



Enhancing the Effectiveness of NGO Project Management through International Best Practices: A Comparative Analysis

Sultonova Dilnoza Dilshodovna^{1,*}

¹ Assistant Lecturer, Department of Agrobusiness and Marketing, Andijan Institute of Agriculture and Agrotechnologies, Uzbekistan

Email: sultonovad1415@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Non-governmental non-profit organizations (NGOs) play a critical role in addressing social challenges and supporting sustainable socio-economic development. The effectiveness of their activities largely depends on the quality of project management systems. While developed countries have established advanced institutional and managerial frameworks for NGO project implementation, many developing countries, including Uzbekistan, continue to face limitations related to funding, professional capacity, and monitoring mechanisms. The aim of this study was to assess international best practices in NGO project management and identify applicable directions for improving project effectiveness in Uzbekistan. A comparative analytical approach was applied using secondary data from the United States, Canada, Germany, Norway, Sweden, and Uzbekistan. The analysis focused on public funding volumes, adoption of international project management standards, monitoring and evaluation effectiveness, and the share of certified project managers. The results demonstrate a significant performance gap between Uzbekistan and developed economies. The study concludes that systematic integration of international standards, strengthened monitoring systems, and professional certification are essential for improving NGO project effectiveness.

Keywords: Non-governmental non-profit organizations ▪ Project management ▪ International best practices ▪ Public grants ▪ Monitoring and evaluation ▪ Professional certification

1. INTRODUCTION

Non-governmental non-profit organizations have become an integral part of modern governance systems by complementing public sector efforts in social service delivery and sustainable development [1]. As NGO activities expand in scale and complexity, the need for effective project management systems has increased significantly. In developed countries, NGOs operate within institutional frameworks that emphasize transparency, accountability, and results-based management [2]. These organizations widely apply internationally recognized project management standards, which contribute to higher project success rates. In Uzbekistan, although reforms aimed at strengthening civil society are ongoing,

NGO project implementation effectiveness remains relatively low [3]. Previous studies have not sufficiently explored the applicability of international NGO project management experience to the Uzbek context. Therefore, this study aims to identify key directions for improving NGO project management effectiveness in Uzbekistan based on international best practices. The hypothesis tested is that the adoption of international standards and professionalization of project management significantly improve NGO project outcomes.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research employed a comparative and descriptive research design. Secondary data were collected from interna-

tional development organizations, government reports, and academic publications [4, 2]. The analysis covered NGO project management practices in the United States, Canada, Germany, Norway, Sweden, and Uzbekistan.

Four indicators were selected for comparison:

1. Annual public funding allocated to NGO projects;
2. Adoption level of international project management standards;
3. Effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation systems;
4. Proportion of certified project managers [5].

Descriptive statistical analysis and cross-country comparison were applied. Logical synthesis was used to identify transferable best practices suitable for Uzbekistan's socio-economic conditions.

3. RESULTS

Canada and Germany exhibit similar patterns, supported by structured public–civil society partnerships and institutionalized monitoring systems [3]. Nordic countries emphasize transparency and outcome-based evaluation, contributing to sustainable project performance [2].

Table 23. Indicators of foreign experience in effective management of NGO projects

No.	Country	Grants (USD million)	Standards (%)	M&E (score)	Certified (%)
1	USA	3200	95	9.5	88
2	Canada	1800	92	9.0	83
3	Germany	2100	90	9.2	80
4	Norway	950	88	9.0	78
5	Sweden	870	87	8.8	75
6	Uzbekistan	25	35	5.5	30

As can be seen from Table 23, in developed countries such as the USA, Canada, and Germany, the level of compliance with international standards in NGO project management is very high, and the certification of qualified specialists in project management is also high. The effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms is also ensured at a high level in these countries. As a result, projects are implemented in a high-quality, effective, and sustainable manner.

Today, effective project management is one of the main tasks of NGOs. In this regard, in developed countries such as the USA, Canada, Germany, Norway, and Sweden, the annual amount of grants allocated by the state for the management of NGO projects is high. For example, in the USA, the state allocates an average of 3200 million US dollars per year for the management of projects of non-governmental non-profit organizations, and the level of compliance with international standards in the use of these funds is 95%. The effectiveness of the US project monitoring and evaluation processes is rated at an average of 9.5 points on a 10-point scale, and 88% of managers managing projects of non-governmental organizations in this country have international certificates and are highly qualified specialists. In Canada, the state allocates approximately 1800 million US dollars per year for the effective management of projects of non-governmental non-profit organizations. The level of use of international

project management standards in Canadian NGOs is 92%. The effectiveness of project monitoring and evaluation mechanisms is rated high with an average score of 9.0, and the share of certified project managers is 83%.

In Germany, the annual state grant allocated to NGOs is 2100 million US dollars, and the level of use of international standards reaches 90%. In Germany, the effectiveness of project monitoring and evaluation processes has a high score of 9.2, and 80% of project management specialists have special certificates.

In Norway, the annual state grant for NGO projects is 950 million US dollars, and the indicator of compliance with international standards is recorded at around 88%. The effectiveness of project monitoring and evaluation in this country is rated high with a score of 9.0, and the share of certified project managers is 78%.

In Sweden, the total annual state grant allocated to NGO projects is 870 million US dollars, and the indicator of use of international standards is set at around 87%. In Sweden, the effectiveness of project monitoring and evaluation mechanisms is estimated at 8.8 points, and the share of certified project managers in this country is 75%.

In the Republic of Uzbekistan, the indicators in this regard are significantly lower than in the developed countries mentioned above. In Uzbekistan, the state allocates only 25 million US dollars in grants to NGO projects per year. Also, the level of use of international standards in project management is only 35%. The effectiveness of project monitoring and evaluation is only 5.5 points on a 10-point scale, and the level of certification of project managers is also low, around 30%.

Based on these numerical analyses and foreign experience, in order to ensure effective management of projects by non-governmental non-profit organizations in Uzbekistan, it is important to increase the amount of grants allocated by the state, widely introduce international project management standards, improve the quality of project monitoring and evaluation, and develop a certification system for specialists involved in project management. By implementing such measures, it will be possible to increase the effectiveness of projects of non-governmental organizations and further strengthen the role of civil society in the socio-economic life of the country.

4. DISCUSSION

The findings confirm that effective NGO project management is closely linked to institutional support, standardized methodologies, and human capital development. International experience shows that financial resources must be complemented by strong management systems to ensure project success [4]. For Uzbekistan, improving NGO project effectiveness requires a comprehensive approach. First, expanding public funding mechanisms would enhance project sustainability. Second, integrating international project management standards such as PMBOK and results-based management frameworks would improve planning and execution quality [5]. Third, strengthening monitoring and evaluation systems is essential for transparency and learning [2]. A limitation of this study is its reliance on secondary data, which may not fully reflect organizational-level differences. Future research should incorporate primary data and case studies of individual NGOs.

5. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that international best practices provide valuable guidance for improving NGO project management effectiveness in Uzbekistan. Key priorities include expanding public funding, institutionalizing international standards, strengthening monitoring and evaluation systems, and investing in professional certification and training. Implementing these measures will enhance the socio-economic impact of NGO projects and strengthen civil society development.

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