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Project Proposal and Management

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REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA
INFORMATION SYSTEM AUTHORITY



Foreign, Commonwealth
& Development Office



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the
Netherlands

Overall Objective: To equip the participants with theoretical concepts and practical skills on how to prepare, execute, and monitor a project.

Main outcome:

- At least two different draft proposals incorporating the main steps and phases of a project, prepared by the participants.

Agenda-Day 1

Writing a Proposal and Managing a Project

08:30-08:45 Opening remarks

08:45-11:00- Part A: Main concepts of writing a project

08:45-09:00 What is it?

What is and what is not a Project Proposal

Preliminary thoughts, Problem Tree, and Project lifecycle

09:00-10:30 Main steps for preparing a proposal

Project Rationale

Project Goals and Objectives

Project Strategies and Activities

10:30-11:00 Tips and Tricks on writing a proposal

Deliverable: Problem Trees, Goals and Objectives identified.

11:00-11:15 Coffee Break

11:15-11:30- Part B: Main concepts of managing a project

Initiation phase

Planning phase

Execution phase

Closure phase

11:30-13:30 Part C: Practical skills: Draft and critique a proposal by using the LogFrame Matrix

Deliverable: At least two proposals drafted with the core features.

13:30-14:30 Lunch

14:30-15:00 Cross feedback



Goals by Session_Day 1

Since this meeting session is an all-day event, below is an breakdown of what we plan to achieve during this meeting.

08:45 – 11:00 ▶

How and What to Write

Familiarisation with the main concepts and steps for writing a proposal including tips and tricks. Participants will identify Problem Trees, Objectives, and Goals for their projects.

11:15 – 11:30 ▶

How to Manage

Acquire concrete skills on how to execute projects based on various project implementation instruments.

11:30 – 13:30 ▶

Draft, Present, and Discuss

Divided in at least two working groups, the participants shall draft simple structures of at least two proposals (Vertical aspect of the Logframe) which will continue in the 2nd day as well.

What is a Project?

A project is a **temporary organisational structure set up to create a unique product or service (output) within certain constraints such as time, cost and quality.**

Projects differ in size, scope cost and time, but all have the following characteristics:

- A **start** and a **finish**
- A **life cycle** involving a series of phases in between the beginning and end
- A **budget**
- A set of **activities** which are sequential, unique and non-repetitive
- Use of **resources** which may require coordinating
- Centralised **responsibilities** for management and implementation
- Defined **roles** and **relationships** for participants



Why do we need a Project Proposal?

- What are the advantages of a clear project proposal?
- What are the different project proposal types?
- What a project proposal is not?

Preliminary thoughts on how to write a project proposal _ 1

- Define your audience.
- Determine the problem being solved by your proposal.
- Conduct research on the current state of the issue and potential solutions.
- Proactively determine the effect that this project will have.
- Establish a timeline and determine the type and amount of resources required.

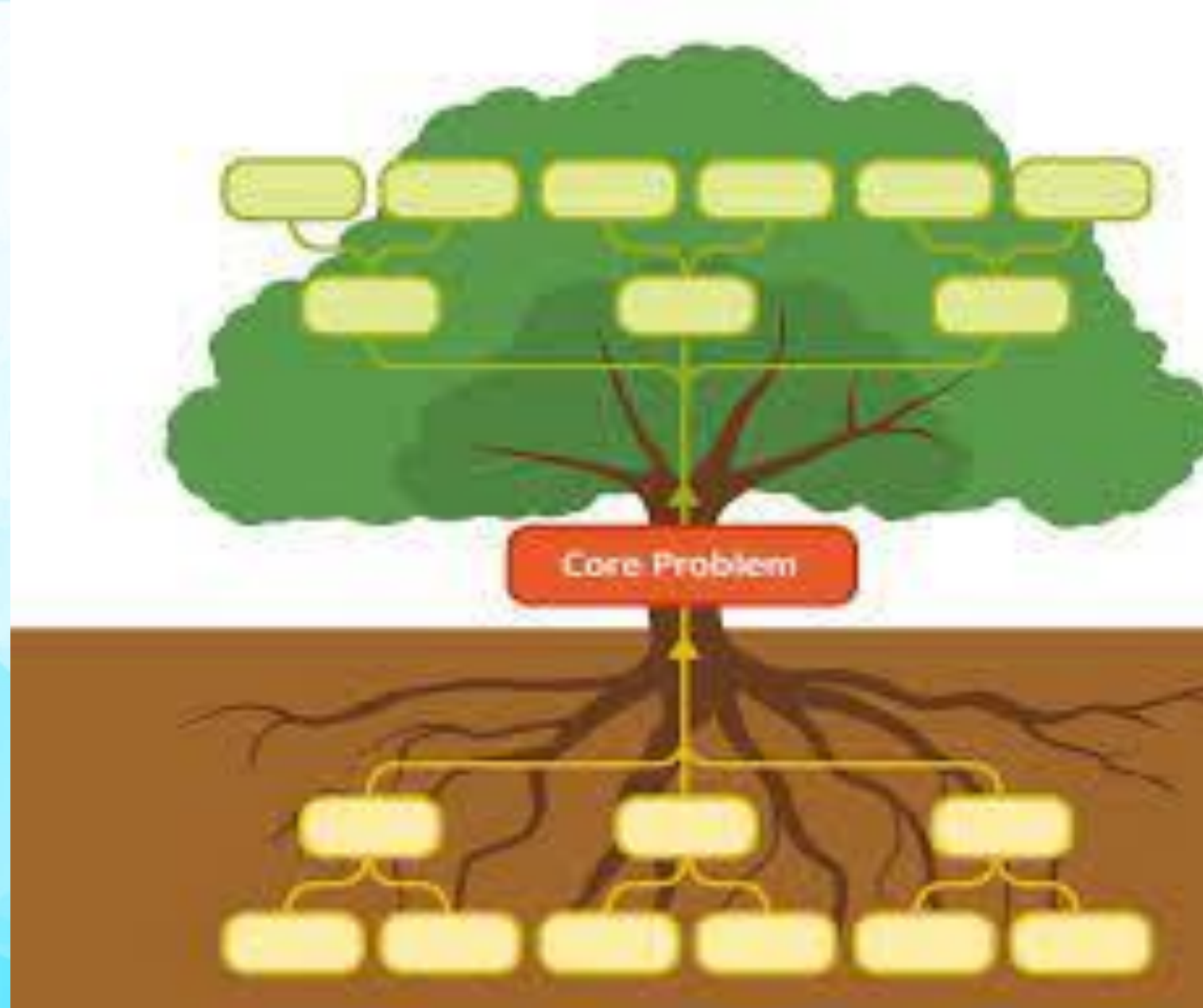
Preliminary thoughts on how to write a project proposal _ 2

➤ Before you begin writing, you should be able to answer the following questions.

- Why are you doing this project?
- What will you be doing?
- How will you be doing it?
- Who will be doing it?
- Where will it be done?
- How long will it take?
- How much will it cost?

The importance of the problem tree (s)

- ▶ Focus on the causes of the problem that you want to solve, in order to draw a roadmap on how to resolve it!



Key concepts and steps for writing proposals

- **Project Rationale---** or the 'project justification,' 'problem statement,' or 'project background' OR: Why are we writing this proposal??
- **Convince the Donor !!!**
- **State the problem as clearly and precisely as possible:**
 - Reflect the donor goals and guidelines.
 - Summarize relevant background information about the region, community, and resources available.
 - Include specific information regarding the focus area and beneficiaries, including input from the community.
 - Refer to research data, live examples, past projects, quotes, and media articles to build a case for support.
 - Explain the organizational strength and capacity in addressing this problem and achieving long-term impact.

Three levels: Outputs---Outcome--Impact

- ▶ **Outputs---** immediate products achieved soon after the completion an activity.

Example: In a training on human rights, the output might be “20 citizens trained in basic human rights concepts.”

- ▶ **Outcomes:** short/mid-term effects/changes/improvement of the immediate outputs.

Continuing the above example, the outcome might be: “the participants used their training to inform other community members about their human rights.”

- ▶ **Impact:** Long-term change that came about because of the project.

Example: the whole community is aware of human rights issues and in the next election the community largely voted against a leader with a history of human rights violations.

State the Outcomes and Goals (clearly), or vaguely....?

- Project **Outcomes** are the specific achievements which the project aims to complete.
- **Attention!** Objectives/Outcomes can and must be achieved by the project, unlike the project goal which is the aim of the project but not the requirement.
- Do not confuse them with activities.....
- Examples of project objectives:
 - Reduce by 25% the number of girls working in carpet factories in city X
 - Increase school attendance by 25% in city Y within one year
 - Increase the understanding of the risks of child labor among 50% of parents in county Z

Activities/Methodologies

➤ Can include:

- Capacity-building/ awareness raising
- Organizational development
- Research and development
- Advocacy
- Victim support
- Microfinance development
- Participatory infrastructure development

➤ **Note:** These are just examples..... You know best what can work in order to address the main problem !!!

Workplan

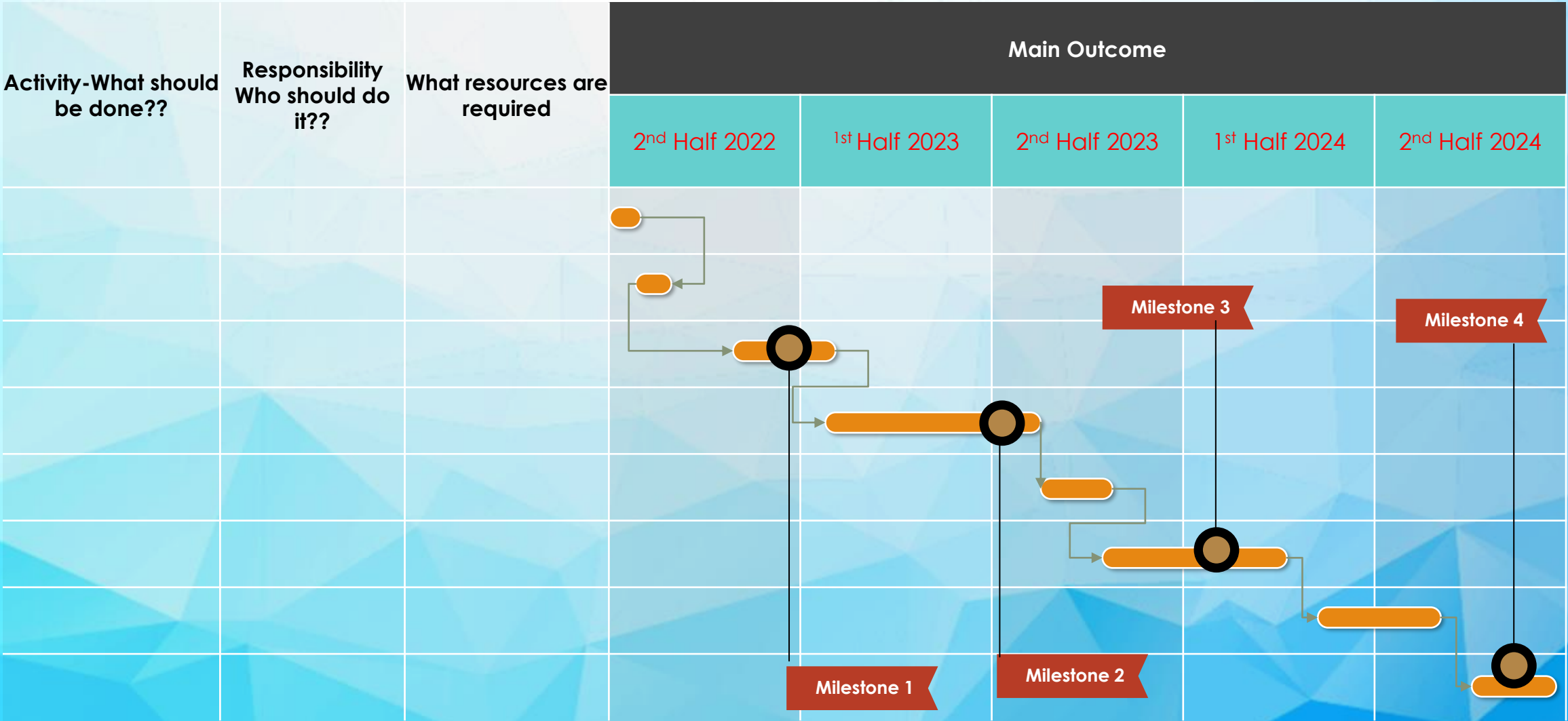
➤ Description of the sequence of activities in time.....

➤ **Be careful:** Strictly have to stick to the format provided in the Call for Proposal if it is given

Workplan Template-1st example

| Activity | Responsibility | Budget | Time/Estimated Completion Date |
|---|---|--------|--------------------------------|
| Identify schools for possible cooperation in the district | Project officer | xx \$ | 1 month/01.01.2022 |
| Outreach to the schools in the district | Project officer | xx \$ | 1 month/01.02.2022 |
| Organize teacher training in cooperation with the concerned government office | Project coordinator | xx \$ | 6 weeks/15.03.2022 |
| Implement teacher training in the selected schools | Project coordinator and project officer | xx \$ | 1 month/15.04.2022 |
| Evaluation of the training results | External consultant | xx \$ | 2 weeks/01.05.2022 |

Gantt Chart_Example 2



Tips and Tricks on writing a proposal

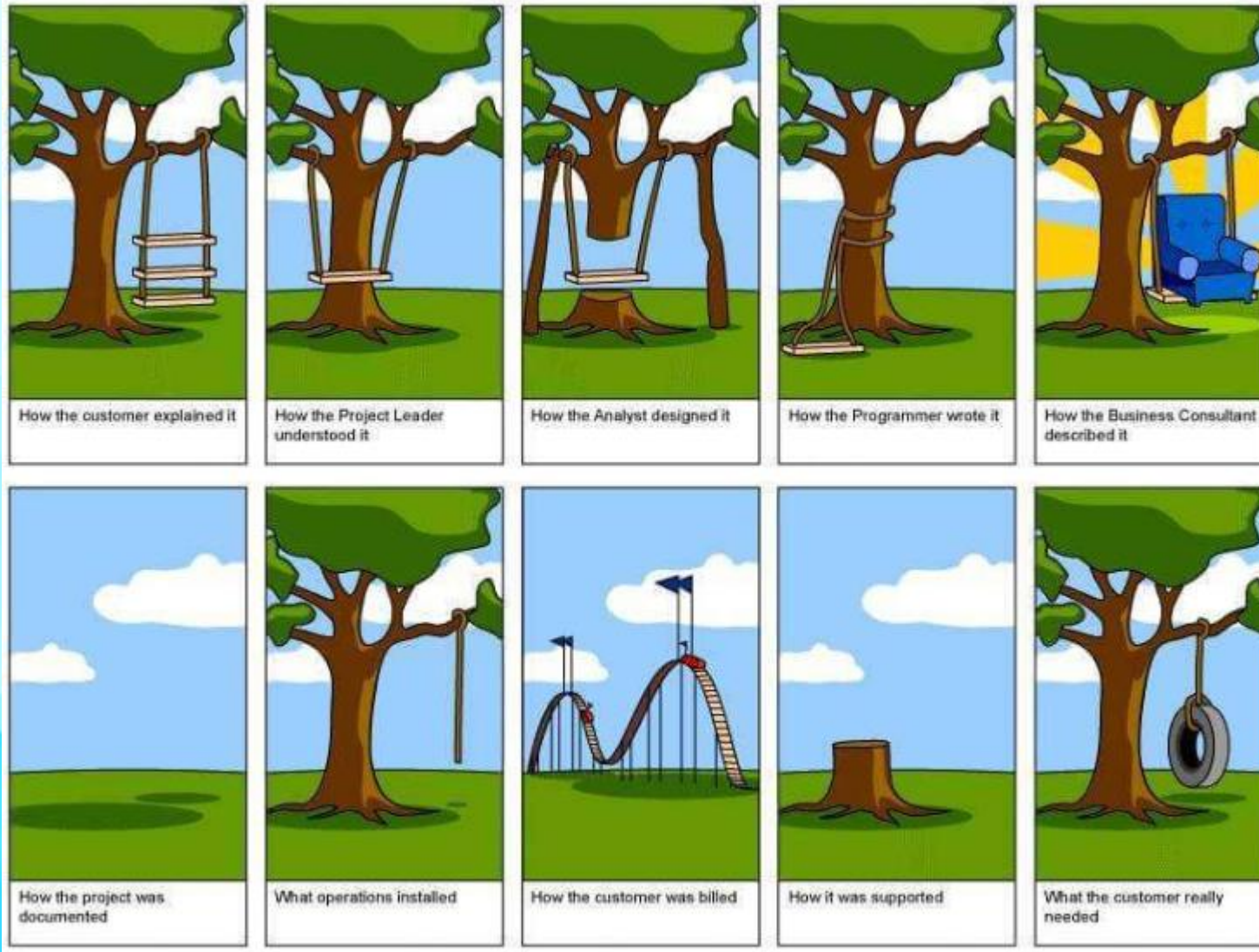


- Have great content
- Read and follow the guidelines
- Work on the proposal as a team
- Make sure you use the right terminology
- Use data and case studies to make your point
- Pay good attention to your project budget
- Use visuals, pictures, and graphics
- Have someone proofread your application
- Watch out for the format

Start thinking during the coffee break

- **Identify 1 or 2 Problems that you can include in the Problem Trees after the coffee break (It must be linked to cybersecurity/cyber development in your area/Ministry)**
- **Start thinking about Goals and Objectives of the projects that you will develop later**

MANAGING PROJECTS IS CHALLENGING!



This graphic serves as an illustration of just some of the many challenges that could threaten the success of development projects. Managing projects in the development sector is anything but simple. The operating environments are **complex**. The **challenges are numerous**. The project relationships are complicated. And, the cost of failure is high. **In short, there is a lot that could go wrong!**

To succeed, the project manager must proactively and decisively manage these challenges. Too often, failed projects are chalked up as the victims of circumstances that were "out of our control." While this explanation might be valid at times, too often it is used as an excuse and fails to acknowledge that risks could have been better anticipated, analyzed, and actively managed.

Initiating

Planning

Executing

Closing

Monitor & Control

Project management

| Project Phase | Description |
|------------------------------|--|
| 1. Initiating | Define the desired outcomes. Create a Business Case. Define the project scope. Get the project off to a good start. |
| 2. Planning | Assign the Project Core Team (PCT). Elaborate the project scope. Plan the work. |
| 3. Executing | Coordinate the execution of project plans. Produce deliverables. |
| 4. Closing | Coordinate formal acceptance of the project. Report on project performance. Capture Lessons Learned and post-project recommendations. Close the project administratively. |
| Monitor & Control | Oversee all project work and management activities over the duration of the project: monitor project performance, measure progress, manage changes, address risks and issues, identify corrective actions etc. |

Inexperienced project teams sometimes underestimate the importance of the work done in the initial project phases and start working on deliverables that are inadequately defined or planned. This results in the delivery of outputs, which are of poor quality and of little value to end-users. This is a common and costly mistake, which is often the root cause of overall project failure and the failure to realise the project's intended benefits

Closing

Executing

Planning

Initiating

Monitor & Control

Initiating----During this phase, the people involved formulate the project's objective(s), ensure the project's alignment to the organisation's strategic objectives, undertake some initial planning to get the project off to a good start, and put together the information required to gain approval to continue to the Planning Phase. The **main input** of this phase is a request to address **a need, problem or opportunity**.

Planning---- During the **Planning Phase**, the **project's objective** is developed into a specific and **workable plan ready** to be executed. The Project Work Plan specifies the project **scope** and appropriate **approach**, decides on **a schedule** for the **tasks** involved, estimates the necessary **resources** and develops the details of the project **plans**. The Work Plan can be updated.

Executing

The project team **produces** the project **deliverables (outputs)** as outlined in the Project Work Plan. This is typically the stage of the project lifecycle that **involves** the **most resources** and requires the most **monitoring**.

Monitoring and Control

Monitor & Control activities run **throughout the project's lifecycle** and all work is observed from the point of view of the Project Manager (PM).

Monitoring is about **measuring** ongoing **activities** and **assessing** project **performance against** project **plans**. **Controlling** is about **identifying** and **taking corrective action** to **address** deviations from plans and to address **issues** and **risks**.

Closing

The **finished deliverables** are officially **transferred** into control of the Project Owner (PO) and the project is administratively closed. Information on overall project performance and **Lessons Learned** is captured in the **Project-End Report**. The PM ensures that the deliverables produced are accepted, all project documents are correctly filed.

Why Projects Fail ??

- Disagreements about the desired/expected Result/Outcome
- Disagreements about HOW to achieve the desired/expected Result/Outcome
- Insufficient or inappropriate resources foreseen/allocated
- Insufficient time to complete the activities
- Inadequate budget to complete the project
- Poor communication
- Ill-defined roles

What is the **trick** to make it work??:

Three Cs: Conceptualize, Communicate, Collaborate !!!!

Immutable Laws of Project Management (Funny side of Project Management ☺))

- ▶ **LAW 1:** No major project is ever completed on time, within budget, with the same staff that started it, nor does the project do what it is supposed to do. It is highly unlikely that yours will be the first.
- ▶ **LAW 2:** One advantage of fuzzy project objectives is that they let you avoid embarrassment in estimating the corresponding costs.
- ▶ **LAW 3:** The effort required to correct a project that is off course increases geometrically with time. The longer you wait the harder it gets. If you wait until the project is completed, it's too late.
- ▶ **LAW 4:** The project purpose statement you wrote and understand will be seen differently by everyone else.
- ▶ **LAW 5:** Measurable benefits are real. Intangible benefits are not measurable, thus intangible benefits are not real.
- ▶ **LAW 6:** A carelessly planned project will take three times longer to complete than expected. A carefully planned project will only take twice as long.
- ▶ **LAW 7:** Project teams detest weekly progress reporting because it so vividly manifests their lack of progress.
- ▶ **LAW 8:** If the user does not believe in the system, a parallel system will be developed. Neither system will work very well.

The Logical Framework Approach----A key monitoring tool !!!

- What is it? ---->>>> An analytical process and set of resources that are used to support the process of monitoring and management.

| | Project description | Verifiable Indicators | Sources of Verification | Assumptions/Risks |
|------------|---|--|-------------------------|--|
| Outcome | Why the beneficiaries need the project | Qualitative or quantitative variables that measure performance | External/Internal | External factors that can affect but are beyond the control of the team. |
| Outputs | What will be achieved (products and services) | Nr of... % of ... Increased by... Reduced by... | | Think: "What could disrupt or affect the implementation where we cannot influence?" |
| Activities | What will the project and stakeholders do ? | Keep it simple and SMART !! | | High/Low Likelihood High/Low Impact Mitigation Measures-Risks |
| Inputs | Time, Staff, Funds, Equipment, Networking, Ideas... | | | Precondition: External factor that must be achieved in order to begin the activities |

Working Groups



- **Remember !**
- Each group should be composed from at least one representative of different institutions
- Each group shall receive an example of LFM from some other projects, please have a look at the example before start working on yours !

Practical exercise

Let's draft a simple project or more than one...!
But before that, let's divide in groups...

- Based on the previous templates-Logframe (Vertical aspect) and the Ghant Chart, draft a simple project concept by:
- 1) Identifying a particular **Problem** that you want to address
- 2) Describing the improved situation that you want to achieve (i.e. the **OUTCOME**)
- 3) Listing all **Inputs** (staff, funds, equipment, social networking) that will help you
- 4) Listing all the **Activities** (in a sequential order) that you may want to undertake to achieve the Outcome.
- Listing all **Outputs** (Deliverables) produced thanks to the activities: These Outputs must contribute to the Outcome!!
- Present your project in less than 3 minutes
- **Let's start !!**

Comments from other groups???

- ▶ What can be added/amended to the list of sub-activities?
- ▶ What is missing?
- ▶ And ultimately, can these tasks be completed within a reasonable timeline and the resources available?
- ▶ What are some of the external factors (out of our control) that can impede/hinder/slow the progress?

Agenda-Day 2

Monitoring a Project and Completing the Proposal

08:30-09:00 Registration and presentation of the objectives of 2nd day

09:00-10:00 -**Measuring Progress with Indicators**

10:00-10:15 Coffee Break

10:15-11:45--Group Exercise: **Populate the horizontal aspect of the LMFs**

11:45-12:00 Presentation of the indicators by the groups.

12:00-13:30 **Completing writing the proposals, comments, and discussions.**

13:30-14:30 Lunch

14:30-15:00 Cross feedback and Final Remarks



What is M&E?: A process of continual gathering of information and assessment of it in order to determine whether progress is being made towards Outcomes and Outputs, and to highlight whether there are any unintended (positive or negative) effects from a project and its activities.

Consider the following aspects when planning data collection: !!!

- **What** – the data to be collected, in what form, and for what purpose.
- **When** – the frequency of data collection and reporting.
- **Who** – the responsible persons, their responsibilities and capacities.
- **How** – methods/procedures for data collection, validation, analysis and reporting.
- **Where** – Data collection and processing, and the destinations for reported information.

Levels and Frequency of Monitoring

| Monitoring level | Frequency |
|---|--------------------|
| Which Activities are underway and what progress has been made? | Weekly |
| At what rate are means being used and cost incurred in relation to progress in implementation? | Monthly |
| Are the desired Outputs being achieved? | Quarterly |
| To what extent are Outputs furthering the Outcome? What changes in the project environment occur? Do the Assumptions hold true? | Six-month/Annually |

So, what is an Indicator, what is it supposed to do?

- ▶ To indicate
 - ▶ To illustrate
 - ▶ To show
 - ▶ To capture
 - ▶ To reveal
-
- ▶ Changes, Trends, Improvements, Progress, and Advancement

How should these indicators look like?

- ▶ Two sets of quality criteria for the Indicators:
- ▶ **SMART** (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound)
- ▶ **CREAM** (Clear (precise and unambiguous), Relevant (appropriate to the subject at hand), Economic (produce data at a reasonable cost), Adequate (able to provide sufficient basis to assess performance), and Monitorable (amenable to independent validation)).

What should these indicators measure or illustrate?

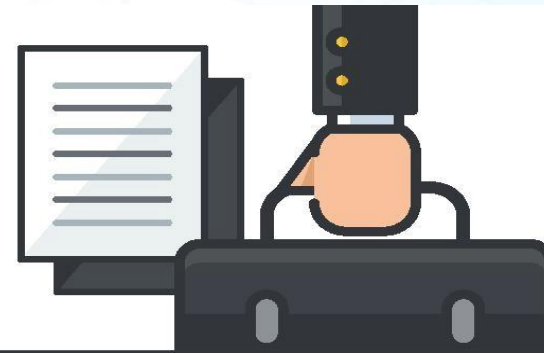
Outcome vs. Outputs

- **Outcome level-(or What you Achieve):** An OUTCOME INDICATOR is a specific, observable, and measurable characteristic or change that will represent achievement of the outcome. It illustrates the potential progress made by the targeted institutions in enhancing cyber security, and in achieving the goals of the Strategy.

- **Outputs/Activity level-(or What you Do and you Produce):**

Output indicators describe the delivery of products by the institutions tasked to undertake activities in the frame of the Strategy.

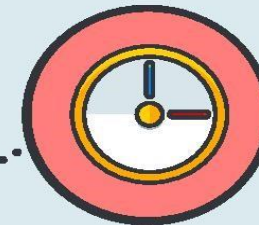
Checklist for developing INDICATORS



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Will you be able to collect data for this indicator? If yes, where will you get this information?



How often would you have to collect data for the indicator?



What are the costs (financial and human resources, e.g. staff time) associated with collecting data for the indicator?



Would this indicator require baseline data? If yes, How will you collect it? Is the information readily available?



Do the persons/institutions that would be required to furnish data for the indicator actually have the capacity (or desire) to do so?

Group Exercise: Populate the horizontal aspect of the LFM

- ▶ For each of the proposal, each group should identify indicators for the LFM, including baseline, targets, assumptions and risks.
- ▶ It is advisable to develop risks mitigation measures for each of the proposals.
- ▶ Remember: As there is a big difference between Outcomes and Outputs, so is between Indicators at the Outcome level and Indicators at the Output level !

The most important part.....WRITE IT!

- Have a look at the template of Description of Action (mainly used by EC) before start writing
- Write the narrative of the proposal (at least 2-3 paragraphs for each section)..... Starting by:
- The rationale
- Description of the Goal, Outcome, and Outputs
- Description of the Methodology and Activities

Remember the tips

- Have great content
- Work on the proposal as a team
- Make sure you use the right terminology
- Use data and case studies to make your point
- Pay good attention to your project budget
- Use visuals, pictures, and graphics
- Have someone proofread your application

Present, Comment, and Discuss

- ▶ Provide constructive criticism... and remember
- ▶ It is never perfect..... 😊)