Brief Introduction

To Completing the Logframe Matrix

Introduction

Formulating a project plan and completing the logical framework matrix requires some understanding of the logical framework approach to project planning. This is an method used within a project management methodology – Project Cycle Management. To understand logframe we need to realise that the *project* is the mechanism of support, and that the logframe plan is a method to constructing a project plan.

What is a Project?

The Project Management Institute defines a project as "a temporary endeavour undertaken to create a unique product or service. *Temporary* means that every project has a definite end. *Unique* means that the product or service is different in some distinguishing way from all similar products or services."

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 in the project

The term "***project***" could therefore be taken to mean a group of activities undertaken to produce a Project Purpose in a fixed time frame. In development terms a "***programme***" is taken to mean a series of projects whose objectives together contribute to a common Overall Objective, at sector, country or even multi-country level.

Steps before we Compile the Project Plan

There are a number of important steps of *analysis* in logframe before we begin to plan the project. These steps allow us to plan our projects better, and are required in project applicaitons:

1. Start off by defining a project concept – an idea of what project you intend to implement.

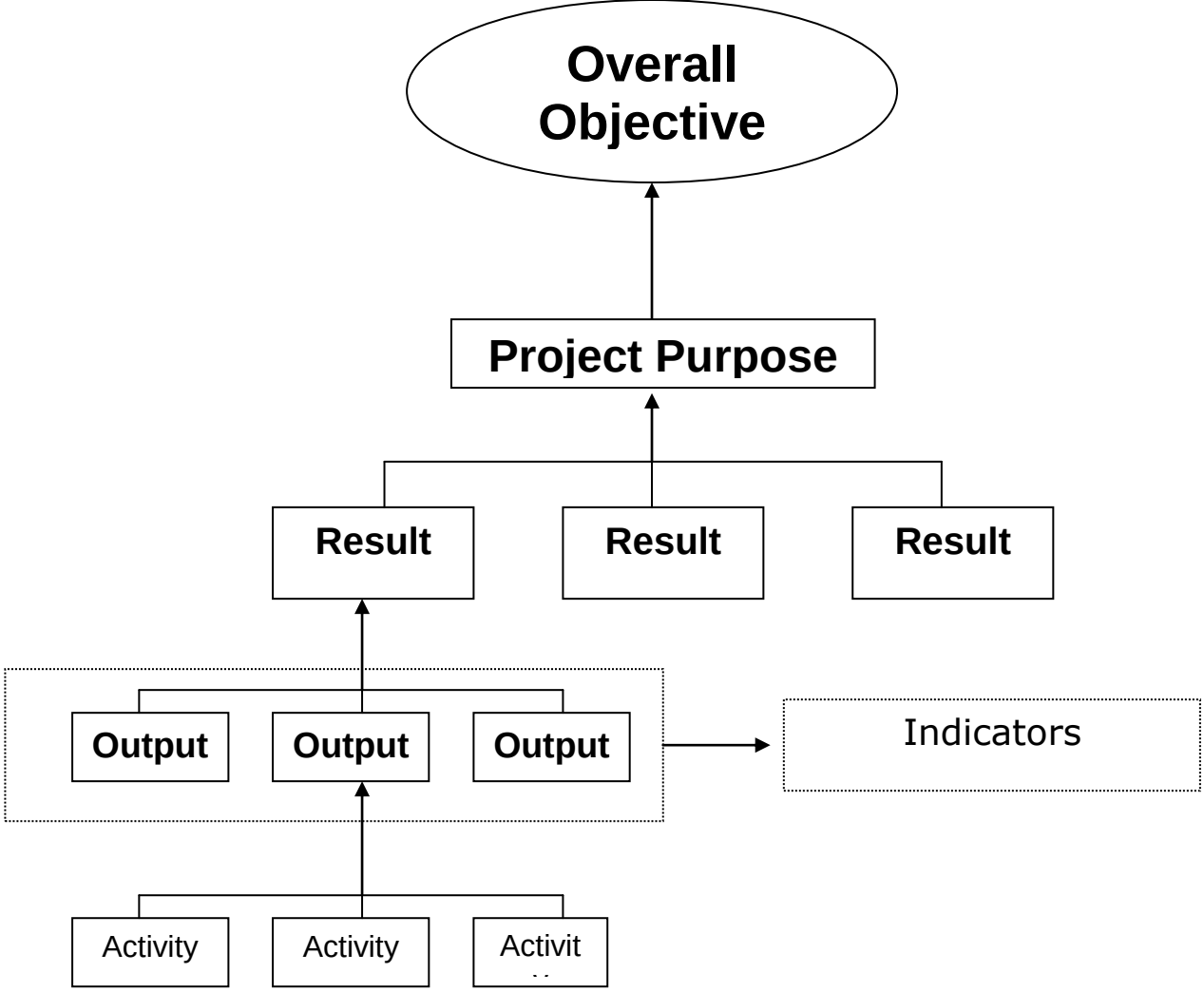
2. Decide who the target group for the project will be. The target group should be defined as the group who will directly receive benefits and participate in the project. A broader or *final* beneficiary group can also be defined – those that will also benefit if the target group benefits. The final beneficiary group is likely to be the broader community within which the target group is located.

3. Define the problems facing the target group in their situation. Ask the question: what is the *focal* problem (the main problem) facing the target group, and what causes this problem (causal problems). Finally decide which problem/s the project will address.

These steps allow us to begin to plan our project.

Planning according to the LogFrame Approach

The logical framework approach follows a hierarchical results oriented planning structure and methodology which focuses all project planning elements on the achievement of one project purpose. Represented graphically the logframe approach is as follows.



The Project Matrix

The project planning elements in LFA are recorded and presented according to a matrix format. This format is called the Project Matrix (PM), or Project Planning Matrix (PPM), and allows for a complete project to be represented in a clear and related manner. The PPM allows for ease of understanding and sets the basis for Project Cycle Management to occur.

The logical framework matrix is a way of presenting the substance of an intervention in a comprehensive form. The matrix has four columns and four rows:

- The *vertical logic* (or *intervention logic*) identifies what the project intends to do, clarifies the causal relationships and specifies the important assumptions and risks beyond the project manager's control.

- The *horizontal logic* relates to the measurement of the effects of, and resources used by the project through the specification of key indicators, and the sources where they will be verified.

The PPM contains four key elements of the Project:

- The Objectives of the Project
- The project Activities and Inputs
- The Assumptions made for the project
- The Indicators required to monitor the Project

The PPM Objectives

The first column of the PPM is called the intervention logic. This refers to the objectives and activities for the Project. The objectives of the PPM are represented at different levels. These can be described as:

Overall Objective:

This is a general development objective that refers to the long term benefits to an entire population, but is outside of the Project control, and is what the Project will contribute to. Normally the overall objective relates and links to a national objective.

Project Purpose:

This refers to what the specific objective of the project is, and describes the changed situation the Project should result in if it achieves its results. The Project Purpose should define the sustainable benefits for the target group/s. The purpose should reflect either a change in the target group's behaviour, or the benefits that will accrue to them. *There is only one project purpose.*

Results:

The results are a statement of the outcome, or the effects of the activities undertaken. If all of Results are achieved, we would expect that the Project Purpose is achieved as a consequence. Although they are numbered, Results are defined according to logical areas and not sequential (they do not have to happen in order), Results are within the control of the Project - they are what the Project guarantees it can deliver. They describe the effect of the completion of the activities.

The objectives in LFA are stated as outcomes - that is as if they have already happened. We therefore state at the beginning of the project what our expected situation is at the end of the Project!

Activities and Means

The activities and inputs of a Project describe what is to be done, and what is needed to do this.

Activities

These are the sequential steps necessary to achieve a result. They are the tasks to be carried out according to each result. Each activity needs to be specific and detailed to allow for complete clarity as to what is to be done, and to allow for budgeting. The activities must be numbered in sequence according to the relevant result!

Means

These are the necessary means to undertake the activities. They include personnel, materials, and infrastructure. They describe the resources required for the successful implementation of the project activities. They are also basically a list of items that will need to be budgeted for.

Cost

This states the overall cost of the project, and the expected sources. It is *not* a detailed budget!

Defining Assumptions

For the purpose of Project planning, it is essential that the external context is given consideration in the plan. These key considerations are in the form of *assumptions*. This will allow for recognition of why a project has not succeeded due to factors outside its control.

The assumptions made in the Project design must be recorded. These are the conditions that:

- Are outside of the Project's control; and,

- Must exist or take place for the Project to be successful.

In order to define which assumptions are to be included, first determine assumptions you make for each level of the objectives in the PPM. These may include:

- The actions of certain groups, or Project stakeholders
- Certain economic or social conditions, such as the absence of conflict
- Political conditions, such as stability
- Conditions of climate

Project Indicators and Means of Verification

Indicators are important monitoring mechanisms for assessing the progress of a plan. They allow for ongoing measurement with the Project Cycle. They are how the performance standard to be reached will be measured.

There are two types of indicators:

Output indicators
These measure the "products" produced - number of people trained, number of participants, number of manuals distributed etc
Impact indicators
These measure actual change – change in attitude, practice, policy

Indicators must also have a means of verification (MoV). The MoV is the source of data that serves as the "proof" for the indicator. In many cases this may be documents, or statistics.

A useful guide to determining indicators is to use four guiding criteria:

- What is the *quantity* we are assessing?
- What is the *quality* we are expecting?
- What is the *timeframe* we expect it in?
- What is the *location* it will occur in?

Try to keep your indicators specific, achievable, realistic, and directly attributable to the Project.

THE PROJECT PLANNING MATRIX

Intervention Logic	Indicators	Means of Verification	Assumptions
Overall Objective Wider than the project – refers to long term change Project will contribute to this objective Outside of Project control	Monitoring mechanisms for assessing the progress of a plan	Data source for verifying indicators Must exist or be generated by project, and must be accessible	Are outside of the Project's control; and, must exist or take place for the Project to be successful
Project Purpose Intended effects / benefits of the project target group Contributes to overall objective, but outside of Project control			
Results Development effect of activities Sum achievement should lead to project purpose Not sequential – each a separate result			
Activities Sequential steps of activities arranged according to results Tasks to be completed to achieve results	**Means** Materials, personnel, services needed to undertake activities and achieve results	**Cost** Overall project cost	**Pre-Conditions** Actions or situation required for the successful implementation of activities