

I.M. PACT – Introducing Methodology in Education for  
Democratic Citizenship Initiatives of the Stability Pact

# **PARTICIPATORY PROJECT PLANNING**

**Training Manual**

**Dukagjin Pupovci**

**Prishtina, October 2004**

## Content

1. What is a project? .....	3
2. Players and perspectives .....	3
3. Responsibility .....	4
4. Using the Logical Framework Approach .....	5
5. The LFA Project Planning Workshop .....	6
5.1. Problem diagnosis .....	6
5.2. Problem trees and objective trees .....	9
5.3. The Logical Framework Matrix .....	12
5.4. The Project Implementation Plan.....	17
5.5. Risk Analysis .....	19
6. Monitoring .....	20
6.1. What is monitoring? .....	20
6.2. Some Basic Steps .....	20
6.3. Types of monitoring .....	21

## **1. What is a project?**

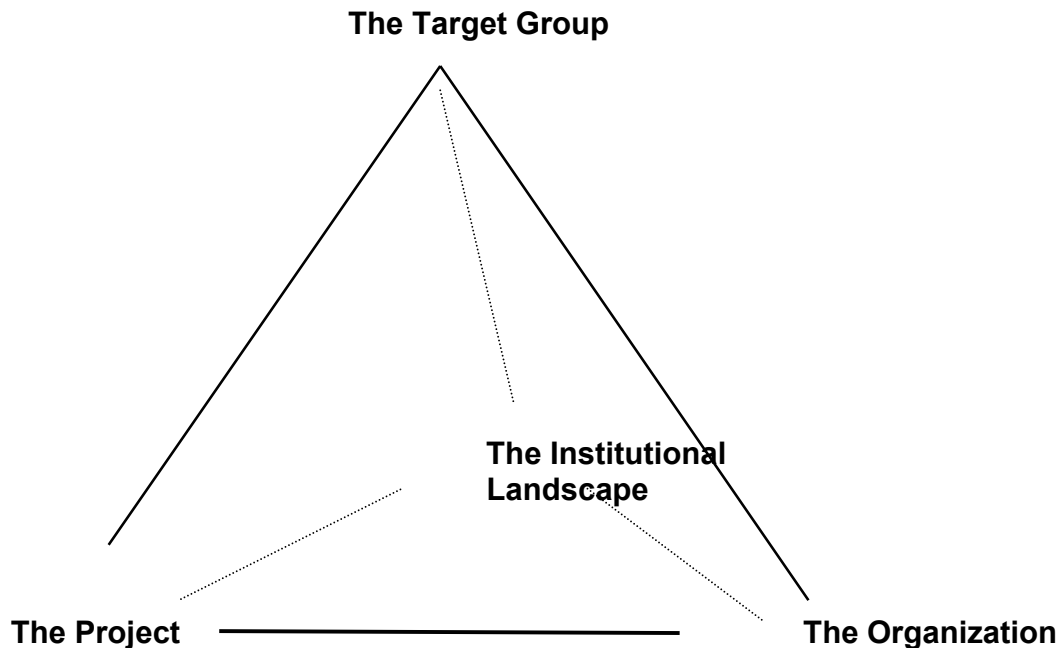
A project includes specific activities to be carried out by responsible persons to produce a particular output. The project has a beginning time and an ending time. Project is very different from routine jobs where the worker does the same type of work every day with little changes. The project produces concrete results that can be seen or verified.

In a school context, building construction is a project which includes many activities such as locating the site, designing, procuring materials, building foundation, walls, roof, electrical fitting, inspection, supervision, and a long list of other activities. In the end we have a concrete result as a house or a school or any other building of good quality.

Making teaching aids for a particular subject for a particular grade is also a project. Here also activities include design, materials used, and the way to make teaching aids, checking and testing, and other activities. In the end, we have a teaching aid of good quality ready for use for teaching and learning.

## **2. Players and perspectives**

Any project can be and is looked at from the perspectives of the different players: the perspective of the project itself, the perspective of the organization that runs the project (e.g. a school), the perspective of the target group (e.g. pupils and teachers), and the perspective of all the other organizations that are affected by or have some influence over the project in one way or another. These four perspectives can be represented by a three-dimensional geometric figure, a tetragon. Using this image makes one aware that this “whole” (comprising the project, the organization, the target group, and the organizational landscape) looks different when viewed from each of its four “corners”.



**The project** itself is situated within an organization and looks at “the world” with the aim of enlisting resources in order to achieve a clearly stated goal. The resources come not only from within the organization but also from other parts of the outside world, from other organizations, as well as from the target group itself. All the project’s activities use these resources in order to achieve measurable results in one particular segment of the outside world. The most relevant aspect of this segment is called the **target group**. To the extent that the project provides a particular service, the target group is comprised of the people who should benefit directly from this service. They are the *users* of the project. It is important to be clear about this distinction: the interests of the one who gives the money can be quite different from the interests of those who should benefit directly from the services. The project needs to satisfy both interests without confounding them.

To some extent, the project also needs to take into account the interests of other players and organizations with whom some form of collaboration is necessary in order to satisfy the target group, as well as organizations that provide resources or contractual services, social groups interacting with the target group and affected by any change in the target group, and organizations and institutions active in the same field or competing with the project for the same financial or other resources. This reveals the importance of analysing the **organizational landscape** and how the project, its organization, and the target groups are seen from the different perspectives present within the organizational landscape. This landscape is composed of different organizations, institutions, and social groups, each of which has its own particular perspective.

### 3. Responsibility

All projects need to be planned. The project plan has to be thought out well before starting the work. It needs a lot of information, such as agreement by the target group and those who provide funding. The plan should be drawn up together by responsible persons. “Planning

together” or “participatory planning” makes sure everybody related with work understood and together agreed on what to do. In this way, different (and often conflicting) viewpoints can be integrated into a plan that displays greater logical coherence; by making possible disagreements transparent, they become resources for a negotiated agreement that incorporates them all. Thus, there will be less friction between the different groups once implementation of the project starts. Along with greater logical coherence, this also entails a more rational use of available resources, leading to greater overall productivity.

The old way is one-person plans the project and another group or department implements the project. This takes a lot of time, creates misunderstandings, generates poor relationship, and, usually, results in implementation problems. Consensus of the planning group on various issues that arise may not be easy. But when there is a consensus, the result is a higher quality project with better implementation plan.

#### **4. Using the Logical Framework Approach**

The Logical Framework Approach (LFA) was originally developed in early 1970's in order to assist the planning, management and evaluation of development projects. Since then, the approach has been taken up by a number of agencies, which use it in their development activities. The LFA is “ a set of interlocking concepts which must be used together in a dynamic fashion to come up with a well-designed project that can be objectively described and evaluated.” The LFA provides a structure, which will allow project planners and evaluators to specify the components of their activities and identify all the logical linkages between a set of means and a set of structures described for analytical purpose.

A group of planners can use the LFA to plan the project. This is usually done in a 2 days workshop which brings together a team of individuals who represent different areas related to the project, including decision makers, those who will implement the project and the beneficiaries of the project.

The LFA workshop is a planning activity and not a problem solving activity. It is to facilitate joint planning on the basis of common and agreed upon interests. It is not designed for resolving conflicts, but resolution of conflicts might easily become a part of an LFA workshop. In such a workshop, good and independent facilitation is of key importance. As experienced people have written, “Facilitation is both an art and a craft.” This means that there are some rules that can be clearly formulated and laid down, but their proper application requires skills in observation and interaction that can only be acquired through constant practice and through sharing of experiences with other facilitators.

The role of the facilitator is to make it easier for a group of people to work together to achieve a collaborative result, a result that draws on the experience, knowledge, reasoning capacity, and creativity of all participants. It is a result, therefore, that is the unique outcome of the process of collaborative group, work that could not have been obtained through any other method. Both the outcome and the process are important: if the group dynamics do not lead to an open and trusting atmosphere, the result will most likely be a project a lower quality. Alternatively, if the outcome of this collaborative group endeavour is of low quality in the eyes of the participants, the value of even an enjoyable and lively process of discussion and exchange of views will be diminished. For the facilitator, it is good to keep in mind that very often the process itself produces an important additional outcome: it changes the participants' relationships to each other, and this may have a more lasting effect than the more visible

result of a good plan or report. These changes in relationship concern both changes in perception and the mutual building of trust, two items that are otherwise difficult to obtain.

To summarize:

- the project planning should take place at the project area,
- the project planning should include representatives of all involved parties,
- the project planning should be facilitated in a neutral way.

## 5. The LFA Project Planning Workshop

This part of the manual is intended as a guide through all the individual steps of the LFA planning workshops in order to help planning groups successfully accomplish their task. A simple planning example is used to describe certain steps in a more detailed way.

**Example:** Representatives of six NGOs from six different countries in South-Eastern Europe got together to discuss the possibility for launching a joint project which aims to help young people in their hometowns to participate in public policy making. Initial discussion shows that they share common problems, mainly related to skills, knowledge and motivation of young people to participate this process.

The representatives agree to organize a planning workshop for this project. They also appoint a facilitator of the workshop.

Usually, a LFA planning workshop consists of the following steps:

- Problem diagnosis,
- Problem trees
- Objective (success) trees
- Developing the objectives of the intervention
- Developing activities of the intervention
- Developing success indicators
- Risk analysis

In certain cases it is necessary to carry out a comprehensive need analysis before the start of the workshop, but this is beyond our topic.

### 5.1. Problem diagnosis

The benefit of this exercise is to gather many different perspectives of problems related to the project idea, pronounced by the participants, even if, sometimes, these problems are more subjective than objective. Also, it is necessary to have people with competent views on the situation the group is dealing with, although it is almost impossible to avoid "less competent opinions".

The problem diagnostics has several clear stages:

- a) Presentation of the project's situation
- b) Identification of (all) individual problems

- c) Display of *all* problems
- d) Identification of (all) additional problems
- e) Display of the additional set of problems
- f) Organization of problems into clusters or “clouds.”

**a) Presentation of the project’s situation.**– The problem diagnosis begins with focussing the group’s attention around a core question derived from the original project idea, a question that will usually start with “What are the problems people/you encounter when...” or “What are the problems with respect to...,” followed by the original project idea. In a well-prepared workshop, the project team may also brief participants about the situation that the project is going to address. Its value lies in providing a common ground for the group’s effort to analyse the situation and to design a well-structured project to address this situation. It should *not* restrict the participants’ thinking. The essence of the problem identification is its *openness*: an idea that at first looks like a trivial, minor, or peripheral problem may later reveal itself as a core problem.

**b) Identification of (all) individual problems.**– After this presentation (if it is part of the planning workshop), the core question is repeated and the participants are asked to write down the problems they see individually. Each participant is provided with a marker and at least ten cards or A5 sheets of paper and is asked to write down all problems he or she can think of, one idea per one sheet of paper. The timing depends on the participants, of course, but they should not be rushed into finishing quickly. On the contrary, the quality of the planning process depends very much on the clarity of the formulation of the problems that the project is designed to address. Problems should be stated in short phrases of roughly eight to ten words, not in single words. For the same reason, there should be no limitation on the number of problems an individual participant submits to the group; the one problem not mentioned because of rush, a seeming lack of paper, or undue shyness might turn out to be crucial for the success of the project at a later stage.

**Example:** The facilitator formulated the following question: *What are the problems with respect participation of citizens in policy-making.*

He got many different answers, each of them written as a problem in a separate card. Here are some of them:

*Lack of interest about future perspective of the country.*

*Citizens participation acceptable only at the level of civil society.*

*There is no consultancy at local level.*

*Citizens are not participating in developing public policies.*

*Corruption in public service.*

*Lack of transparency in developing public policies.*

...

**c) Display of all problems.**– All the papers are collected by the facilitator with the writing facing the floor. Nobody, not even the facilitator, should be able to read the problem

formulation, because everyone has the right to name any problem deemed relevant, irrespective of their rank and position, and irrespective of whether any of the other participants may feel flattered or hurt by this particular problem statement. Participants may not trust that they have this right unless the strict anonymity of the problem statements is respected. At the same time, it must be ensured that no problem is given prominence simply because it has been forwarded by a high-ranking participant. Problems should be considered solely according to their intrinsic value and logic, and the facilitator's task is to ensure this by guaranteeing anonymity. After the collection of all individual papers, the facilitator reads out each problem statement to the whole group and pins it to the pin-board or the wall. At this stage, the order of the problems is not important, and it is not important if the same statement comes up more than once. Each individual statement is treated equally, and all are given equal prominence on the display area.

**d) Identification of (all) additional problems.**— During this exercise in familiarisation, participants went through a thinking process that is likely to have led to additional ideas about problems. Therefore, participants are asked to go through a second round of writing down these additional problem statements, which is conducted in the same fashion as in the first round. They are collected in the same manner (i.e., as anonymously as possible), although this can be more difficult the second time, as there may be few additional contributions.

**e) Display of the additional set of problems.**— The additional problems are then displayed in a similar manner: they are read out loud, and added to the problem statements that are already there.

This completes the first major phase, resulting in a complete listing of all relevant problems. The group can now move to the second major phase, the grouping of problems into “clouds.”

**f) Organization of problems into clusters or “clouds”.**— Ultimately, the purpose of the problem diagnosis is to define a clear hierarchy of goals and objectives. Yet, these goals and objectives should address problems that are present in the situation. These problems have simply been identified and displayed in the previous stage of the problem diagnostics. They have not yet been related to each other. This is the purpose of the “problem clouds”, which are delineated at this stage of the problem diagnosis. These clouds organize *all* individual problems into (more or less) appropriate groups with specific titles. As the participants have already familiarised themselves with the problems, they can be expected to have formed some idea of possible groupings of problems. The facilitator therefore prepares papers that will contain the headings of the "clouds" identified by participants, and then initiates a discussion aimed at identifying these "clouds". The facilitator should also take care not to allow too many problem clouds to develop. An important problem cloud is the so-called “treasure box”, which represents the site for all ideas whose place or value in the overall context is not immediately clear.

The exercise continues until *all* problem statements have been sorted either into one of the problem clouds or into the “treasure box”. The facilitator always has to find a balance between taking care of the quality of the process (which depends on the level of alertness of the participants) and following the demands of the time schedule, which may necessitate some “pushing.” Problems can still be rearranged at a later stage (when entire “clouds” may merge or be separated from other clouds), when their relationship is discussed explicitly.

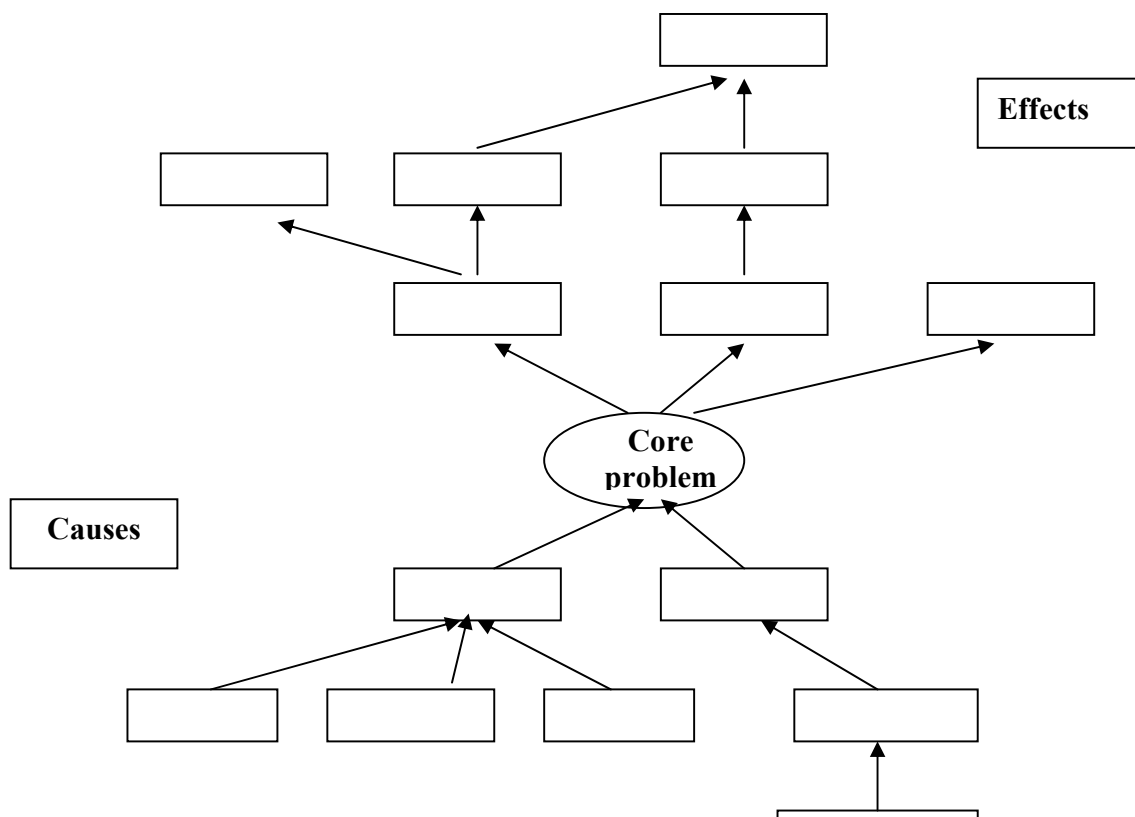
There are two common difficulties that are experienced during problem identification and analysis: inadequate problem specification and the statement of “absent solutions”:

- Inadequate problem specification occurs when a problem is specified in insufficient detail so that it does not communicate the true nature of the problem. Statements like "Poor performance" need to be broken down so that we understand what the problem is, and can therefore analyze the underlying causes – for example performance problem in a school may include low capacity to apply modern teaching methodologies, failure to establish regular communication with parents, and so on. Getting the level of detail right is a matter of judgment on the part of the workshop facilitator and the participants, and it also depends on the scope and the nature of the project.
- Absent solutions are problem statements that do not describe the current negative situation, but describe the absence of a desired situation. For example, "Lack of trained teachers" does not describe the specific problem (staff have insufficient or inappropriate skills), and risks biasing the intervention towards the absent solution ("training") when in fact it might an issue of recruitment or personnel management.

However, in real life, it is not always possible to avoid those difficulties. People often formulate problems containing inadequate specification and/or absent solutions, and even statements that are not problems at all– for example: Management, Teachers, etc. Whenever possible such situations should be handled in a way that contributes to the quality of problem analysis. One strategy is to try to clarify and even reformulate "inadequate statements" during this phase of the planning workshop, though it could be done in the next phase, as well.

## 5.2 Problem trees and objective trees

**The problem tree.**– Once the group has decided on the feasibility of constructing problem trees from the existing “clouds,” the first step is to identify the central or “core” problem for each of the clouds (only in exceptional cases will it be possible to find a “core problem” that is present in all problem clouds and thus construct only one problem tree). This problem is considered to be the “trunk” of the problem tree. The group is then invited to discuss all the other problems in their relationship to this core problem. In other words, is a particular problem a *cause* or an *effect* of the core problem? Continuing with the graphical representation of a tree, is a particular problem one of the “roots” leading to the trunk, or is it rather one of the branches growing out of that trunk?

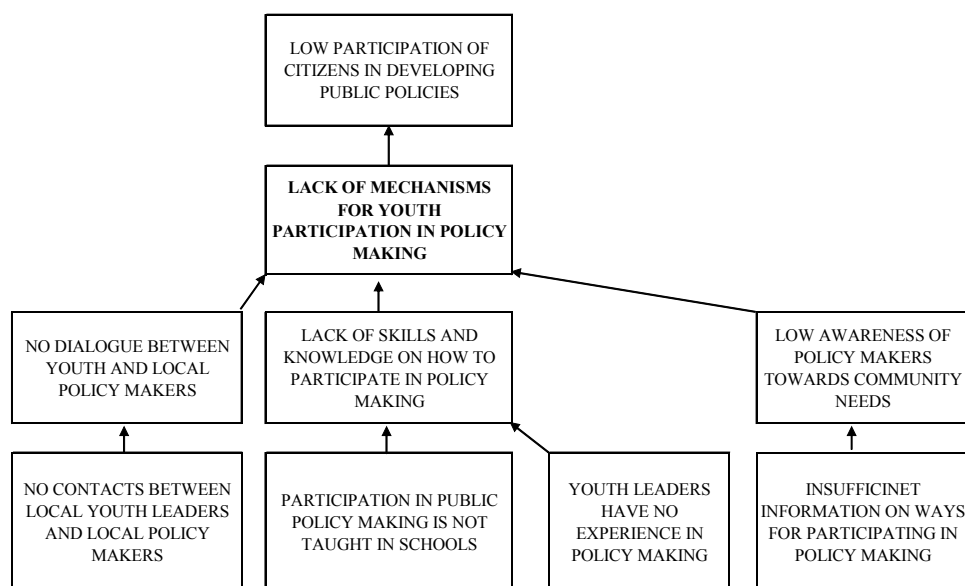


The figure above shows how such a problem tree *might* look: neither the number of levels above or below the core problem, nor the number of forks should be taken as a guide, as this strictly represents the field of problems as already visualised in the problem “cloud.” It is the relationships between these problems that determine the necessary number of layers and forks. The “tree” is intended to represent as complete as possible a representation of all cause-and-effect relationships present within this field of problems, as complete as the participants present can produce on the basis of the information and perspectives available.

The tree is physically constructed from the problem statements already displayed on the wall. The papers are taken from their present place in one of the clouds and rearranged according to the logic of the tree on a blank area of the wall or pin board. Participants should not, however, be discouraged if they find it difficult to design a “complete” problem tree. It is often discovered that there are good arguments for considering a specific problem a “cause” (and thus a “root”) of another problem, while there are equally good arguments for considering it an “effect” (and thus a “branch”). In such a case, the facilitator might remind the participants that bringing to light these differing perspectives and the reasons for them is more important than satisfying the formal requirement of constructing a consistent problem tree, since the essence of an LFA planning workshop is to create an atmosphere for collectively considering the varying perspectives of different stakeholders *before* the project actually starts. If the dispute continues into the definition of goals and objectives, it could be useful to ask if any of these divergent views are linked to explicit or implicit interests of one or more of the stakeholder groups.

This may lead to the uncovering of a real conflict of interests, something that only too naturally develops whenever different groups with different interests participate in a single project or process. Again, it is always preferable for a project to be aware of such conflicting interests from the start, rather than be surprised, and possibly be ruined, by them later. Many conflicts can, however, be solved by the participants themselves, who can negotiate to what extent conflicting interests will be taken care of explicitly in the formulation of the goals and objectives.

**Example:**



**The objectives tree.**— While problem analysis presents negative aspects of an existing situation, analysis of objectives presents the positive aspects of a desired future situation. This involves reformulation of problems into objectives. The objective tree can therefore be conceptualized as the positive mirror image of the problem tree, and the *cause-and-effect* relationships become *means-to-end* relationships.

The transformation of the cause-and-effect relationships of the problem tree into a means-ends relationship should not be a mechanical exercise. While it is possible to mechanically transform the “problem tree” into an “objectives tree,” this rarely does justice to the complexity of situations or to the collective intelligence of the group of stakeholders present during a planning workshop. Neither is this kind of mechanical exercise helpful for the later stage of defining the four-level hierarchy (*activities, results, project purpose, and overall goal*) required by the logical framework matrix, unless the problem tree itself already fits the four levels.

It is important, though, to find clear objectives that address each of the “core problems” in the previous exercise. These objectives should describe in a clear one-sentence statement a situation in which the respective core problem is no longer present or at least considerably reduced. Under normal circumstances, these objectives will become *results* in the logframe matrix, unless the group decides that one of these objectives is important enough to merit a complete project and therefore translates into a *project purpose*. Alternatively, it may turn out that the solution to the core problem necessitates the achievement of several objectives.

It is equally important to find enough common ground to be able to define a unifying *project purpose*, one towards the achievement of which *all* the project’s energies are geared and which therefore provides the major yardstick for measuring its success when it comes to evaluating the project. The group must take care to see a clear *means-ends* relationship between the *results* defined earlier and the *project purpose*, the logic being that once the *results* are delivered, the *project purpose* will be achieved.

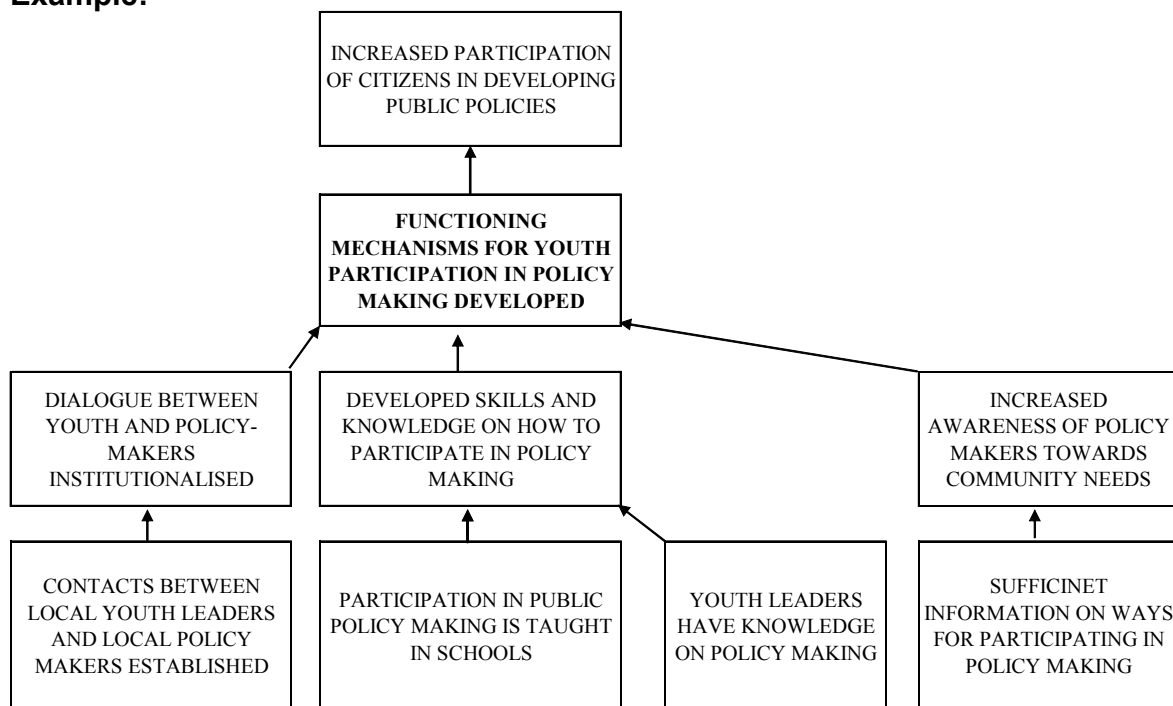
The existing problem tree is useful for thinking about the preconditions for achieving both the *project purpose* and the *results*. Once the “root problems” have been tackled successfully in

reality, the problems caused by them which appear higher up in the problem tree) should also have been resolved.

This always requires thinking about *how* these problems can be tackled. In other words, the group must specify the kinds of *activities* a project can undertake either to address one of the stated problems explicitly or to contribute to the achievement of the stated objectives in a more indirect fashion. At later stages of the project, in the implementation phase, it is through these *activities* that the project interacts with the outside world.

Presently, the planning group must also define a more general (but still “measurable”) *overall objective*, one that indicates to which broader social, educational, political, or other goals the project (with its limited resources) will only make a contribution. Under normal circumstances, the problems in the upper (“effects”) half of the problem tree will help the participants to identify such a goal. It is this *overall goal* that provides the link between the more general strategy of the organization running the present project and this particular project.

**Example:**



**5.3. The Logical Framework Matrix**

Once the diagnostic stage has successfully concluded with the development of goals and objectives, the use of the logframe matrix ensures a coherent and transparent plan that already incorporates indicators for monitoring and evaluating, and takes the external environment of the project into account as well. The matrix itself can be seen as a convenient visualisation of the internal structure of the project. The logframe matrix is comprised of four rows and four columns. These four columns present the *intervention logic*, the *objectively verifiable indicators*, the *sources of verification*, and the *assumptions behind the intervention logic* on all four levels of the hierarchy of aims, as defined in the vertical axis.

	Intervention Logic	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions
Overall Goal				
Project Purpose				
Results				
Activities	Activity 1 Activity 2 ... Activity N	Means	Costs	

The first column contains the **intervention logic** of the project. It shows a hierarchy of aims and how they follow clear cause-and-effect relationships: the project undertakes specific *activities* that should lead to clearly defined *results*. The activities are what the project *does*, while the results represent the *output* of these activities and, therefore, of the project. The *results* of the project, taken together, should allow the project to achieve its *project purpose*. It has become an international standard that a specific project should have only *one* “project purpose.” This makes both project planning and project evaluation easier, because it is easier to plan for the achievement of a single objective than for two or more parallel objectives, and it is easier to measure the success of a project against a single stated purpose rather than against two or more, which may even be in unrecognised conflict with each other.

At the top of the hierarchy of objectives (in the top line of the logframe matrix) we find the *overall goal(s)* of the project. This or these are usually more general development or policy goal(s) to which the project can only *contribute*, but which the project itself cannot achieve. To give an example, providing schools with computers to enable them to access web-based information will contribute to the goal of a “well-informed general public,” but it will not achieve it on its own, even if the project is one hundred per cent successful in providing *all* schools with a specified number of computers with Internet access each.

The second column of the logframe matrix presents the *objectively verifiable indicators* at all levels of the hierarchy of objectives (i.e. the intervention logic). It is important to have *objectively verifiable indicators* for the overall goal(s) and the *project purpose*, as well as for the *results* in order to be able to achieve a consensus between all stakeholders about *how*

*successful* the project was. Only if the degree of success can be measured by indicators on which everyone can agree is there any hope for achieving a consensus opinion on the project's achievements, or otherwise.

While there exist standard sets of indicators for various fields of intervention, it is advisable to take the measurement question very seriously and think it through for each and every goal, purpose, and result (note: the indicators for *activities* are whether they have actually been *done* or not). It has become a standard convention not to allow any objective to remain in the logframe matrix unless a reasonably convenient indicator can be found. An objective whose achievement cannot be measured is not a valid objective. In that sense, the above-mentioned "generally well-informed public" might not survive as a valid overall goal.

Often it is possible, however, to develop proxy indicators that make it feasible to preserve objectives aiming for seemingly immeasurable qualities, as was the case in the "generally well-informed public" example. One might suggest that the "general public" is well informed if topics of national or international interest (as reflected in the newspapers, for example) become the object of lively conversations in pubs (or in coffee houses if we are dealing with a different culture) within two days. This, of course, opens the question of "how do we know this".

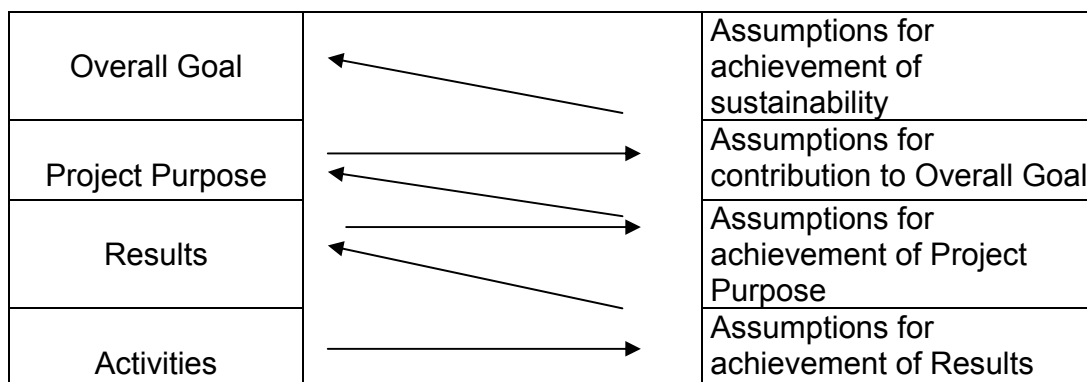
That is the object of the third column, which specifies the *sources of verification* for each of the *objectively verifiable indicators*. For some indicators there are either project documents or publicly accessible records that contain the necessary data. For others, the method and timing of data collection has to be specified. At this point it is important to keep in mind that the use of existing sources of information is cheaper and more convenient than a specific research effort or the establishment of an additional system of documentation (on top of the system of documentation that any project must establish and maintain for purposes of internal control and accountability).

The fourth column deals with the *assumptions* about the external environment that are made in the formation of the *intervention logic*. In any social intervention project, the cause-and-effect relationships and the means-end relationships are not as clear cut and unchangeable as in the mechanical system of a machine. In social systems these relationships always depend on a constellation of external factors beyond the control of the project. Thus, accessing information through the Internet using computers at schools depends on additional factors beyond the control of that project. For example, the availability of telephone lines and of electric power may be the most prominent factors in many countries where the necessary infrastructures are still in the process of being built. In addition, even "connected" computers will only contribute to the increased knowledge of their users if these users actually look for information instead of simply playing some of the now-available interactive games. The *assumption* in this case would be that pupils use the computers for the purpose intended.

It is a generally recognised danger that the *assumptions* column gets neglected in planning workshops, to the detriment of those projects that do not pay enough attention to their external environment and to their *preconditions for success*. The facilitator should be well aware of this danger, which is usually exacerbated by time constraints, and plan ahead by reserving enough time for dealing with the assumptions.

The importance of the assumptions becomes clear when considering the relationship between the intervention logic and the assumptions, as follows:





The *intervention logic* follows a straight path: *activities* lead to *results*, *results* allow the project to achieve its *project purpose*, and the achieved purpose contributes to the *overall goal*. This straightforward reasoning does not take into account the external environment.

In reality, *activities* will only lead to the envisaged *results* if certain external conditions allow this to happen. The existence of these external conditions is specified as one or more *assumptions*. The overall logic then becomes slightly more complicated: *Activities plus fulfilled assumptions* lead to *results*.

The same is true on the other levels of the logframe matrix. Thus, *results plus fulfilled assumptions* lead to the achievement of the *project purpose*, and *Project Purpose plus fulfilled assumptions* contribute to the *overall goal*. And this contribution is *sustainable* if the assumptions at the topmost level come true.

The assumptions leading to a project's sustainability are particularly important if the overall strategy of the organization managing the project or the organization funding the project has a strategy that emphasises sustainability directly or in formulations ("systemic impact", "long-term impact", etc.)

### Example:

	Intervention Logic	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions
Overall Goal	Increased participation of citizens in developing public policies	Increased number of new programmes initiated by citizens Increased turn-outs in local elections	Decisions by authorities Election statistics	Functioning democracies in participating countries New programs are well accepted

Project Purpose	To develop functioning mechanisms for youth in 6 communities to participate in policy making	Decisions of city councils based on dialogue with youth advisory boards	Reports from the meetings	Decisions and mechanisms are sustainable Citizens are willing to participate in policy-making Community supports youth participation
Results	1. The dialogue between youth and policy-makers institutionalised	Six advisory boards exist Agreements between youth advisory boards and city councils signed	Statutes Members lists Agreements	Policy - makers respect the agreement
	2. Developed skills and knowledge on how to participate in policy making	Curricula implemented in at least 10 schools Increased number of young people involved in public policy campaigns	School annual reports Lists of participants	
	3. Increased awareness of policy makers towards community needs	Increased number of new issues discussed in city councils initiated by awareness rising campaigns	Media Minutes from the meetings	
Activities	1.1. Establish youth advisory boards to city councils	<b>Means</b> 1 expert	<b>Cost</b> 1,000 EUR	Young people are willing to participate in youth advisory boards
	1.2. Create a legal framework for youth advisory boards			
	2.1. Develop school curricula for youth participation in public policy making	2 experts	3,000 EUR	Schools are willing to cooperate
	2.2. Provide training for youth advisory board members		20,000 EUR	
	3.1. Organize awareness rising activities on youth participation in policy making		35,000 EUR	Policy-makers respond to campaigns

### 5.4. The Project Implementation Plan

For project implementation, the “Gantt” technique is normally used. The Gantt operational (implementation) plan is an effective and commonly used means to gain an overview of the timing of, the relationships between, the responsibilities for, and the resources required for any number of activities. The activities are simply listed on a table, with each activity heading one line.

Activities	Time schedule (months, weeks, days)	Means	Costs	Person responsible
Activity 1				
Activity 1.1				
Activity 1.2				
Activity 1.n				
Activity 2.1				
...				

This type of planning makes it easier to take into account relationships between activities: if the beginning of activity two requires the completion of activity one, and the beginning of activity three the completion of activity two, then they need to be timed sequentially, possibly using “buffers” (i.e., leaving a gap between the end of activity one and the beginning of activity two) to take care of the delays normally encountered in the implementation of any activity.

Activities	Activity 1	Means	Costs	
	Activity 2			
	....			
	Activity N			

In a simple manner, the Gantt table lists all the activities and expands on them. While the logframe matrix mentions only one activity, the implementation plan splits this up into all the sub-activities that are grouped under that one overall activity. “Providing schools with computers Internet access” could be broken down into “establishing the number of schools,” “ensuring telephone lines in all schools,” “ensuring acquisition and delivery of computers,” and “providing Internet programmes and training in their use.” The level of detail really depends on the complexity of the project (see example in the next page).

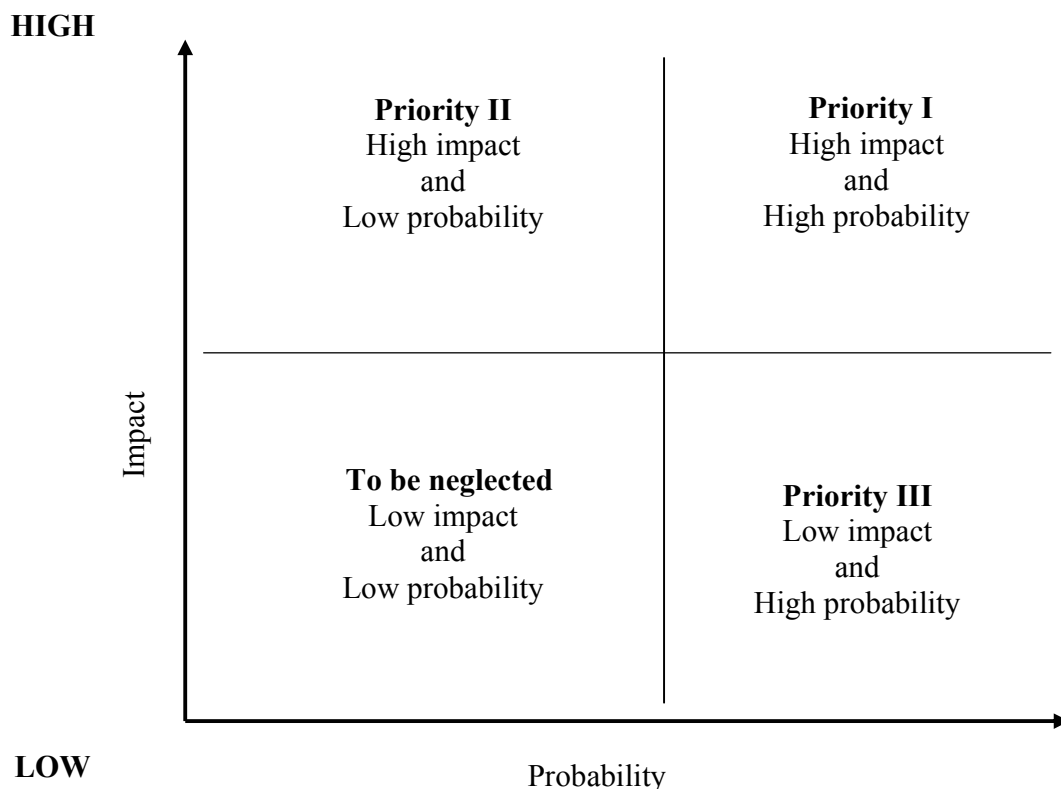
**Example:**

Activities	2004					2005							Means	Costs	Person responsible	
	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7				
1.1. Establish youth advisory boards to city councils	X	X												1 expert	1,000 EUR	
1.2. Create a legal framework for youth advisory boards		X	X													
2.1. Develop school curricula for youth participation in public policy making			X	X	X	X	X							2 experts	3,000 EUR	
2.2. Provide training for youth advisory board members				X	X	X									20,000 EUR	
3.1. Organize awareness rising activities on youth participation in policy making							X	X	X	X	X	X			35,000 EUR	

## 5.5. Risk Analysis

Risk analysis is done to see how realistic a project is, and thus how likely to succeed. Risk analysis is applied to the assumptions of the logframe matrix (see 5.3). For each assumption the participants estimate two parameters:

- How much damage will it do to the project if the assumption does not come true (i.e., “high impact” in the following illustration)?
- How likely is it that this assumption will fail to come true (i.e., “high probability” in the following illustration)?



This risk analysis provides an estimation of the importance of the assumptions listed in the fourth column of the logframe matrix. The higher the probability that this assumption may fail and the higher the impact of such failure for the project’s success, the more important it is to think about possible alternatives.

Assumptions that are both “high impact” and “high probability” always merit spending time thinking about alternatives. If such an assumption appears at the level of the *project purpose* or *overall goal*, it may be time to think of an alternative project altogether. In international project parlance, such assumptions are called “killer assumptions” because they can completely kill a project. Thinking of an alternative project does not mean abandoning the project altogether; an assumption is still an assumption, and despite high impact and high probability, all may go well. But in this case, it is more than simply prudent to have a “Plan B”

(or even a “Plan C”) in the drawer *just in case* the worst-case scenario comes true. Needless to say, these alternative plans should be of a similar quality (with respect to the logical framework matrix at least, if not also the implementation plan) as the original plan, and this certainly needs to be considered when calculating the time requirements for the workshop.

## **6. Monitoring**

### **6.1. What is monitoring?**

Project monitoring is an integral part of day-to-day management. It provides information by which management can identify and solve implementation problems, and assess progress. The logical framework matrix and the project implementation plan provide the basis. The following *basic issues need to be regularly monitored*:

- Which activities are underway and what progress has been made (e.g. at weekly intervals)?
- At what rate are means being used and cost incurred in relation to progress in implementation (e.g. monthly)?
- Are the desired results being achieved (e.g. quarterly update)? (efficiency)
- To what extent are these results furthering the project purpose (e.g. half-yearly analysis)? (effectiveness)
- What changes in the project environment occur? Do the assumptions hold true?

Project management checks how the objectives are met, and analyses the changes in the project environment including key stakeholder groups, local strategies and policies. If progress falls short, corrective action has to be taken. Details of any action have to be included in the next progress report.

### **6.2. Some Basic Steps**

Monitoring creates the information base required for steering and decision-taking during implementation. Since monitoring is not only done within a project but also by the different levels decision must be taken, what information is required to control the project implementation process and how it is to be obtained, collected, analysed, dispatched. Therefore, monitoring will usually involve the following steps:

Step	Content
1. Collecting data (facts, observation and measurement) and documenting them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Indicators for objectives at all levels of the logical framework</li> <li>▪ Quality and appropriateness of activities and use of resources (performance)</li> <li>▪ Project environment (indicators for assumptions)</li> <li>▪ Project impact</li> <li>▪ Co-operation with target groups and partners</li> </ul>
2. Analysing and drawing conclusions (interpretation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Comparison of planned and actual achievements (planned and unforeseen), and identification of deviations (review) and conclusions</li> <li>▪ Changes in project environment and consequences for project; drawing conclusions</li> <li>▪ Comparison of planned and actual mechanisms and procedures of project organisation and co-operation with target groups; identification of deviations and conclusions</li> </ul>
3. Making recommendations (judgement) and taking corrective action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Adjustment of timing of activities and resources</li> <li>▪ Adjustment of objectives</li> <li>▪ Adjustment of procedures and co-operation mechanisms</li> </ul>

Internal monitoring documents and progress reports record and present the results of this process. The main *responsibility will usually be with the project management.*

### 6.3. Types of monitoring

#### 6.3.1. Monitoring of activities

Monitoring of *activities* compares time planned for and finally required to carry out an individual activity. Thus, it can be judged whether the implementation plan can be adhered to. The major tool is the implementation plan that should be sufficiently detailed to allow for such a judgement. In this framework deadlines are defined as the point time until which a specific Activity has to be completed; while “milestones” are key events in the implementation of activities that provide a measure of progress and a target for the project team to aim at. The simplest possible milestones are deadlines.

Both milestones and deadlines provide the basis on which project implementation is monitored and managed. Whenever individual activities deviate from the schedule, the consequences on other activities and resources must be considered. Causes of these deviations need to be analysed and timing may have to be adjusted.

If deadlines for activities that are on the “critical path” or influence the timing of other Activities cannot be respected, project management is also re-quired to react by adjusting plans, shifting resources, etc.

Resources need to be available at the time required in sufficient quantities and quality. The time required for making them available is often underestimated. This concerns both human resources and physical resources. To ensure the project’s liquidity, availability of funds for the future must always be monitored, including situation of the public budget, exchange rates, etc. If target groups contribute to financing project activities, it must be assured that they can meet the requirements. Purchase of equipment, contracting for works and supplies will have to follow the applicable rules. Project management has to ensure that planning of activities reflects the time required to mobilise the resources.

Keeping a record of the project’s activities is an essential part of the Monitoring and Evaluation system. Using the Gantt format makes it easy to get a quick overview of the contents of the project’s daily, weekly, or monthly reports. The data are summarised for each of the activities and entered into the Gantt table. It then becomes easy to compare what has been achieved with what has been planned, line by line, activity by activity, and item by item, including the beginning and end of activities, human resources used, and materials and equipment used.

Condensing the original implementation plan and the actual achievements into one table might look like this:

Activities	Time Schedule (Months, Weeks, Days)	Human Resources	Material Resources	Cost	Organization responsible	Person responsible	Comments
Activity 1		3 man-months	1 vehicle	5000			
Actual A1		8 man-months	2 vehicles	6000			
Activity 2		4 man-months	Print. press	400			
Actual A2		4 man-months	Print. press	600			
Activity 3		15 man-months		3000			
Actual A3		10 man-months		2000			
Activity 4		10 man-months		10000			
Actual A4		16 man-months		17600			
Activity 5		3 man-months		1000	EvaLtd		
Actual A5		3 man-months		5000	PoliTd		

From this table it is easy to see the following results:

- Completion of the first activity took four instead of three months and employed two people instead of only one person. And while this also required two vehicles instead of only one, the costs reflected only a fraction of this increased use of resources.

- The second activity (presumably because it depended on completion of the first) started one month later than planned, but used precisely the same resources planned for, except that in the meantime the costs had risen by one third.
- The third activity was delayed by one month and used only two instead of the envisaged three people (we can only speculate if the consequent drop in salaries was actually intended to make up for increased costs in other activities).
- Activity Four started one month ahead of schedule and lasted one month less than planned for. This was most likely due to a doubling of the personnel for that activity. The costs reflect both of these changes, and an (assumed for the purpose of this fictitious example) additional salary increase of 10 per cent.
- Activity Five was actually a final evaluation, which was contracted out to a different company than the one originally envisaged (obviously, “PoliTd” is a more expensive firm than “EvaLtd”).
- The overall budget for the project increased from 19,400 fictitious currency units to 31,200 units, which clearly shows that this is a completely fictitious example. The one thing projects in real life *cannot* change is the overall budget, because the budget normally depends on a donor organisation and has been fixed and agreed upon before the start of the project.

### 6.3.2. Monitoring of results

Monitoring of results is based on the indicators for the results. The indicators represent the desired situation at a specific time or at the end of the planning period. However, this may not be sufficient for managing the project, since very often decisions have to be taken at shorter intervals to control implementation. Therefore, results may have to be broken down in interim results and described by additional indicators that cover the relevant planning period (e.g. indicators should be set for annual work plans).

Progress is assessed by comparing an initial situation with the current situation. When establishing the initial situation (which should have been done during project preparation, and updated during the inception period), it should be kept in mind that a wide range of data collection methods exist. It is very often not the so-called exhaustive baseline survey that provides the most appropriate data required for project management decisions, but rather less time- and cost-consuming methods will provide sufficient details about the initial situation.

The following table shows a template of how monitoring of Results could be summarised in a table format (with an example), including breakdown of Indicators for a given period – quarterly and cumulative monitoring. The table will immediately provide a visual overview of the progress towards the results, and relevant remarks and suggested corrective action.

No.	Results	Planning for entire duration						Planning and progress for reporting quarter						Overall planning and progress to date						Validity of indicators and		Remarks	Action to be taken
		Achieved before reporting quarter						Achieved during reporting quarter						Scheduled progress towards indicator for entire duration at the end of reporting quarter		Real progress towards indicator for entire duration		Real progress towards indicator for entire duration		Indicator valid (Y/N)	Sources valid (Y/N)		
		Indicator	Quantity	Unit	Quantity	Unit	%	Indicator	Quantity	Unit	Quantity	Unit	%	Quantity	Unit	Quantity	Unit	%					
2	DEVELOPED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE ON HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN POLICY MAKING	CURRICULA IMPLEMENTED IN AT LEAST 10 SCHOOLS	10	SCH	2	SCH	20	CURRICULA IMPLEMENTED IN AT LEAST 10 SCHOOLS	6	SCH	4	SCH	67	8	SCH	6	SCH	60	Y	Y	ADMINISTRATIVE OBSTACLES	CONTACT EDUCATION AUTHORITIES FOR HELP	
2	DEVELOPED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE ON HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN POLICY MAKING	INCREASED NUMBER OF YOUNG PEOPLE INVOLVED IN POLICY CAMPAIGNS	1,000	PERS.	250	PERS.	20	AT LEAST 20% INCREASE COMPARED TO THE PREVIOUS REPORTING QUARTER	300	PERS.	360	PERS.	120	550	PERS.	610	PERS.	61	Y	Y			

### 6.3.3. Monitoring of assumptions

While activities and results are very often regularly monitored, adequate monitoring of assumptions and risks is rather rarely done. As for results, assumptions can also be tagged with indicators and sources of verification. The following table provides an overview sheet for monitoring of assumptions. It will form the basis for a quarterly monitoring of assumptions, which will work in a comparable way as the sheet for results monitoring, i.e. providing an overview of the achievement (or progress towards) the assumptions, and relevant remarks and suggested corrective action. Project management is asked to react as immediately as possible if assumptions do not hold true and jeopardise project success, e.g. through adjusting planning, convening meetings with concerned parties and partners.

The tables could form part of the progress reports to be produced by the project. Further Assumptions need to be added if required, i.e. if factors have been over-looked or new possible risks arise in the project environment.

**Exercise.** Develop indicators and sources of verification, and provide comments for the following situation.

Level in LF	Assumptions	Indicators	Sources of Verification	Comments/consequences if assumptions do not hold true
Overall Goal	Functioning democracies in participating countries			
	New programs are well accepted			
Project Purpose	Decisions and mechanisms are sustainable			
	Citizens are willing to participate in policy-making			
	Community supports youth participation			
Results	Policy - makers respect the agreement			
Activities	Young people are willing to participate in youth advisory boards			
	Schools are willing to cooperate			
	Policy-makers respond to campaigns			



#### 6.3.4. Monitoring of impact

Impact monitoring looks at:

- project effectiveness (“doing the right things”) and beyond, i.e. the positive and intended impacts;
- the side effects not included in the logframe;
- the negative impacts.

These effects and impacts may become evident during the course of a project or only later. Impact monitoring should be set up during the course of a project. Apart from the project level, the analysis becomes most important for evaluation, strategic steering and policy formulation for future undertakings. The monitoring of effects and impacts is different from other kinds of monitoring because of

- the long-term period of observation, i.e. there may be a considerable time gap between the achievement of the results and the emergence of benefits and impacts. In such cases it may be helpful to work with process-oriented indicators, i.e. indicators that are likely to show first and subsequent signs of the intended impact. They should at least give a good indication of whether the project is on the right track. Usually the assessment will involve direct feedback from and assessment by the target groups;
- a close connection between changes due directly to a project or programme, and its environment and context, i.e. that it is often difficult to distinguish between changes occurring directly due to the project and changes that would already have taken place without the project (“incremental benefits”). The procedure and instruments for impact monitoring are the same as for monitoring of Results: collecting information in the form of tables and time sequences, etc.