**Purpose**

This is one of two tools in the Rapid Response Kit intended to help NGOs begin projects in new communities. Providing an illustrative timeline to the community early on will instill confidence in the NGO’s capacity and mitigate program delays. Gantt charts, or project timelines, are popular tools for project management and consist of a horizontal bar chart that shows progress on a project schedule. There are many timeline and Gantt chart templates available online; however, most involve complicated formatting and design elements. The version provided here is a simplified template that can be tailored to fit your program. Tasks are arrayed on the vertical axis while the horizontal axis represents time. Tasks may be rolled up into summary elements, which constitute a number of subtasks and represent a phase of project work.

**How to use this tool**   
Although project timelines will vary drastically depending on the project, region, donor, and contract type, many crucial elements are consistent. This tool begins with a generic timeline template and includes instructions to guide you in adapting it to your project. The tool is available as an editable Microsoft Excel workbook.

In the Task Table tab, enter the task names, start date, duration (months), and end date. The tasks will automatically appear in your Project Timeline. In some cases, you may want to edit the table formatting to remove any blank space in the beginning of your chart. To do so, follow these three simple steps:

1. Click on the dates above the task bars and select **Format Axis**.
2. In the **Axis Options** window, under **Bounds**, look for the current number for **Minimum Bounds**. This number represents the left-most boundary of your Project Timeline. Increase this number to bring your tasks closer to the vertical axis.
3. If needed, click **Reset** to return to the original settings. This allows you to try a number of settings until you find the one that makes your Project Timeline look best.

The editable Excel workbook for Tool 2.2 is available for download [here.](https://africanpeoplewildlife.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Tool-2.2-Project-Timeline-Template.xlsx)

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