementing a new project, it is important to have in your mind a general image of how the project should progress. Equally important is to have the capacity to manage all pertinent project details (e.g., having the printed materials ready when needed, ensuring enough volunteers show up at the event, informing all club members, etc.). A good project plan will help you cover all details about activities, roles, responsibilities and deadlines. Make sure to contact your Red Cross Unit when planning a project to keep them informed about club activities. They may be able to provide you with materials and additional project support.

Elements of a Good Project Plan

1. Preliminary information:

- **Project Summary:** Offers an “at-a-glance” perspective of the project, covering information on target audience, goals, results and costs.
- **Project team:** Lists all individuals involved in delivering the project.
- **Target audience:** Identifies who will benefit from your project. Potential audiences include peers, the elderly, veterans or blood donors.

2. Project Goal: A clear and concise statement of the project's purpose and intended results. It offers a broad vision of what you wish to accomplish through your initiative. The goal must be shared by all members of the project team and it should be relevant to your target audience. Example: *Help K-12 students to be better prepared to respond to single family house fires.*

3. Project Objectives: This can be viewed as the “battle plan” you set to achieve your goal. A key to project success is to have clear, well defined objectives.

The SMART technique is an easy way to verify if you have the right objectives for your project:

- **Specific**—Objectives should be concrete and well defined (e.g., *deliver a training event, host a blood drive, fundraise for Disaster Relief Fund, etc.*).
- **Measurable**—They are easy to measure (e.g., *number of people that benefited from your project, amount of materials distributed, etc.*).
- **Achievable**—Objectives should be feasible and attainable (*Can you deliver the project in a reasonable timeline?*)
- **Realistic**—They can be accomplished with the resources available by the team members working on the project (e.g., *collect 30 units of blood, raise \$100 for your local unit*).
- **Timely**—They have a specific timeline with a start and end date for the project (e.g., *implement a 3 week campaign, one day health and safety awareness fair, etc.*).

4. Project Outcomes: Identify what you accomplished through your project, specifying all results, activities, services and/or products delivered. Example: *\$500 raised for the Disaster Relief Fund*

5. Project Timeline: Pinpoint the duration of the project, stating the project start and end dates and all deadlines associated with key activities in the project.

6. Communication and marketing strategies: These help you generate attention and bring visibility to your project. Think about the beneficiaries of your project, and then identify the best way to connect with them.

7. Resources: These are the materials, equipment and people you need in order to accomplish the intended results of your project. Remember to check with the local Red Cross Unit when planning a project; they might be able to provide some critical information and/or material resources.

8. Budget: Represents the total amount of money necessary for project implementation. You need to list all expenses and the revenue sources, especially in the case of fundraisers.

The Project Plan Template will help your club map out all the necessary project components. Your time is limited and precious; spend it wisely. Completing the full Project Plan is a wise use of your time and will go a long way toward setting you up for success.

Project Plan Template

Project Title:

Project Lead(s):

Project Dates (start to end date):

Brief Project Description:

Team—Who is on the Project Team?

- Lead(s):
- Team Member(s):
- Committees:

Target Audience—Who is Your Target Audience? (e.g., community partners, peers, etc.)

- Briefly describe the groups that will benefit from your project.

Goal—What Are We Trying to Achieve?

- Describe the overall goal for the project.

Objectives What are you planning to achieve?	Expected outcomes What are the changes you are trying to achieve through your intervention?	Indicators How will you measure change/impact?

Objective	Activities (What tasks need to be implemented?)	Communication strategy (How do you plan to distribute information?)	Timeframe (When will the activity take place?)	Human resources (Who will do it?)	Material resources (What do you need to do it?)	Costs (How much will it cost?)

Project Budget

Item	Quantity	Unit Cost	Amount	Total	Source/ Information
REVENUES					
Total Revenues					
EXPENSES					
General and Administration					
Publicity					
Supplies					
Equipment					
Miscellaneous					
Refreshments					
Total Projected Expenses					
NET INCOME					