



Humentum's Project Management Health Check





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About Humentum

Humentum strengthens social good organizations through practical expertise, curated resources, and collective problem-solving. Humentum's decades of experience working with thousands of nonprofit organizations around the world translate into deep understanding and visible results. Humentum creates practical solutions to improve finance, people, and risk processes through:

- Experienced consulting delivered by a global team with decades of on-the-job experience
- Individual, group, and organization-wide training
- A robust membership platform for peer-to-peer collaboration and tailored tools and templates

[Visit the Humentum website here.](#)

What can the Humentum Project Management health check do?

Humentum's Project Management health check helps you assess the health of your organization's project management practices. It is designed as a self-assessment tool to help you identify areas where you need to improve. There are sets of statements that cover all key areas of an organization's project management based on the Project DPro framework. For each statement, consider how well your organization aligns with the best practice statement. By the end of the health check, you will be able to tell if the approach to project management in your organization is healthy or sick - and whether you need to call a doctor! You may opt to complete this health check again after a year or two and assess and monitor your progress.

What can the Humentum Project Management health check **not** do?

Every organization is different, and project management systems must reflect this. A 'one-size-fits-all' approach can't work. However, the key aspects of best practice are the same for most organizations most of the time. The health check focuses on those key aspects. They are the foundation of best practices. Humentum's Project Management health check only provides a general indication of the health of your organization's project management. It is not an exhaustive list of all aspects of project management

Additionally, the Project Management health check is not an audit, and it does not describe a standard set of procedures applicable in every situation. It is not appropriate to set a score as a 'pass rate' for a partner assessment. It is not appropriate to compare the scores of two organizations and make conclusions about the differences between them.

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Who is the Humentum Project Management health check designed for?

Humentum's Project Management health check is designed for project or program teams from small and medium-sized nonprofit organizations. This may include non-governmental organizations (NGOs), national and community-based organizations (NNGOs and CBOs), social good organizations, schools, medical centers, etc.

How to use the Humentum Project Management health check?

You do not need to be a certified project manager to complete this health check. The most useful way to complete the health check is in a two - three hour meeting or working group, with input from the Executive Director, program managers, project managers, MEAL staff, and on-site staff. Ideally, the group should be around 5 - 7 people maximum.

Taking each statement of best practice in turn, discuss whether it is true, or is in place, or happens in your organization. Agree on a score based on what actually happens, not what is supposed to happen, or what is documented in your project manual.

Explanation	Score
Our practice is completely in accordance with the statement	5
Close to 5, but not quite there	4
Close to 0, but not that poor	1
This is not in place, is not true, or does not happen	0

Often, the real value in this exercise is not the score itself, but rather the conversations and the details of the issues that arise. Make good notes and keep a list of action items as they come up.

After completing each section, transfer your scores to page 10 to calculate your total. The guidance provided will help you interpret your results and explore next steps where Humentum can offer support.

Check the agreed score for each statement. Add up the total for each section and transfer it to page 10 to get a total. Then, interpret the score using the guidance given.

Section 1. Project Team and Capacity

Projects are delivered by people. Having the right people with the right skills, clear roles, and adequate support is fundamental to project success. Building project management capacity across the organization ensures sustainability and continuous improvement. A culture that values learning, collaboration, and professional development will consistently deliver better projects.

	Project Team and Capacity	Score			
1.1	Project managers have the skills and experience needed for the role	5	4	1	0
1.2	Project team members understand their roles and responsibilities	5	4	1	0
1.3	Project staff receive orientation/training on project management tools and processes	5	4	1	0
1.4	Project teams include or have access to necessary technical expertise	5	4	1	0
1.5	Project staff collaborate effectively with finance, logistics, and other support functions	5	4	1	0
1.6	Staff performance is reviewed regularly, and constructive feedback is provided	5	4	1	0
1.7	Senior management provides appropriate oversight and support to projects	5	4	1	0
1.8	There are mechanisms to ensure staff wellbeing and workload are monitored to prevent burnout	5	4	1	0
1.9	The organization has project management policies, tools, and templates in use	5	4	1	0
1.10	There is a culture of learning from both successes and failures, and documentation to record these learnings.	5	4	1	0
Total					

Section 2. Project Identification and Design

Good project management starts with proper project identification and design. Projects should respond to genuine needs identified through assessment and consultation with stakeholders, especially the community stakeholders. A clear project design includes well-defined objectives, expected outcomes, and a logical framework showing how activities will lead to results.

Project Identification and Design		Score			
2.1	Projects are designed through comprehensive needs assessments and include stakeholder consultation	5	4	1	0
2.2	Project proposals and scope clearly define objectives, expected outcomes, and target community stakeholders	5	4	1	0
2.3	Projects have clear, measurable indicators (SMART indicators) defined from the start, and MEAL indicators are included in the design	5	4	1	0
2.4	Feasibility (technical, financial, operational) is assessed before approval, and a procurement plan is prepared	5	4	1	0
2.5	Stakeholder inclusion and safeguarding considerations are integrated into project design	5	4	1	0
2.6	A Theory of Change or Logical Framework (LogFrame) is developed for each project	5	4	1	0
2.7	Key assumptions and risks and mitigation strategies are identified with the development of a risk register during the design phase	5	4	1	0
2.8	Project designs consider sustainability and exit strategies from the onset	5	4	1	0
2.9	Projects are aligned with the organization's strategic plan and mission	5	4	1	0
2.10	Decision-gates are clearly defined and validated with stakeholders to ensure shared understanding, awareness, and availability	5	4	1	0
Total					

Section 3. Project Setup and Planning

Once a project is approved, proper setup and detailed planning are essential. This includes establishing clear governance structures, developing comprehensive work plans with realistic timelines, and ensuring all necessary systems and resources are in place before implementation begins.

	Project Setup and Planning	Score			
3.1	A named project manager is assigned with authority and accountability for each project/program	5	4	1	0
3.2	A detailed project implementation plan (work plan) is developed before activities begin	5	4	1	0
3.3	A project organizational structure is established with clear roles and responsibilities (RACI)	5	4	1	0
3.4	A project charter is developed and shared with/approved by all relevant stakeholders	5	4	1	0
3.5	Project governance arrangements (steering committee, change management systems) are established	5	4	1	0
3.6	A detailed project budget is developed and linked to activities in the work plan	5	4	1	0
3.7	Project inception meetings are held with key stakeholders and team members, with recurring meetings scheduled for project duration	5	4	1	0
3.8	Communication and reporting requirements/lines are clearly defined, planned, and documented	5	4	1	0
3.9	A MEAL plan is developed, and baseline data is collected before project activities begin	5	4	1	0
3.10	Partnerships are formalized through terms of reference, agreements, memorandums of understanding aligning with organizational values	5	4	1	0
Total					

Section 4. Implementation and Execution

Implementation is where plans become reality. Effective project execution requires coordination, communication, and adaptive management. Project managers must ensure that activities are carried out as planned, while remaining responsive to on-site realities and emerging challenges. Progress reviews, problem-solving, and course corrections are normal parts of implementation.

Implementation and Execution		Score			
4.1	Project activities are implemented according to the approved work plan	5	4	1	0
4.2	Regular project team meetings are held to coordinate activities, address issues, and to review and adjust the work plan	5	4	1	0
4.3	Project managers actively document and monitor progress, changes to scope/schedule/budget, and take corrective action when needed	5	4	1	0
4.4	Contingency plans are reviewed and actioned for high-priority or high-impact risks	5	4	1	0
4.5	Risks are reviewed and updated regularly throughout project implementation in the Risk Register	5	4	1	0
4.6	Regular communication with donors follows agreed formats and schedules	5	4	1	0
4.7	Quality standards for project deliverables and activities are monitored based on MEAL Plan	5	4	1	0
4.8	Procurement follows organizational policies and donor requirements; project spending is tracked against budget regularly (at least monthly)	5	4	1	0
4.9	Project teams maintain positive relationships with all stakeholders through established communication channels	5	4	1	0
4.10	Safeguarding protocols are followed, and incidents are reported appropriately	5	4	1	0
Total					

Section 5. Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, Learning

Effective MEAL systems help project teams understand whether they're achieving intended results, identify what's working and what isn't, and make evidence-based adjustments. MEAL systems are embedded in all stages of Project Management to ensure that projects are resilient, sustainable, and involve participatory methods with all relevant stakeholders.

	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (MEAL)	Score			
5.1	A MEAL plan is developed and used to guide data collection and analysis	5	4	1	0
5.2	Progress against indicators is tracked regularly throughout implementation	5	4	1	0
5.3	Data collection methods and tools are appropriate and reliable	5	4	1	0
5.4	Project data is analyzed and used to inform decisions and adjustments	5	4	1	0
5.5	Regular progress reports are produced and shared with stakeholders	5	4	1	0
5.6	Community stakeholders have mechanisms to provide feedback and raise complaints	5	4	1	0
5.7	Feedback from community stakeholders and partners is documented and acted upon	5	4	1	0
5.8	Project information is shared with community stakeholders in accessible formats	5	4	1	0
5.9	Reviews or evaluations are conducted at appropriate intervals (midterm, endline)	5	4	1	0
5.10	Lessons learned are documented and shared within the organization	5	4	1	0
Total					

Section 6. Project Closure and Transition

Project closeout is often neglected, yet it's a critical phase for capturing lessons, ensuring accountability, and setting up sustainability. A structured closeout process ensures that all contractual obligations are met, knowledge is transferred, assets are properly accounted for, and achievements are documented.

	Project Closure and Transition	Score			
6.1	The project has a closeout plan and checklist developed, including the process for closing out and documenting final results	5	4	1	0
6.2	All final donor reports (narrative and financial), stakeholder reports are approved and submitted on time	5	4	1	0
6.3	Final project and deliverable evaluations are conducted to measure project outcomes and to document lessons	5	4	1	0
6.4	All project documentation is organized, archived, and accessible for future reference	5	4	1	0
6.5	Financial reconciliation is completed, accounts are closed, and assets purchased in the project are documented, transferred/disposed	5	4	1	0
6.6	Agreements, ToRs, and staff contracts and obligations are properly concluded based on organizational guidelines	5	4	1	0
6.7	A lessons learned/after-action review workshop is held with the project team and key stakeholders	5	4	1	0
6.8	Transition or handover plans are developed to ensure sustainability of project benefits	5	4	1	0
6.9	Project successes and achievements are celebrated and communicated internally and externally	5	4	1	0
6.10	Knowledge and good practices from the project are captured and shared with the organization	5	4	1	0
Total					

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Interpreting your score

Record your score for each section in the table and check the appropriate risk assessment column for each section. Finally, add up your total score, and see the advice below.

Section	Score	High risk	Medium risk	Low risk
Project team and capacity		0 - 25	26 - 40	41 - 50
Project identification and design		0 - 25	26 - 40	41 - 50
Project setup and planning		0 - 25	26 - 40	41 - 50
Project implementation and execution		0 - 25	26 - 40	41 - 50
MEAL		0 - 25	26 - 40	41 - 50
Project closure and transition		0 - 25	26 - 40	41 - 50
Total		0 - 150	151 - 240	241 - 300

Your score is 241 or higher. Well done!

Your project management practices are strong, and the risk of missing objectives is low. To keep building on this success, review the risk assessment in each section. Use this moment to identify small improvements that can make a big difference across all six sections.

We recommend advanced training for your staff to maintain and enhance your organizational capabilities:

- **Program Management for Development Professionals (Program DPro):** Move beyond single projects to learn how to manage portfolios and programs of work for greater strategic impact.
- **AI for Project Managers: A Practical Masterclass:** This masterclass empowers you to turn AI from a tool into a strategic advantage to aid your organizational strength in project management.

Check out Humentum's full course catalog, including those mentioned above, [here](#).

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Your score is between 151 and 240. Not bad. This is a solid foundation, with room to strengthen.

Good Progress! You have established solid foundations in project management and are on the right track. By focusing on areas with lower scores, you can boost project delivery and results. These sections are your best growth opportunities. Consider targeted training and capacity strengthening for your systems and to meet donor expectations with confidence!

Here is an option to invest in, to build on the strengths you've already developed:

- **Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning for Development Professionals (MEAL DPro):** Build capacity in monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning to strengthen results measurement and adaptive management.

Check out Humentum's full course catalog, including those mentioned above, [here](#).

Your score is less than 151. There is work to be done!

Time to act! Your assessment shows important opportunities to improve project management. Without changes, projects may fall short of their potential, resources could be stretched, or donor confidence may be affected. The good news is that you've taken an important first step by completing this assessment to identify your focus. We recommend managers and trustees meet soon to prioritise improvements and create an action plan. External support and training can be very beneficial to build the skills and systems for success. Here are some other trainings and assistance you could consider:

Here is an option to invest in, to build on the strengths you've already developed:

- **Project Management for Development Professionals (Project DPro):** This certification training provides comprehensive knowledge of all key project management best practices and processes in NGOs, based on the globally recognized Project DPro framework.

Check out Humentum's full course catalog, including those mentioned above, [here](#).

Remember: This Health Check is a starting point for improvement. The most important step is to take action on what you've learned. Start with your lowest-scoring areas and commit to making incremental improvements. Project management excellence is a journey, not a destination.