**OPSYS – Component 4.1**

**Planning of operations/ Time management**

**Business Needs Specification**

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# Planning of operations using OpSYS

## AS IS

There is no specific system that supports relevant actors in fulfilling tasks related to this process. The tools that support this process are the conventional Microsoft Office tools and paper based ones.

## To BE

The system puts the daily actors in the centre of a daily work, in order to ensure that the data in the system is complete, updated and of good quality. This new DEVCO operational information system is conceived as the main and, on a daily basis, single entry point for access, encoding and management of all operational information, including for reporting where possible, being also the best approach to ensure data quality.

Planning and time management is one of the most important components of the new operational system in terms of programme management. The need to prepare a sequence of steps to achieve specific goals, to create visibility and increase the level of communication between internal actors is essential in this respect. Moreover, done effectively, it can reduce the necessary time and effort of achieving a particular goal.

The new component should be seen as a map where clear visibility is given to the progress up to the end of a process. This component should help decision making persons in their process of making good decisions, thus the system must:

* Create milestones in the context of a given entity (MIP, Action, Contract..)
* Generate string of standard milestones according to history records and procedural rules (e.g. 50 days tendering period for an international service contract..)
* Monitor milestones (as much as possible by the system itself)
* Provide calendar views; aggregate them per entities and include sub-entities
* Keep track of the initially envisaged time schedule in order to compare real situation with foreseen scenario and to improve our forecasting abilities
* Manage tasks: In the context of a given operational entity, it is possible to enter a task, to assign it to a user, and to close it.

The system should allow task managers to add intermediary milestones according to their specific needs and for their local use.

The dashboard is the main reference-point for the day-to-day activities of relevant actors. It allows quick visibility to relevant milestones. E.g. quick access to ‘own’ procurements; an overview of recent actions; an overview of overdue procurements (overdue lifecycle steps), a metroline view indicating the current stage of the action/file.

The scope of the planning of operations component is by the use of dashboards, notifications and a portfolio view to ease the tasks for operational actors, to get a quick project status overview, particularly when taking over or acting as a backup, to improve transparency between all relevant actors and stakeholders at any moment of the process.

This component is based on the experience of users, as well as on experience of existing IT tools like MIS (DG NEAR), SIGMA (DIGIT/RTD) and DECIDE (SG).

## Business need: Planning of operations/ Time management

There are 5 main elements included in this component than can be tackles all throughout the main flow of the new system:

**"Time management" page for the main entities/processes**:

The page should give a global view which includes timeline, milestones, rapid access documents related to certain milestones such as meeting minutes, overview of open alerts.

The page should display one or more user customised views of the timeline of a particular process.

**Notifications**:

Notifications are sent by email, and displayed on the system.

Notifications follow the rule: must or could, meaning that "must" notifications will always be sent to relevant users. The system is flexible and allows relevant actors to decide if "Could" notifications will or not be sent.

"Must" - The system must notify the actor when an action is needed on his/her side – perform visa, accept meeting, etc. When accessing the system, the actor is also prompted to perform the respective task on his dashboard..

"Could" - The system may notify the actors when (1) the processes is moving from one step to another or (2) when modifications are made to relevant documents of that process ..

**"Must" Alerts and prompt actions:**

If a particular action is not fulfilled in due time by the relevant actor, the system sends a reminder.

**Calendar of the actor**:

Specific milestones such as meetings are synchronised between the actor system calendar and the actor's own outlook calendar..

Respective actors need to accept invitations so that their calendar is updated.

**Timeline of a programme**:

This requirement helps actors to define and communicate how to handle things that affect the programme's timeline. Any changes that may impact areas such as the scheduled deadlines need to be visible via this tool to ensure the actor can track them. The system is able to display different views of a process. Data recorded consists in:

- Original timeline forecast

- Most recently updated timeline forecast

- Achieved dates



**Principles of time management and roles of actors:**

Main concerned roles are:

* EC HQ process coordinator (such as central units, e.g. unit 06 for Programming process)
* EC process manager
* implementing entity process manager

The following are generic steps:

* Trigger: EC HQ Process coordinator enters centrally decided key dates of a process (e.g. the submission deadline for the draft programming documents, or the dates of the EU Member States management Committees for the whole year ..), or key parameters/periods (e.g. the minimum tender submission period for a given tender process..). CUD - Must
* Trigger: EC Process manager generates a timeline for a given process (example: an Action Document timeline including key milestones such as the submission date to HQ for the QSG meeting, the EU MS management committee, the Commission Decision on the Annual Action Programme, and the signature of the Financing Agreement..). By default, the system generates the earliest possible timeline. If necessary, the EC process manager adjusts elements of the timeline to make it realistic, and he/she saves the timeline. CUD - Must
* Trigger: EC Process manager should be able to insert intermediary milestones. CUD - Should
* Trigger: Upon executing a step corresponding to one of the standard milestones (e.g. the submission of the Action Document to the QSG), the system automatically updates the timeline. R - Must
* Trigger: For a given entity, the system should generate a commitment-flow and payment-flow on the basis of foreseen amount, envisaged modality, envisaged implementation period and historical data for this modality. R – Should (This produces a baseline for 4.2 "Financial forecast" where the risk levels are to be adjusted)
* Trigger: Timeline Lay-out: the Process manager should be able to choose one of layouts available: metro line view, gantt chart. CUD - Should
* Trigger: When the non-respect of a standard milestone causes the impossibility to respect the next upcoming milestone, the system should automatically generate an updated timeline, showing the consequence on the final deadline, if any. This updated timeline remains in provisional status as long as it is no approved by the Process manager. R - Should
* Trigger: Display options for an aggregated timeline: A Process manager should be able to aggregate timelines of lower level entities (e.g. a Programme Manager should be able to display elements of the timelines of the Contracts depending of that given Programme). The Process manager should be able to restrict the dates to be aggregated to certain standard milestones. R - Should

For implementation processes (Contract management, programme management), time management needs a greater role from the implementing entity process manager:

* Trigger: implementing entity process manager is able to insert intermediary milestones. CUD - Could
* Trigger: implementing entity process manager is able to modify milestones, which receive a provisory status. CUD - Could
* Trigger: upon the change of milestones by an implementing entity process manager, the Partner Country Process manager, and the EC process manager reject or accept the changes. CUD - Could

The functionalities described above "Principles of time management and roles of actors" apply to the phases of the cycle of operations, as follows:

### Programming

With respect to the above generic processes, the standard milestones of the Programming processes are the following:

Document 1: National Development Plan Analysis

1. Submission the draft National Development Plan Analysis to the Programming Team Meeting (It can be a CTM/RTM/TTM: Country TM/Regional TM/ Thematic TM)
2. Programming Team Meeting

At all time, results of specific Studies, meetings, workshops, coordination exercises may be inserted by EC programming manager in the timeline as intermediary milestones.

Document 2: Multi-Annual Indicative Programme (MIP/NIP/RIP/SSF..)

1. Submission of the draft MIP to the Programming Team Meeting
2. Programming Team Meeting
3. **V**alidation of the final ("post CTM..") MIP version

Document 2: Multi-Annual Indicative Programme (MIP/NIP/RIP/SSF..): **Decision making process**

1. Management Meeting
2. Cabinet consultation
3. Strategic Dialogue of the European Parliament (including exchange of letters)
4. Inter-Service Consultation
5. EU Member States committee
6. Written procedure of approval by the College of the Commission
7. Signature of **EDF** MIPs by Partner Country and Partner Regions authorities

### Identification and Formulation

The standard milestones of the Identification and Formulation processes are the following:

Action Document (main track): Identification process

1. Submission of the draft A.D. to the QSG Meeting
2. QSG Meeting

Action Document: additional step for Budget Support: Budget Support Steering Committee

1. Submission of BSSC files to the Budget Support Steering Committee
2. Budget Support Steering Committee (as meeting or written procedure)

Action Document (main track): Formulation process

1. Submission of the draft A.D. to the QSG Meeting
2. QSG Meeting
3. Validation of the final ("post QSG 2..") A.D. version

Action Document: additional step for Budget Support: Second Budget Support Steering Committee (Optional)

1. Submission of BSSC files to the Budget Support Steering Committee
2. Budget Support Steering Committee (as meeting or written procedure)

Action Document: Decision making process

1. Submission of Annual Action Programme or Measure to the Inter-Service Consultation
2. Submission of AAP-M to the EU Member States committee
3. Submission of AAP-M to a written procedure of approval by the College of the Commission
4. If required, Financing Agreements are signed with Partner Country and Partner Regions authorities

Complementary process for blending projects (stemming from a Blending Action Documents):

The standard milestones for blending projects is to be derived from the related process description in component 1 (*currently under revision by the blending unit*).

### Implementation

Depending on the possible management mode (direct, indirect, shared) or the entity selected to manage the aid intervention (DEVCO, National body of donor country, International Organization, Member States, Partner Country) there are several types of and the system should be able to differentiate between them.

Main types of implementation:

1) Implementation of Budget Support (BS)

2) Implementation of Programmes through Programme Estimates

3) Implementation of Programmes through Pillar Assessed Grant or Delegation Agreement

4) Implementation of Grants through Call For Proposals

* Restricted or open Call for proposals
* Direct management / indirect management/ shared management

5) Implementation of Programmes through Call For Tenders

* Restricted or open Call for tenders
* Tender for Services/ Supply/ Works
* Framework contract
* Competitive negotiated Procedure
* Direct management / indirect management/ shared management

6) All type of implementation

ROM which is yearly process which provides a wide range of quantitative and qualitative data on the performance of the development projects and programmes. See 4.6 for a detailed list of the ROM steps.

The process flow of different implementation programmes is described in component 4.3 – Tenders and calls for proposals.

**Example of standard milestones for a tender in a given configuration:**

* Open call for tender (1 step tender)
* Indirect management (procurement is managed by the Partner country)
* EDF country (possibly 2 institutions involved in the drafting and approval of the tender dossier: Line ministry and Aid coordination management unit)
1. Partner Country Procurement Manager submits the draft Tender Dossier to the Partner Country Aid Coordination Management unit
2. Partner Country Aid Coordination Management unit submit the draft Tender dossier to the EU Delegation
3. Publication of the Tender Dossier
4. Deadline for tender submissions
5. Partner Country Aid Coordination Management unit submit the Tender evaluation report to the EU Delegation
6. Notification to successful tenderers
7. Signature of the Contract

### Evaluation

The standard milestones of an evaluation process are the following:

Recruitment of evaluation consultant (implementing entity in charge of the evaluation)

 Agreement with Partner country on the terms of reference of the evaluation

 Submission of the evaluation tender dossier to the approval process

 Signature of evaluation Contract

Evaluation execution phase:

 Inception report

 Draft Final report

 Approval of the final report (including Evaluation Quality grid)

 Follow – up

Evaluation plan: For each country, evaluations should be aggregatable by planned, ongoing and completed or evaluations in a given period, (R- Should) and displayed as a gantt chart (R-Could).

# User stories list

**Further feedback from users:**

* Planning and time management: use dashboards (possible to see which activities are foreseen, on track, late..), notifications and a portfolio view; useful for operational agents to get a quick project status overview, particularly when taking over or acting as a back-up. Must be configured in an intuitive way by the user depending on his/her needs.
* Examples of data which could be inserted in a dashboard: dates for QSG, evaluation committees (too much?), D+3, N+1, end of implementation, end of contract; two groups of data are needed: dates with an impact on legal of financial aspects, dates linked to the workload (MIS) and workflow, dates linked with communication (events during the implementation phase).
* Closing and decommitment should also be integrated as planned activities in the contract/action management, so that the EC Process manager is notified (e.g. final payment date + a number of x months), in order to decommit asap the balance of unspent funds.

The table below represents the point of view of users from the user group (rating: agree or not, and comments), with respect to the proposed "high level needs":

|  |
| --- |
| **Proposed HL need: An operational planning of events and milestones (decision process, studies, etc.)**  |
| Needs | Disagree | No opinion | Agree | Comments |
| HQ User Group:  |  |  | X | Zoom levels applied to personal pipeline or unit or sector? By instruments also?Useful to visualize where you stand in the PCM processAnnual planPossibility to drill down from one variable to one other depending on the various available linksA centralized tool that provides an overall view on the process |
| Delegation Peru: |  |  | X | For example a project life’s follow-up table identifying milestones should be an essential tool for project managers but unfortunately it is not used in Delegations (only partial info is recorded in excel tables but most of the time these are not kept updated. Moreover, there is a strong reluctance of colleagues to use specialized application like MS-Project (too difficult). This tool should be developed into the new system and present automatically the updated projects’ status based on the info collected at contracting and payment stages.  |
| Delegation Morocco: |  |  | X | Fonction primaire d'un tel dispositif. Ceci devrait être le point de départ de l'architecture de cet outil. Le point d'entrée de l'information et la plateforme qui, via des passerelles permet de se connecter à des modules de gestion financière, administrative, etc. Un tel outil devrait prévoir des chemins critiques pour chaque procédure avec des alertes lorsque les délais deviennent une contrainte pour l'atteinte de l'objectif dans le temps imparti. Du point de vue du manager il devrait être possible d'avoir chaque jour une vue d'ensemble de la progression des processus en cours et pouvoir prévoir si nécessaire des ressources supplémentaires pour une tâche donnée. À l'heure actuelle nous travaillons constamment dans l'urgence pour rentrer dans les délais et nous n'avons aucun moyen d'identifier les processus en cours si ce n'est par la compilation manuelle de tableaux (voir exemple en annexe). Ce qui est une tâche fastidieuse et largement inutile car pour être à jour un tel tableau devrait être mis à jour quotidiennement … À la fin le gestionnaire passe plus de temps à suivre l'évolution qu'à la mettre en œuvre la tâche dont il est responsable. |
| Delegation Georgia: |  |  | X | Tool should also give indicative timelines going forward, as well as provide all the relevant up to date templates and supporting documents. Important with automatic reminder function! |
| Delegation Ethiopia: |  |  | X | Project management is highly time sensitive and one of the most important aspect is managing the project schedule. The new system can be integrated with other calendar and mail functionalities, so that TMs can receive warnings and reminders of important operational and financial dates at various phases of the FA and contracts. It is also useful for communication and scheduling of events jointly with partners. |
| Delegation Cambodia: |  | X |  | There are different schools of thought here.Some fear this risks complicating things more… just access to the MIP, and draft IF s as they go through the decision system would be enough. As well as clear links with the relevant decision, contracts, studies… Others would like to see a more complete, harmonized and transparent system, hoping it would ease individual management work. |
| **Proposed HL need: Integration of financial forecasts and decision pipelines with the operational planning**  |
| HQ User Group:  |  |  | X | Notifications if you are late or notHelpful to visualize where you stand in the full workflow |
| Delegation Peru: |  |  | X | Warning system to be integrated within the new application connected as well with other modules like SAP BPC (automatic colored cells or issue of message with deviations’ notification). |
| Delegation Côte d'Ivoire: |  | X |  | Pas certain de comprendre ce qui se cache derrière cette phrase |
| Delegation Morocco: |  |  | X | Ceci est déjà en partie dans CRIS mais devrait intégrer de façon plus efficace la gestion du risque lié à une non-exécution d'une tâche (payement, engagement) pour l'instant l'introduction du niveau de risque est manuelle et nécessite une manipulation fastidieuse si le gestionnaire de programme doit mettre à jour ce niveau de risque en fonction de l'évolution de la situation réelle.  |
| Delegation Georgia: |  |  | X | Yes – it would also be a big help if the system also notified contractors about their obligations automatically : i.e. invoice due on 30 days etc. |
| Delegation Ethiopia: |  |  | X | Important to integrate the new system with other operational and financial IT systems. Ensure the adequacy of ABAC to keep the existing CRIS functionality and appropriate access of operational colleagues to ABAC to be consistent with the financial circuit. This should be flexible to accommodate the specific context in Delegations.  |
| Delegation Cambodia: | X |  | X | Not everybody agrees with this. One basic question is why aren’t the current and quite detailed CRIS forecasts not used better as a management tool by POs and Management alike? |
| **Proposed HL need: "Metro station" view of the cycle** |
| HQ User Group:  |  |  | X | Be able to define our own personal views with different zoom levelsOr a step by step view? |
| Delegation Peru: |  | X |  | Very difficult to implement and to maintain up to dated. Not sure about the added value to have this in place, normally the user profile should automatically present the level of view corresponding to the level of access / function allowed. |
| Delegation Georgia: |  |  | X | The more visual the interface, the better. On a global/delegation view it would be nice to be able to show project pipelines/implementation periods as a bar chart (Y axis projects, X axis time)  |
| Delegation Cambodia: |  |  | X | Could it be structured around MIP>Decisions> … |

# Glossary

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Term* | *Definition* |
|  |  |
| BCS | Background Conclusion Sheet |
| BSSC | Budget Support Steering Committee  |
| Budget support | Budget support is aid which is transferred directly into the national budget of the partner country. |
| Budget tree view | The budget tree view is a way of presenting and accessing information, in a hierarchical, Windows-Explorer-like way. |
| DEVCO | EuropeAid Development and Co-operation |
| EEAS | European External Action Service |
| EP | European Parliament |
| FR | Financial regulation |
| ISC | Inter Service Consultations |
| MS Committee  | Member states committee |
| PE | Programme Estimates |
| QSG | Quality Support Groups |
| ROM | Results-Oriented Monitoring |
| SPSP | Sector policy support programme |