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Module 4 | Course on:

Project Development

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Introduction

How to use this module (Week 1)

You are now in Week 1 of the e-internship. This week focuses on Project Development to support your team's Company Play work.

After this module, you should have a basic understanding of project development pcycle and be ready to use them in your team work and mentor session.

What to take from this material to your team work	• Turn a **problem into a clear project idea** (don't start with solutions—start with a real need). • Define a **simple objective + expected result** before discussing activities. • Keep your project **focused and realistic** (small, clear, doable within time/resources).

What your team should do based on this	• As a team, agree on **one core problem your Company Play will address** and write:
	  ○ 1 problem statement
	  ○ 1 main objective
	  ○ 2 expected results

Discuss with your mentor	• Is your **problem clearly defined and relevant**? • Are your **objectives realistic and measurable**? • Does your idea align with **real needs in the market/community**?

	• What should be simplified or narrowed down?

You use this in	• Defining your **project idea and direction**
	• Structuring your **Company Play concept**
	• Preparing for:
	  ○ Simulation phase
	  ○ Final project output

What is the link to the entrepreneurs' presentations	• How do I turn my idea into a structured, fundable project? • From idea to project: defining problems, objectives, and results in early-stage agribusiness

In today's rapidly changing world, the ability to design and manage effective projects is an essential skill for students, professionals, and entrepreneurs. Project development helps transform ideas into practical solutions that address real-world challenges. Through structured planning, clear objectives, and collaborative teamwork, projects can generate innovative outcomes that contribute to social, economic, and environmental development.

This Project Development MOOC is designed to provide participants with the fundamental knowledge and practical tools required to create and manage successful projects. The course introduces the key stages of project development, including idea generation, problem identification, goal setting, planning activities, resource management, and evaluation. Participants will also explore common project management frameworks and learn how to organize projects in a clear and systematic way.

By combining theory with practical exercises, the MOOC encourages participants to develop their own project ideas and transform them into structured project plans. Throughout the course, learners will gain skills in teamwork, critical thinking, and problem-solving while using digital tools that support online collaboration. Ultimately, this MOOC aims to empower participants to design impactful projects that respond to community needs and contribute to sustainable development.

The main objectives of the Project Development MOOC are to:

- Introduce the key concepts and principles of project development and management.
- Develop participants' ability to identify problems and transform them into project opportunities.
- Teach learners how to design structured project plans with clear goals and activities.
- Provide practical tools and methods used in project planning and implementation.
- Encourage teamwork, collaboration, and communication in project development.
- Promote innovative and sustainable approaches to solving real-world challenges.

By the end of this MOOC, participants will be able to:

1. **Understand the fundamental principles of project development and management.**
2. **Define what a project is** and identify its key characteristics
3. **Distinguish** between projects and routine operations
4. **Recognize the relevance of project development** in advancing digital and green transitions in rural areas
5. **Identify problems or needs** that can be addressed through a project.
6. **Define clear project objectives, goals, and expected results.**
7. **Develop a structured project plan**, including activities, timelines, and resources.
8. **Apply project management tools**, such as logical frameworks or project planning methods.
9. **Work effectively in teams** to design and develop project ideas.
10. **Use digital tools and online platforms** to support project development and collaboration.
11. **Evaluate project results and propose improvements** for future initiatives.

TOPIC 1: Introduction to Project Development

This module introduces the foundational concepts of project development and management, with a specific focus on **twin transition agriculture and rural development** which is the integration of **digital innovation** and **sustainability (green transition)** in rural contexts.

Participants will gain a clear understanding of **what a project is**, how it differs from routine operations, and **why structured project development is essential** for addressing challenges in agriculture and rural areas.

1.1. What is a Project?

A **project** is a **temporary effort undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result**. Unlike routine activities, projects are designed to achieve specific goals within a defined timeframe and with limited resources.

In the context of **agriculture and rural development**, projects may include:

- Introducing digital tools for precision farming
- Developing climate-smart agricultural practices
- Supporting rural entrepreneurship through innovation
- Improving value chains using sustainable methods

These initiatives are not ongoing operations—they are structured efforts aimed at producing **measurable change**.

1.2. Key Characteristics of a Project

Projects share several defining features:

- **Temporary** → They have a clear start and end date
- **Goal-oriented** → They aim to achieve specific objectives
- **Resource-constrained** → They operate within limited budgets, time, and human resources
- **Unique** → Each project delivers a distinct outcome

For example, implementing a **smart irrigation system using IoT sensors** in a rural community is a project because it has a defined timeline, budget, and expected results.

1.3. Projects vs. Operations

It is important to distinguish between **projects** and **operations**:

Projects	Operations
Temporary	Ongoing
Unique outcomes	Repetitive tasks
Defined objectives	Continuous processes

Example:

- Running a farm daily → Operation
- Introducing a digital farm management platform → Project

Understanding this distinction helps ensure proper planning, resource allocation, and evaluation.

1.4. Introduction to Project Management

Project management refers to the structured process of:

- **Planning** → Defining objectives, activities, and resources
- **Execution** → Implementing planned activities
- **Monitoring** → Tracking progress and performance
- **Evaluation** → Assessing results and impact

In twin transition contexts, project management ensures that:

- Digital tools are effectively integrated
- Environmental sustainability is maintained
- Rural communities benefit in a measurable way

1.5. Why Project Development Matters in Twin Transition

Agriculture and rural areas face complex challenges such as:

- Climate change
- Limited access to technology
- Low productivity

- Market inefficiencies

Project development provides a structured way to:

- Transform problems into actionable solutions
- Test innovative approaches (e.g., digital platforms, green technologies)
- Scale successful interventions

For example, a project introducing **solar-powered irrigation systems combined with mobile-based monitoring** supports both environmental sustainability and digital transformation.

1.6. Knowledge Check (Quiz)

Multiple Choice

1. What is the primary purpose of a project?
    - A. Ongoing operations
    - B. Temporary effort to create a unique result ✅
    - C. Daily management tasks
    - D. Administrative reporting
2. Which of the following is NOT a project characteristic?
    - A. Defined start and end
    - B. Repetitive process ✅
    - C. Specific objectives
    - D. Limited resources

True/False

3. A project always has unlimited resources. → ❌ False
4. Project management involves planning, execution, and monitoring. → ✅ True

1.7. Reflection Task

- Think about a challenge in agriculture or rural development in your context.
- Is addressing this challenge a **project** or an **ongoing operation**?
- Explain your reasoning in 3–5 sentences.

1.8. Practical Exercise

Exercise: Identifying a Project

1. Identify one initiative related to:
    - Digital agriculture OR
    - Sustainable rural development
2. Describe:
    - What makes it a project
    - Its expected outcome
    - Its timeframe

1.9. Key Takeaways

- A project is a **temporary, goal-oriented effort** with defined resources
- Projects differ from routine operations in their **uniqueness and structure**
- Project management involves **planning, execution, and monitoring**
- In agriculture and rural development, projects are key tools for enabling the **twin transition (digital + green).**

This module sets the foundation for the next step: **identifying real-world problems and transforming them into project opportunities**.

TOPIC 2: PROJECT FUNDING THROUGH GRANTS

Nowadays, agribusiness management in any area of production and services also implies project funding which can significantly contribute to the sustainability and development of agribusiness, as well as to any type of agricultural activity, i.e. sphere of rural development. Young people who decide to stay in the countryside or work from rural areas should have the necessary knowledge and skills to fund their ideas on and off farms by applying for calls for proposals announced by different donors, and hopefully by winning project funds.

In this segment of the Handbook one can encounter the following:

i. A review of the role and importance of project funding through grants in the field of agriculture and rural development;
ii. Possible and most interesting sources of funding relating to the support of the development of rural areas and agriculture, which might be at the same time available to different legal entities.

2.1 Importance of grants in agriculture and rural development

The emergence of project funding is linked to the emergence of the Green Revolution, and it continues to this day, whereby the size of funds has been steadily increasing.

Nowadays, in the midst of the Digital Revolution and Agriculture 5.0, one mostly contemplates improving business through the use of artificial intelligence, IoT, and machine learning. The goals and priorities presented in calls for project proposals often correspond with the combination of needs to solve key problems in the field of agriculture in a country or a region in general, and current trends in the sector such as:

- Lack of youth and innovation in rural areas,
- Insufficient utilisation of ICT in agriculture,
- Securing better conditions for the development of sustainable agriculture,
- Reform of agricultural policy and rural development policies,
- Development of smart villages,
- Food safety,
- Reducing losses in food production, etc.

Thus, nowadays, project funding (through grants) can be considered an important drive of infrastructural changes in agriculture, and a source of introducing new services/activities and joint research ventures, connecting and strengthening the capacities of actors for collaboration on matters of mutual interest, or simply promoting products, services and actors in the local, national, regional, and quite often in the global context.

Grants are significant because they represent a source of non-refundable aid that can be awarded to legal entities with different degrees of development, but also to individuals (most often through short-term exchange scholarships for the purpose of carrying out research activities, i.e. completing the educational cycle). Grants can serve as an additional source of investment for legal entities from civil, public and private sectors such as government institutions at the local and national levels, non-governmental organisations, cooperatives, small and medium-sized enterprises, large companies, agri-entrepreneurs, universities, and research centres.

Although available to a relatively large number of people/entities that meet the application criteria, grants are scarce. Hence, being awarded this type of financial support is considered a highly competitive process that requires specific knowledge and skills which will be discussed in Topic 2. However, it is worth knowing how to qualify for and receive grants, because with such significant support both agri-entrepreneurs and other actors in agriculture and rural development are offered the opportunity to connect and cooperate with the whole world.

Reflection Task: What are the main challenges in your rural/community context that could be addressed through grants?

Finally, it is relevant for countries in Europe to strengthen the LEADER component/access of the EU in its programmes and introduce planning relating to rural development as well as to continue to work on strengthening the legal and financial framework for the development and functioning of LAGs (Local Action Groups) comprising relevant representatives from the local agricultural sector, either private, public or civil.

🧠 1. QUIZ QUESTION (Knowledge Checks)

A. Multiple Choice

1. What is the main advantage of grants?
    - A. They must always be repaid
    - B. They are non-refundable financial support ✅
    - C. They are only for governments
    - D. They are short-term loans

TOPIC 3:
STAGES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROJECT PROPOSALS

In agriculture, as well as in other sectors, project funding implies knowledge about the project cycle/life of the project, i.e. about the stages during which a project, as a short-term venture of a certain scope and value, is created, implemented and finalised.

The project cycle is a topic of importance for both donors, and fund users. Thus, there are several different approaches to defining the stages of the cycle (the most frequently used explanations are those according to the PMI - Project Management Institute, and those according to the European Commission PCM - Project Cycle Management). In this Handbook, the authors´ clarifications are mostly guided by the PCM methodology reinforced by an authentic interpretation of individual stages and associated elements relating to financing through the allocation of grants.

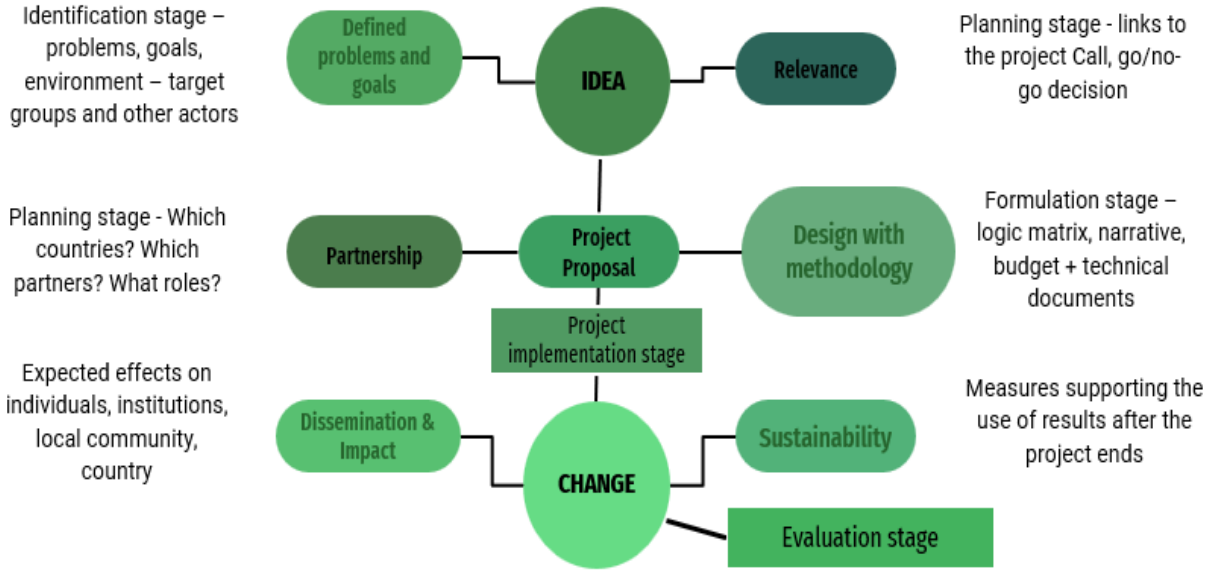
The project/programme cycle undergoes five different stages – identification, planning, design, implementation and evaluation. After the fifth stage, the available funds are re-programmed, and a new cycle is initiated. In this segment of the Handbook we consider in more detail the first three stages of the project cycle because they relate to the period of applying for project funds, i.e. the preparation of project proposals. The stages of implementation and evaluation are not the subject of our interest in this Handbook because they concern the period from obtaining project funds to the end of the project lifetime, i.e. they deal with project management (see the picture below).

Projects tend to be developed from the initial idea, through the project proposal to project implementation, in order to achieve a specific, desired change. During the identification and planning stages one is still in the domain of the project idea. However, during the design stage, the idea is formulated into a project proposal. During the implementation

stage, a change of the current state and/or behaviour occurs, which one can measure in the evaluation stage.

Figure 1: Stages in the Development of Project Proposals

3.1. Identification



What do we have in mind? The first or initial stage of the project cycle (hereafter: PC) is identification. In the context of the PC, identification most often refers to the questions *What is happening, to whom and why*? Within the identification stage, we usually talk about the following skills:

- The ability to recognise needs, problems, actors, and solutions for changing the existing conditions in a given context,
- The ability to recognise an opportunity for a change (for instance, identification of funding sources),
- The ability to see the context of events, i.e. the bigger picture within which the change should take place.

Identification can be internally motivated (personal, individual, authentic) or externally motivated - coming from another person. Commitment to the project idea is greater if identification is based on the internal motivation of an individual/organisation/community. Such motivation is based on specific values that an individual and/or community strives for, as well as on specific needs that should be addressed according to a rationally set order of priorities.

Discussion. During the stage of initial reflection about the project (forming the basic idea), which comes from an individual or an organisation, one performs an analysis of problems, solutions and relevance, as well as of direct users and other actors. In other words, we ask ourselves who our project idea will have an impact on, and how will stakeholders respond to our idea. The identification stage serves to better understand the priorities that appear to be in conflict, and this is achieved through a participatory discussion between the main actors under appropriate conditions.

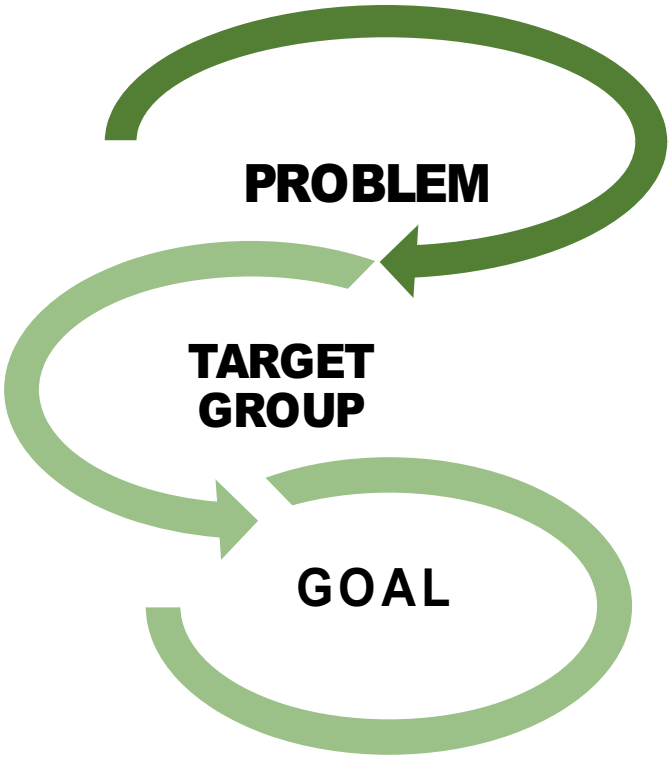


Figure 2: Identification– problem, target group, goal

The goal of the identification stage is to clearly define the main problem, as well as the secondary ones closely related to it in the given context (negative aspects of the current situation), and then to observe specific cause-and-effect relationships, i.e. the effects that occur as a consequence of each observed problem, as well as those which are at the root of defined problems. A graphical representation (visualisation) of such analysis is called a **Problem Tree**. The next step involves redefining the identified problems into goals, i.e. switching them from a negative value to a positive one in order to obtain a **Goal Tree** which reflects the future positive reality that we aim to reach by implementing our idea.

Steps in defining the **Problem Tree**:

1. Identify the main problem
2. Identify secondary problems
3. Analyse problems and establish their hierarchy
4. Identify several causes for each problem (below the problem)
5. Identify the consequences of each problem (above the problem)
6. Connect the causes and effects by using arrows (see example below)

Steps in defining the **Goal Tree**:

1. Redefine negative aspects into positive ones,
2. Goals arise from problems.

In defining the **Problem Tree**, as well as the **Goal Tree**, it is necessary to have in mind all participants involved in the project, i.e. stakeholders (interested parties). Stakeholders can be categorised as internal (consortium, i.e. project partners), and external (all actors who have or could have an interest, i.e. impact relating to the project idea).

Stakeholders´ mapping and analysis can take different forms - from a simple tabular presentation of interested parties (mostly external relative to the initiators of the project idea; depending on the topic, internal stakeholders within the initiator´s organisation may be relevant), and their needs and expectations, interests and the influence, over graphs/matrixes to more complex forms of analysis and documents. Stakeholders´ mapping and analysis usually involves the following steps:

1. **Identifying stakeholders** (consortium members, target groups, beneficiaries, other interested parties). In projects thematically related to the field of agriculture, the most frequently encountered stakeholders are as follows:
    - Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development,
    - Local self-government units,
    - Agricultural faculties and institutes,
    - Farms,
    - Agricultural entrepreneurs,
    - Associations of farmers, agricultural cooperatives,
    - Agricultural pharmacies,
    - Advisory services.

2. **Description of stakeholders**
    - Number of members of each of the specified target groups and beneficiaries; relevance to the sector,
    - The needs and challenges they face,
    - How they are involved in the project,
    - Selection method.

3. **Grouping of stakeholders** into categories according to their potenital interests and impact on the project:
    - Those that should only be followed – monitored,
    - Those that need to be informed,
    - Those whose needs need to be met,
    - Those who should be actively engaged in the project.

At this step, it is necessary to group stakeholders into four categories relative to their interests and impact (see the matrix on the next page).
In the first category one can encounter stakeholders with a minor interest and impact, and these are marked as stakeholders that we do not need to pay too much attention to (just monitor).

The second category includes stakeholders with a major interest, but minor impact, that need to be informed about project results.
In the third category one encounters those with a minor interest, but major impact, and the project should respond to their needs.

The fourth category includes stakeholders who have a major interest and impact on the project, so it is necessary to keep them actively engaged throughout the project by seeking their opinions, arranging guest appearances related to project activities - including trips, and the like.

The goal of stakeholders´ mapping and analysis is to better understand the problem, but also to assess the competition, and structure the consortia, i.e. partnerships.
Outcomes and examples. The main outcomes of the identification stage are *the mapping and analysis of stakeholders* (interested parties), and the construction of the *Problem/Goals Tree*.

Who are the stakeholders?	Target groups and consortium members (project partners)	Beneficiaries
Identification	*The population directly affected by the project which is involved in project activities, and without which the project would not be possible.*	*The population that does not directly participate in the project, but they are expected to significantly benefit from it, especially in terms of medium and long-term impact.*
Description	*Number and description* *Needs and shortcomings (challenges)* *How does the project meet their needs?* *How are they involved in the project?* *What is the method of selection of target groups?*	*Number and description* *Needs and shortcomings (challenges)*

Table 2: Mapping and analysis of stakeholders

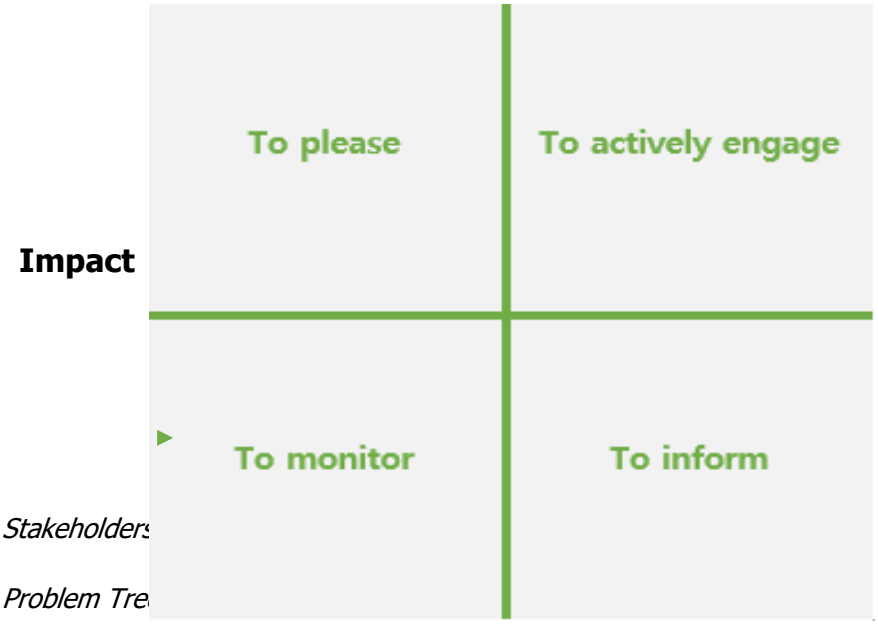


Figure 3: Stakeholders

Figure 4: Problem Tre

Figure 5: Objective/solution Tree

Having a good idea is always a good idea! However, in order to be sure that it can be turned into a project, a more detailed look at the environment is necessary. This is where the the planning stage begins.

TOPIC 4: PLANNING

What do we have in mind? In the process of planning that constitutes the second stage of the project cycle, we ask ourselves ***What do we need in order to turn an idea into a project proposal?*** During the planning process, we primarily deal with the feasibility of our idea, analysing all the necessary assumptions and environmental conditions, external factors and risks, and the necessary means, i.e. resources (human and financial) that we have at our disposal, and that we need to employ. During the planning stage, the following action algorithm is proposed:

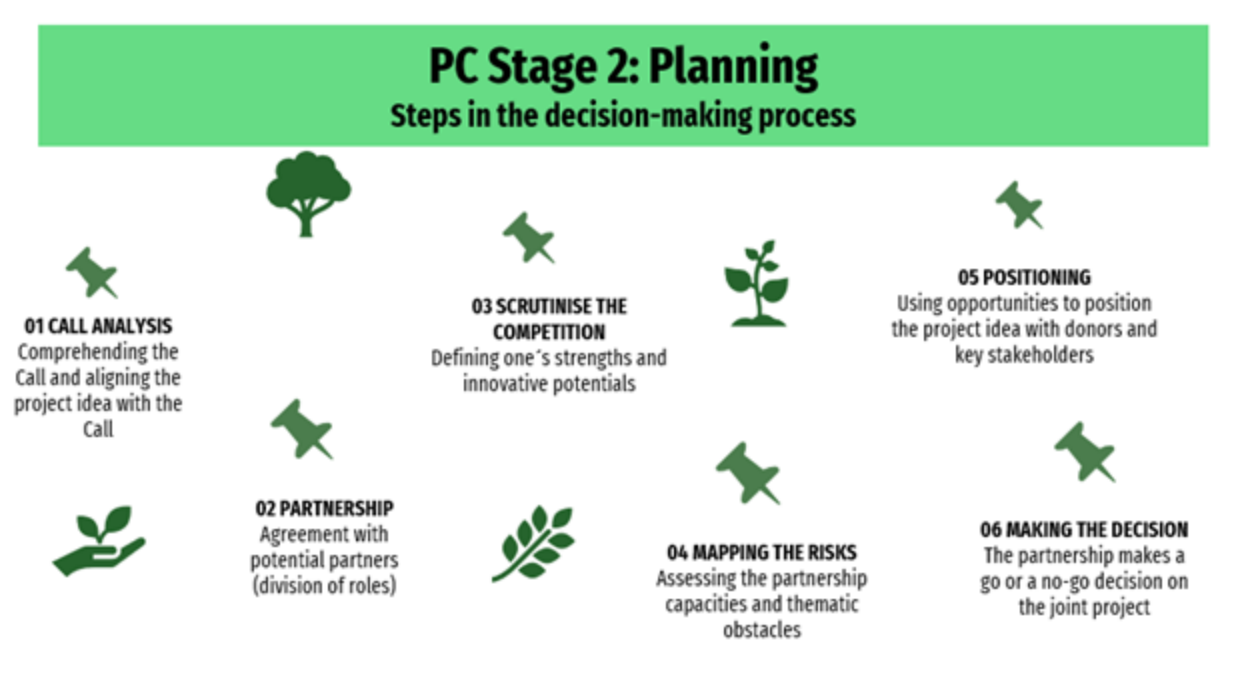


Figure 6:

The skills we need during this stage of the project cycle include the following:

- Organisational skills
- Interpersonal skills
- Negotiation skills
- Analytical skills – assessment of the scope and costs of the conceptual intervention
- Comprehension of the read calls for project proposals.

Discussion The action algorithm in the planning process comprises five steps, and a series of sub-steps that precede the decision to initiate the next stage of the PC - designing the project, i.e. formulating the project, or the decision not to initiate that process. The basic steps in the planning process are as follows:

1. We find and then analyse an adequate open call/competition for the submission of project proposals,
2. We contact potential partners to share the project idea and agree on roles and expectations,
3. We consider the competition and map our own potential for innovation by understanding comparative advantages of our consortium,
4. We map the key risks relative to both theme and capacities (of an organisational and technical nature),
5. If opportunities have been recognised, we carry out strategic positioning according to key actors and donors, and test the idea.

After finalising all previous steps, the consortium decides to initiate the preparation of the project proposal, i.e. the project design/formulation stage or to abandon the project idea waiting for a more adequate call, or a better partnership (go/no-go decision).

Although our initial idea may be good, it is now put into the context of the funding source - if we agree that our idea cannot be financed from a given source, the planning process is concluded. If, however, there is a possibility that the idea can be slightly adjusted to the call, or that it fully corresponds to it, we continue with the planning process.

The call analysis is the first step in the planning process, and during this activity we deal with structural issues relating to planning and scrutinise all elements of the description of the project intervention (defined problems, target groups and beneficiaries, importance for the sector, goals, activities, methodology, potential partners, time frame, logic matrix, risks and assumptions, impact and sustainability, budget), as well as technical aspects of the preparation - analysis of the form (usually the narrative part, budget and logic matrix prepared by the donor), and additional documentation (administrative documentation, e.g. extract from the register) which needs to be prepared and filled in within the given deadline.

Table 3: Call analysis

In the text of the call we seek answers to questions:	**We bear in mind…**	**We decide whether to continue with the planning**
Who?	Who announced the call for proposals and what is important for that particular donor - we read the described context of the call, the	

	so-called *Background* which is the basis of the call.	
For whom? With whom?	For whom is the call intended, i.e. who can apply? Is the call intended for a consortium of partners; how many institutions can form a consortium and what are the legal requirements (what type of organisations, how many organisations, etc.); we look at the call criteria (*Eligibility criteria*); we consider partners without which we cannot submit the application.	*Elimination part! The possibility of making a no-go decision!*
What?	The call precisely states the segments being financed, priorities and goals, and the sectors to which it refers; sometimes it precisely states the expected results; this also refers to the part relating to costs.	*Elimination part! The possibility of changing or adapting the idea to the call or making a no-go decision*
How?	The application process should be reviewed in order to get a clear idea of the required preparation time - the use of donors´ e-platforms is increasingly common, but some calls also require the printing of project applications and sending them by mail.	
Why/for whom?	One gains understanding by becoming familiar with the call background, as well as with precisely specified target groups; this segment is important for describing the	*The possibility of including*

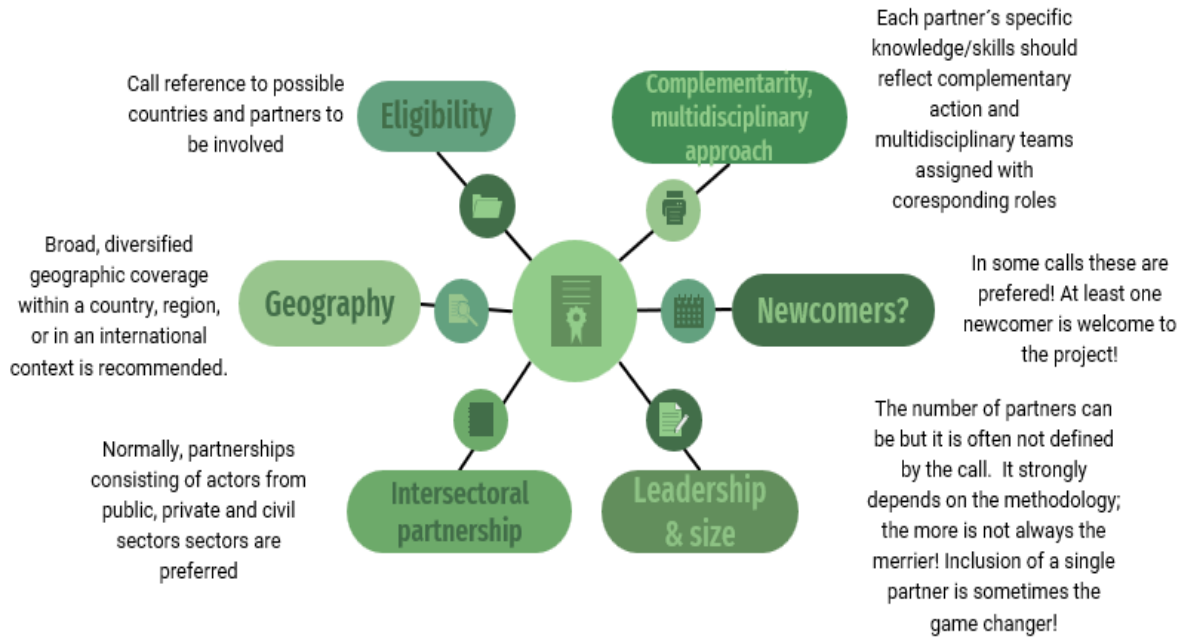
	project relevance, which is often overlooked; we also consider why we are the ones who should carry the project according to the call criteria - referring to our earlier references.	*a new target group relative to the call!*
How much?	The question refers to the percentage of grants and parts of the project that we may have to co-finance ourselves; in most cases we also need to make sure that we have the financial capacity corroborated by the experience of managing similar budgets before.	*Elimination part! The possibility of changing the project manager or making a no-go decision*

The largest number of competitions/open calls, though not all, do not concern individual applicants, but require setting up a partnership between two or more organisations at the local, national, or international level.

If we estimate that the call may be adequate for our idea, we move to the second step of the planning process which implies contacting potential partners to exchange opinions relative to the call – to share different standpoints and perceptions. We agree on the division of roles and negotiate the budget distribution.

Creating a winning consortium is not always a simple task, but it can be of crucial importance for obtaining project funds. When considering which partner would be good for the project, as well as which partners would satisfy the donor, we are guided by several important elements presented in the graph below. At the same time, these are some of the golden rules of setting up a successful partnership.

Figure 7: Some Tips for Setting-up a Successful Partnership



Regardless of who launched the initiative and who came up with the project idea, the consortium agrees on the participant which will ultimately be the project carrier (it is usually an institution with the best human and financial capacity), and who will be the partners. The call forms provide questions relating to the description of the consortium and each of the partners (see section 2.3. Design).

Within the third step of the planning process, we join our partners in the process of inquiring about the competing consortia in order to understand whether we have opted for the correct lot (in the case of calls divided into lots, i.e. parties), whether we have a competitive topic or a target group, etc. By reflecting on the potential competition, we actually map our own potential for innovation by means of understanding the comparative advantages of our consortium, which will later help us formulate the project and present our capacities to the donor. In the context of numerous calls, innovation does not necessarily imply an epochal breakthrough. On the contrary, it can refer to a new work methodology, the inclusion of a specific target group (e.g. female agri-entrepreneurs in rural areas) or a region (e.g. those particularly affected by the rural out-migration of young people), and some such.

The fourth step in the planning process serves to understand the main obstacles or shortcomings that can pull us away from the goal, which is getting the grant. These shortcomings and risks can be of an internal nature, i.e. existing within the consortium (e.g. spare capacities in the local self-government which is a necessary partner in the project, lack of staff in the leading organisation, etc.), and risks imposed by the external

environment (e.g. the position of women in the countryside is traditionally accepted and their work activation is not possible). A careful risk analysis can indicate which pitfalls to avoid, and which ones to heed.

Last but by no means the least important step in the planning process is to seize the opportunity to do strategic positioning (and lobbying) towards key actors and the donor. This is not always possible and it primarily depends on the networking of the leading organisation in the consortium. However, some donors, especially those which support the application of new and small-scale organisations, organise an *open doors day* and allow consultations with organisations that wish to test/adapt the idea in this manner.

Outcomes and examples: The outcomes of the planning stage are as follows: the decision to submit the project proposal based on the go/no-go analysis, mobilised resources for the process of preparing the project proposal, the consortium, i.e. partnership is formed, and roles are assigned, the project scope as well as the total budget are determined relative to the conditions of the call and the conclusions of the analysis of the call for proposals.

Examples relating to the description of the consortium, and the risks and assumptions are given in part 2.3.

TOPIC 5: RESOURCES AND AVAILABILITY

Support for project funding through grants can be obtained through contests run by foreign donors, but also through the allocation of designated funds from public administration at the local, cantonal and national levels.

Project funding in terms of grants is often linked to the country's status in relation to the EU. Availability of resources is different in EU member states in comparison with those which are not members of the EU. The European Union has a common policy in the field of agriculture. Therefore, one should expect changes and adjustments that will also condition the thematic focus of open calls for organisations from the agricultural sector. However, one should not ignore other donors present in in the country, from national donors (State ministries and agencies), to international agencies (UN) and foundations. Different donors may have different goals and priorities, but one should bear in mind that they all seek to support those projects that, from their standpoint, can have a measurable impact and create a meaningful change in the field of agriculture.

The choice of a funding source depends on the needs identified by the legal entity/natural person who wishes to enter the competition for the allocation of grants. Ordinarily, donors do not often change the defined priorities because they are guided by longstanding strategic plans and set indicators that they wish to achieve. It should be remembered that donors have defined their goals motivated by their positioning in the country or at the global level, striving towards the implementation of local and national strategies, as well as the internationally agreed 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)[1], at least 5 of which directly and profoundly concern the sector of agriculture. Donors are often interested in making use of the results generated within the projects they support in order to have the desired information and data that they can further use in programming new phases of support, but also in achieving impact and creating advocacy positions.

Table 1: Some Mapped Funding Sources through Grants Relevant to the Field of Agriculture available internationally

Source of grant support	Primary purpose	Potential users	Find out more!
Erasmus + Programme	Cooperation, networking, exchange, capacity building and	Universities, NGOs, companies, public sector	https://www.you-net.eu/erasmus-programme-guide.html https://erasmusbih.com/en/

1 https://www.un.org/en/footballforthegoals?gclid=CjwKCAjwzJmlBhBBEiwAEJyLu1pZsW0clErC6dZOE0_WyNK0GNPns7wZco2ASLJfoF5pQddcXoUwohoCto4QAvD_BwE

	innovation in education and training		
Horizon Europe – Cluster # 6	Research and innovation in the field of food and agriculture	Universities, research centres, NGOs, companies, public sector	https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/cluster-6-food-bioeconomy-natural-resources-agriculture-and-environment_en

It is also recommended to visit specific portals where calls for grants are announced, such as EUROPEAID (https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/online-services/), as well as to subscribe to portals that regularly announce new calls and publish results of previously funded projects, or send notifications when calls are announced (EUCalls, EPALE), which can also be a significant source of information about potential partners.
Small-scale and newly founded organisations, especially those located in rural areas, can constitute a significant target group of many donors who condition large organisations, i.e. national and regional networks of thematically related organisations, to use part of the awarded project funds to support small-scale organisations in the field of similar thematic activity through the process of re-granting, i.e. by opening calls for mini-grants. In this regard, organisations and agri-entrepreneurs should seek membership in thematic networks and monitor their work.

True / False

The European Union has a common policy in the field of agriculture - ✅ True

Reflection Task: What funding sources/opportunities are available in your country/region?

TOPIC 6: DESIGN (FORMULATION)

What do we have in mind? The project design or project formulation stage concerns the process of writing the project proposal, i.e. it usually implies the preparation of the narrative part, the budget (which may also include narrative clarifications) and the logic matrix, followed by other technical documents that donors may require already at this stage and that need to be provided together with the application (certificates, declarations, signed partnership agreements, letters of support, memoranda of cooperation, etc.).

The formulation of project proposals can be done in one or two steps, depending on the instructions provided in the call. If one step is all that it takes, the full project proposal is sent to the donor within the stipulated deadline. If, however, it is submitted in two steps, the first step includes merely a concept - a short version of the project that contains the basic elements of the logic matrix with the focus placed on relevance. This phase requires a lot of time, regardless of whether one prepares a *small-scale* or a *large-scale* project. It is especially challenging to prepare a project for a large consortium comprising partners which are not quite familiar with each other. On the other hand, the submission forms as well as the process of project submission itself can be quite demanding (which is an increasingly common case).

In addition to excellent written communication skills and usually high proficiency in English, at this stage of the PC it is necessary to have a relatively good grasp of the subject matter as well as sound understanding of budget forms and methods of financing and introducing costs. It is also necessary to logically connect all segments of the application, as well as relationships within the logic matrix.

After the planning stage, i.e. at the beginning of the design stage, it is useful for the team representing the consortium or at least one delegated person to attend the info session offered by the donors after the announcement of the call - this especially applies to more complex projects or to people who do not have enough experience of writing project proposals. Likewise, the info session should be understood as a way of gaining insight into the expected competition within the framework of the call for project proposals.

Discussion. In continuation of the Handbook we will consider the content of an average project. The specific content of a project proposal always depends on the rules of the call and donor forms, but there are some rules that should be considered when formulating project proposals in different parts of the project application. The recommendation of the author of the Handbook is to first create a project logic matrix, followed by a detailed budget, and then to write the narrative part for which you need to allocate more time

and bind it carefully with the LM and the budget proposal, i.e. make additional adjustments to these two documents if necessary, based on the project narrative.
Outcomes. The outcomes of the project proposal design/formulation stage are project proposals with a narrative, budget and LM, as well as prepared additional required documentation.

LOGICAL FRAMEWORK MATRIX (LFM)

What do we have in mind? Most donors, though not all, require that the LM is structured as a separate document representing the heart of the project or the project in miniature. The LM is a tool in the form of a table that contains the following:

- The hierarchy of project goals, results and activities,
- Key external factors that have an impact on our project (defined as assumptions and risks),
- Measures that envisage the implementation of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities on the project,
- The basis of estimated necessary resources for the implementation of the project.

Intervention Logic	Indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions / Risks
General Objective (1)	5	6	
Specific Objectives (2)	7	8	11
Results / Outputs (4)	9	10	12
Activities (3)	Resources (14)		13

Table 4: LM – Recommended Order of Filling in/Defining Individual Segments

The authors´ recommendation for filling in the LM (following the logic of the creation of the project) is according to the order shown in Table 4. We start from number 1, and go towards number 14.
We define the following:

1 General goal/goals of the project (previously identified in the Goal Tree),

2 Specific goal/goals of the project (identified in the Goal Tree),
3 Activities on the project - activities that should be grouped into work packages (a set of related activities that lead to the same result or results),
4 Project results,
5 Indicators for the general goal(s),
6 Sources of verification for the general goal(s),
7 Indicators for the specific goal(s),
8 Sources of verification for the specific goal(s),
9 Indicators for results,
10 Sources of verification for results,
11 Assumptions and risks for specific goal(s),
12 Assumptions and risks for results,
13 Assumptions and risks for activities,
14 Necessary resources for the implementation of activities (many LMs do not cover this category).

NOTE : The Logical framework Matrix should contain as little text as possible in order to be readable and clear. Any additional clarifications can be presented in the narrative part of the application, usually in several different segments. The goal is for the reader to gain a good impression of what the project is about, how it is planned to be implemented, who the stakeholders are, how long it can last in relation to the complexity of the content and number of activities and results, whether the intervention is realistic in terms of achieving goals, etc. The only thing that an insight into the LM does not provide is the project relevance, so we deal with this segment in detail in the narrative part of the application, which will later be discussed more thoroughly.

A discussion about the elements of the LM follows.

<u>About goals</u>

Project goals are defined in the identification stage. There are general and specific goals and within a single project it is possible to define more than one general and more than one specific goal. In most cases, applicants usually define one general and one to four specific goals. One should not exaggerate when it comes to the number of defined goals. Otherwise, the project may immediately be considered too ambitious or unachievable.

Attainability of goals is often linked to the manner in which they are defined, which should be as clear and precise as possible. This is achieved by utilising the SMART (smart, measurable, attainable, realistic, time-bound) approach. In this respect, we carefully define each specific goal so that it contains several determinants, e.g. the number of the population it refers to, the place where the project intervention is carried out, or the point in time in which the goal is achieved (e.g. by a certain month or year).

The general goal of the project is set more broadly (but not too broad, e.g. we cannot say that the project teaches about world hunger!), and it should be linked to the call/competition by being aligned with the general goal of the call/programme within which the call was announced. The project contributes to some extent to the achievement of the general goal. The general goal is therefore defined as a contribution to some wider policy. Thus, quite often general goals result in being a contribution to some broader national, sectoral or international (UN) policy, i.e. the project contributes to the achievement of one or more goals of that policy. In this regard, the general goal is actually the perceived impact of the project and is realised at some point after the end of the project.

We define specific goals clearly and concretely so that each of them represents an individual contribution to the achievement of the general goal and clearly emanates from one or more project results. In fact, specific goals constitute a promise to the donor that they will be achieved by the time the project ends, and those promises result in the direct benefits for the defined target groups because they solve the main identified problem.
The use of different terminology to denote general and specific goals is noticeable. Thus, one can encounter expressions such as *general objective*, *general aim*, and *overall objective* to denote a general goal, while *purpose* or *specific goal* or *specific objective* refer to specific goals. We define goals by using the to-infinitive construction.

SMART Objectives in Project Design

https://www.ucop.edu/local-human-resources/_files/performance-appraisal/How+to+write+SMART+Goals+v2.pdf

- Widely used framework for writing measurable objectives

About the results

Each project produces results that can be measured (tangible) - everything that we can take in our hands, e.g. research on the use of pesticides in the country, the establishment of an agri-entrepreneurs´ association, the purchase of a tractor or a new plant, etc. or non-tangible results which include changes in behaviour, knowledge, and skills.
Each project result is a consequence of the implementation of one or more activities, and leads to the achievement of one or more specific goals.

When we think about the results, we should consider different formulations in English that are used in the practice of different donors. In order to be sure what is meant by the term *result*, we should look at the donor´s instructions about filling in the forms for submitting the project proposal. We usually associate results with the terms *outputs*, *outcomes* and *deliverables*.

The achieved project results are presented to a wider audience through the dissemination process and are usually publicly available for further use, so it is necessary to assure their quality through monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities. We usually define results in the form of nouns – e.g. improved training content for farmers, reduced use of pesticides, and the like.

About activities and work packages
Each project contains a plethora of activities that can be logically grouped into work packages, i.e. activity clusters, as referred to in some calls. Each work package contributes to the creation of one or more outputs.
We define activities as processes that are carried out for some period of time. For the sake of defining activities we use verbal nouns such as creating, planning, acquiring, evaluating, testing, and the like.

A project should not have too many work packages. A donor´s tendency is that there are mandatory/or expected work packages on each project, and these are the ones whose activities last throughout the project - they unfold horizontally and simultaneously with the main activities grouped in other work packages.

Each project usually has five to eight defined work packages, two of which are mandatory horizontal work packages:

- The first one concerns project management and quality assurance, and
- The second one deals with the project dissemination, communication and exploitation.

The remaining (so-called intervention) work packages can include the following:

- A work package concerning research activities and data management,
- A work package relating to capacity building (competent administrative bodies, advisory services, farmers, agri-entrepreneurs...) whose backbone consists of knowledge transfer activities,
- A work package relating to advocacy and public policies comprising such activities as designing public campaigns, writing recommendations, etc.,
- A work package concerning the creation of innovations and the procurement and testing of equipment.

Some project activities are marked as *milestone* activities. Usually, these activities contribute to a specific result without which further progress on the project would not be not possible. Depending on the complexity, the project may have more (usually up to 5) identified activities of this type. They are also spread evenly across the work packages.
In some calls, activities are also referred to as *tasks*.
It is desirable to adequately name each work package.

Indicators

Indicators reveal the manner in which to measure the achievement of a certain result or a goal. Indicators can be quantitative, qualitative, and temporal. It is recommended to resort to a greater utilisation of quantitative indicators, either in the form of numbers or percentages (%), i.e. some unit of measurement.

Sources of verification

Sources of verification indicate where the documentation corroborating the achievement of indicators is stored (where and how we can make sure that indicators have been achieved). The most common sources of verification are reports, registers, public policies, contracts, and other sources.

Risks and Assumptions

Risks and assumptions are most often associated with results and goals, but also with work packages in more complex projects. Risks represent external factors that we cannot influence directly, but which can affect the project´s success.

Assumptions are the basis of every project idea, and by stating them we defend the possibility of reaching the desired goals through the project implementation. At the level of the general goal, the assumptions refer to the global, macro-economic political context that we believe must be provided. Furthermore, we ask ourselves what assumptions must

be attained for the implemented activities to lead to results, for the results to lead to specific goals, and for the specific goals to lead to the general goal.

In various donor forms, the risks and assumptions´ segment can appear in different places – either in the narrative part, or as a part of the LM. So, it is necessary to take care of the coherence and consistency of the texts. In the narrative part, the definition of risks is followed by a suggested strategy to control their impact. Likewise, we estimate the probability of risk occurrence, and assess the level of impact. It is necessary to identify risks of a different nature – technical, organisational, socio-economic, political, financial, and the like.

Finally, it should be noted that some donors do not employ the LM as a tool in the preparation of project proposals which encompasses all aspects of implementation - activities and results - defined in advance. They rather utilise the concept of the Theory of Change (TP). The LM is used as a tool for project planning as well as for the subsequent M&E. On the other hand, using TP emphasises our understanding of how and why a certain change occurs through the creation of cause-and-effect relationships between required resources, activities, results, outcomes, and impacts. Multilateral donors like the EU or the UN favour the use of the LM in their calls, while bilateral donors (individual embassies) use the TP concept more often.

Outcomes and examples. The outcome of this segment of the formulation stage is a correctly and thoroughly filled in LM, according to the examples given in the table below. Some donors put a limit on the length of the LM (eg. three to five pages). It is a good practice to numerically and consistently state the results, activities and indicators in the LM, as well as in the budget table and the narrative part. We usually mark activities by using the capital letter A and adding an ordinal number to the number of the work package (thus, if we take the first package as an example, then the first planned activity on the project will be marked as A1.1. and so on). In the case of results and indicators, we follow the same principle, changing the initial letter to **r** or **i**, for example.

Do It Yourself (DIY) : Try to develop a logical framework using the table below as an example

Table 5: LM - examples

	LM	INDICATORS	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS AND RISKS
GENERAL GOAL	GG1: To contribute to the strengthening of cooperation between universities and businesses through a greater use of ICT in agriculture	3 annual national EXPO events for min. 100 participants from the field of ICT and agriculture Increased capacities of universities to use ICT in agricultural studies in 5 areas by 2023.	Project reports Cooperation agreements Alumni employment statistics Training reports	
SPECIFIC GOALS	SG1: To increase the capacity of ICT application in 4 segments in agricultural study programmes of 5 universities and in practice through cooperation between businesses and universities in the field of ICT and agriculture SG2: To increase the effectiveness and employability of 100 agriculture students coming from 5 institutions	• 24 professors trained in the application of robotics and IoT in agriculture • 5 university ToT teams • 7 courses based on ICT topics in agriculture for students • 200 students attend courses on ICT in agriculture • Handbook on the use of ICT in agricultural studies in 5 areas (80 pages). • 2 hackathons covering the topic of ICT application in agriculture with 100 participants - students of electrical engineering and agriculture 2 EXPO events with 16 members of the organising committee	Agendas from training sessions, lists of attendees, pictures, evaluation forms, reports Project website EXPO platform Media reports, reports from the EXPO event and hackathons Registration for fast courses for students	*Assumptions:* The country continues with the process of reforms in education and modernisation of study programmes and higher education institutions. The Country continue with the digitalisation process Higher education institutions continue to develop cooperation with business partners *Risks:* Slow acceptance of novelties and fear of digitisation in traditional agriculture and among professors Internal political instability that blocks the country's economic growth
RESULTS	Work Package 1: SITUATION ANALYSIS r1.1. Comparative analysis and report with recommendations on the observed needs of the university; r1.2. Web portal; r1.3. Introductory conference Work Package 2: CAPACITY BUILDING r.2.1 Improved competences of professors on the use of ICT in agricultural studies; r 2.2 Purchased and installed ICT	1 comparative analysis and needs assessment report (80 pages). 1 web portal with min 1000 visits 1 conference/50 participants 1 seminar/24 participants 20 sets of ICT equipment in agriculture	Web portal Agenda, reports, pictures from the event Decisions of higher education institutions for approved courses Media reports	*Assumptions*: Agriculture professors recognise a great need for additional ICT knowledge and are open to innovating the content of their lectures Universities and businesses have a mutual interest to cooperate Students are interested in learning through work and in a team and they are interested in entrepreneurship

	LM	INDICATORS	SOURCES OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS AND RISKS
	equipment; r 2.3 5 university ToT teams created r 2.4 Handbook/manual on the use of ICT in agriculture; r 2.5 Fast courses for students; r2.6 National hackathons r2.7. EXPO platform	5 ToT teams Manual - 400 copies, 80 pages Accelerated courses approved at 5 universities 2 national hackathons with 100 participants each EXPO work plan 2 EXPO with 200 participants 17 EXPO organising members		*Risks*: Professors do not have enough time to devote it to professional development; Different public procurement systems in Bosnia and Herzegovina can slow down joint procurement and cause delays in the use of procured materials and equipment. Changes within the consortium may slow down the continuation of activities
ACTIVITIES	Work Package 1: SITUATION ANALYSIS A 1.1. Implementation and planning Research into the current situation and needs´ analysis; A 1.2. Web portal design; A 1.3. Organising the Introductory Conference Work Package 2: CAPACITY BUILDING A 2.1 Organising the training for professors on the use of ICT in agricultural studies; A 2.2 Execution of public procurement with the aim of purchasing, installing and maintaining ICT equipment at universities; A 2.3 Creation and networking of 5 university ToT teams A 2.4 Developing a handbook/manual on the use of ICT in agriculture; A 2.5 Creation of quick courses for students on the use of specific ICT tools in agriculture; A 2.6 Organising national hackathons A 2.7. Creation and organisation of EXPO platforms and events	Resources/costs/inputs: Presentation of necessary resources according to budget categories - directly as stated in the budget: WORK PACKAGE 1: 100 days of engagement; 1 subcontracting in the amount of EUR 2000 for the creation of a website		Partners engage experienced and credible project coordinators who will work on needs analysis The required data exist and are available to the public; All trainings are based on an assessment of real needs of the training participants Students are motivated to get involved because they recognise the importance of the project for their future careers, through networking, increased employability. *Risks*: Bureaucratisation of EXPO Partners are indifferent to the obligation to regularly update the website Poor English skills in the financial and legal services at the university.

Source: Erasmus+ CBHE Project: Vitalising ICT Relevance in Agricultural Learning - VIRAL

TOPIC 7: PROJECT NARRATIVE

What is on our mind? What to write? The project narrative refers to the description of all its parts, according to the format set by the donor. In this segment, we write texts as answers to the posed questions, and we try to tell an authentic story. The most important segments of the narrative are as follows:

- Relevance
- Methodology
- Partnership
- Impact (dissemination) and sustainability

The project narrative provides one with a complete picture of what we wish to do, with the exception of the cost of each work package, i.e. project activities, since this is the information that we provide in the budget form. The main skills that one needs in order to compose a competitive narrative part of the project are as follows: the knowledge of language and excellent written communication skills; using a writing style that is more technical and less literary, thus demonstrating the knowledge of the programme and the technical language of grants; storytelling skills, and brevity and consistency in narration.

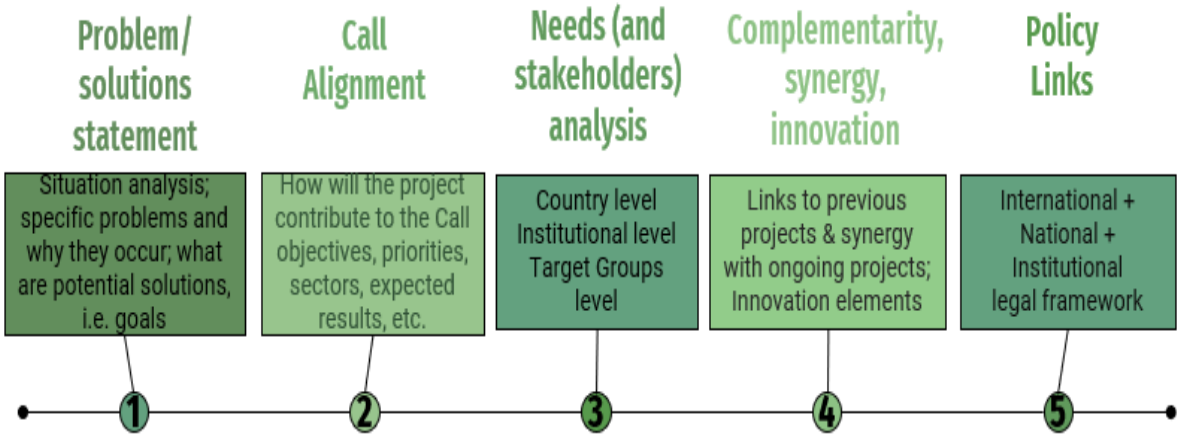
All questions and sub-questions that appear in the narrative need to be clearly answered. It often happens that despite the precisely formulated questions, the answers turn out to be elusive or fail to provide the required information. Likewise, answers are often copied from one section to another, or they appear to be incomplete or unconvincing for evaluators of project applications.

Discussion - relevance. The narrative of a project proposal usually begins with questions (and sub-questions) relating to the relevance, i.e. the importance of our project. The importance of our project has to be determined and described in relation to identified authentic and justified needs in the area within which the intervention is carried out, target groups directly involved in the project, the intervention sector, and the priorities and goals of the call itself.

The project relevance answers the question of why we are doing something and it should draw the attention of the reader/evaluator to the importance of the topic discussed in a convincing way. In other words, the narrative part gives us the opportunity to build the case for our project, based on the relevant data. Regardless of the format of the narrative,

the relevance segment should include an overview of the following 5 focal points that help to achieve project competitiveness:

Figure 8: Project Relevance Description in 5 Key Points



When there is room, it is suggested to refer to the description of the project contribution to, i.e. the relevance for the so-called horizontal (*cross-cutting*) aspects of development which are important to almost all donors, and which relate to the elements of digital transition, green transition, social inclusion and gender equality. Projects in the field of agribusiness, agriculture and rural development can be particularly suitable for contributing to the topics (even if they are secondary in relation to the focus of the project) of environmental protection, the introduction of ICT in rural areas, as well as the position of vulnerable groups in rural areas, especially (elderly) women and young people.

Horizontal (cross-cutting) aspects to consider			
01	02	03	04
Digital dimension	Green dimension	Social (inclusive) dimension	Gender dimension
Blended learning/mobilities; change of physical space and working in a virtual environment; Virtual cooperation & experimentation; Use of new technologies; Improving digital skills (digital knowledge transfer), etc.	How does the project incorporate green practices in different project phases. (e.g. bring about change of individual consumption habits, lifestyles); The project´s alignment with partners´ institutional practices regarding green policies; Contribution to the EU/SDG green agenda	Showcasing democratic values, participation of the underrepresented groups (vulnerable, marginalized society members) – inclusion & diversity	How does the project contribute to gender equality and balance, strengthen the socio-economic status of women and touch upon the balanced distribution of roles in the family, and society; Reflect on the project contribution to the relevant policies

Figure 9: Common Horizontal Aspects of Project Relevance

Experience has shown that most project proposals concerning grants deal more adequately with the description of the LM and methodology than with the description of relevance, even though the questions relating to relevance are the first to be answered and directly concern the overall impact that the project is expected to achieve based on defined problems and needs.

Moreover, when it comes to projects that are submitted in two steps, the relevance described at the first step constitutes an elimination criterion for submitting the entire project. Some of the most common mistakes that both novice and experienced applicants may make regarding relevance descriptions are presented in the picture below.

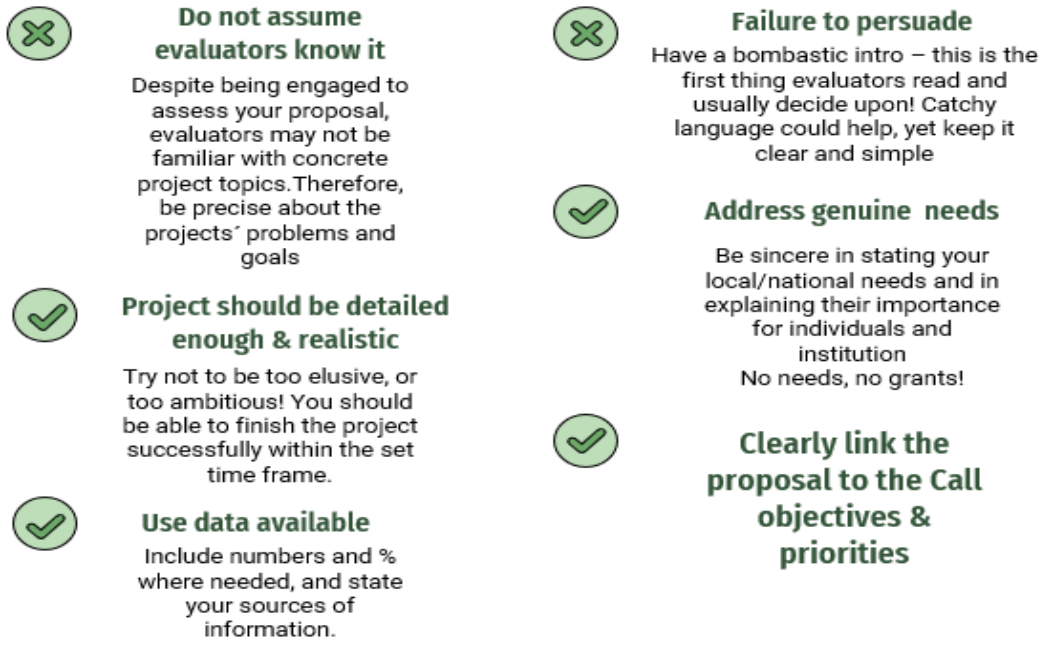


Figure 10: Relevance – common mistakes

Outcomes and examples - relevance. The questions and sub-questions that need to be answered in the narrative part about the relevance of the project are formulated differently in relation to different calls and approaches of donors. For instance, with the Horizon Europe projects, they are included in the *Excellence* part.

The main outcome of this segment is the correctly and competitively described project relevance which will unequivocally communicate to the project evaluators the following: the efficiency and effectiveness of the proposal, the range of influence, the uniqueness of the proposal, the usefulness for the community and individuals, the context in which the change should happen, and why it should happen.

Examples of frequently asked questions and sub-questions, and a suggested approach to providing answers:

1. ***The context and general objective –*** *Describe the general/international context in which the project takes place and how the idea came about; describe how the project contributes to the general objective of the call, the priorities and thematic focus of the call and the expected results (if defined) - i.e. the assigned/expected scope of work;*
2. ***Needs analysis and specific objectives****. Describe how the project contributes to the specific objectives of the call; clarify your specific goals (use the SMART principle) that you have defined based on identified problems; explain the problems and present the situation in the area the project deals with in the target country, region, local community; present the needs of the sector to which the project refers, local communities, identified target groups and beneficiaries, as well*

as partner institutions; describe the target groups of the project and other stakeholders, the method of their selection and participation in the project; use numbers and percentages (%) wherever possible;

3. ***Complementarity, innovation, added value**. Complementarity refers to the description of how the project relies on previous knowledge and work in the area of intervention (or previous scientific achievements); comment on the complementarity with other projects of the same or other donors, especially those implemented so far by the project partners; describe the elements of innovation[2]; when describing the added value[3] of the project, a review of the project's contribution to topics of horizontal importance is expected - promotion of good practices in the field of intervention, promotion of gender equality, promotion of public-private-civil partnerships, and the like.*

METHODOLOGY

4. *and the like.*

Figure 11: Methods and methodology

Discussion - methodology. When the description of the project´s relevance is completed, it is time to move to the segment of methodology description in the narrative

[2]The concept of innovation does not necessarily refer to new horizons from the scientific standpoint (except in the context of scientific projects such as Horizon Europe); it is possible to highlight any novelties that the project brings, such as - the inclusion of a specific target group, or a local community, testing a new method and the like.

[3] In some calls, a reference to the EU added value is requested, whereby it should be described how the project has the potential to influence other EU countries to use the results, especially border territories; therefore, it describes the transnational dimension of the project and the replication potential of project results.

part[4]. Methodology answers to the question of *how* we work. Also, in this segment of the project narrative, we actually describe and *defend* the selection of activities and work packages exactly as they have been defined in the LM, defining the relations between them, as well as the time frame for the implementation of activities/work packages. The use of different methods indicates the existence of project phases - preparation (inception), implementation, dissemination and impact (the follow-up phase).

The goal of methodology is to determine/identify work methods appropriate for achieving the project's goals. Methodology represents an analysis of all methods and procedures planned for the project (including those relating to project management, risk management strategies, quality assurance - monitoring and evaluation, dissemination). We should keep in mind the differences between methods and methodology - while work methods are defined as conducting research, testing, and the like, methodology is an overview of specific techniques used in research, testing, and piloting.

Outcomes and examples - methodology. The most frequently asked questions relative to the description of project methodology are as follows:

1. *Describe the concepts and methodology.*
2. *What are the project risks and assumptions?*
3. *Describe how the project is managed and the quality of the project is ensured - what is the M&E strategy, what are the project management mechanisms, what are the mechanisms of coordination and communication between partners and with third parties?*
4. *What is the timeline for the implementation of each activity/work package?*

Some useful examples of working methods-concepts-practices in the agricultural sector are as follows:

- Entrecomp (Entrepreneurial competence) Framework in Agriculture,
- Local Action Groups (LAGs) as an example of private-public civil partnerships,
- Training of Trainers,
- Evidence-based policy making,
- Social experimentation and innovation in rural areas,
- IoT in agriculture,
- Financial support for third parties.

RISKS

Some typically considered examples of risks - which can be grouped according to the work packages they relate to and should optimally count five to eight (in medium-sized projects) - are presented in the table below.

[4] Questions relating to methodology can be encountered throughout the narrative, depending on the donor's form.

Risk description	Work packages	Risk management measures/strategies
Operational risks: Withdrawal of a consortium member, withdrawal of a project manager or a key expert; low probability, high impact severity; Budget inadequacy; low probability, medium impact severity; Insufficient engagement of national partners in communication with stakeholders – medium probability; high impact severity.	WP1 WP2 WP3 WP4 WP5	The project Steering Committee is formed with the aim of strategic decision-making, including the replacement of partners in the event of the withdrawal. Problems with budget gaps will be identified in the initial phase of implementation, and all changes will be agreed upon with the donor; all partners are ready to use more resources for a certain period of time, if necessary; partners are a part of the national rural network for the development of agriculture and villages, so they are in a good position to engage additional human capacities of stakeholders for project quality implementation and results, including their engagement in M&E activities.
Technical risks: Difficulties that the rural community encounters with the use of new information and communication technologies (ICT), and the lack of basic infrastructure - including the Internet; lack of funds; medium probability, high impact severity.	WP4	Innovative technological solutions will take into account the existing local restrictions in relation to each local self-government unit; A systemic analysis of the implementation space and existing obstacles will be conducted and used in accordance with the work plan. Capacity building activities will be carried out through physical demonstrations as well as through virtually available materials.

Table 6: Risk Matrix – an example

Description of project management and quality assurance

Describing the aspects of project management (PM), and quality assurance (QA) is an integral part of project methodology and must be explained separately in order to convey an impression of the existing capacities for quality management and achieving the expected results, i.e. achieving goals.
In accordance with the level of project complexity, this segment should describe the following:

- management structures that are of strategic importance (the formation of a management body such as the Steering Committee chaired by a representative of the leading institution on the project, i.e. the coordinator is most often proposed); these are formed to last throughout the entire duration of the project;
- bodies of an operational nature, e.g. joint procurement commission;
- expert bodies that support joint work on project activities in accordance with the partners' expertise and expected results - work teams according to work packages, and the like;

- a special body dealing with M&E is often recommended in the form of an independent quality committee involving stakeholders outside the project consortium, and the like;
- the guiding principles of the PM, as well as listing the project managements documents, such as Quality Control Manual, Communication Strategy, Code of Ethics, Work Plan and others;
- Coordination and communication mechanisms of a virtual and non-virtual nature, and the like.

Timeline and other related details

Concerning the project timeline, a Gantt chart is usually filled out with activities planned for each month of project implementation.

It is important that the start-up phase is not too long - three to six months is the usual start-up period for projects lasting between 24 and 48 months. The final two to three months is the time when the consortium works intensively to close the project and initiate the final reporting. For each planned activity, a realistic duration and interdependence with other related activities should be determined.

If there is an equipment procurement activity on the project, it is important that it is done as early in the project as possible, and that the equipment is put into use during the project lifetime.

If there is an activity on the project, i.e. more often a work package that involves re-granting, i.e. the possibility of awarding mini-grants to small-scale and less experienced organisations, the time frame for such an activity must be defined in relation to the complexity of the grant scheme and the expected level of work of each partner in implementing the grant scheme, with a specially defined preparatory phase, mini-grant implementation phase, grant scheme closing phase, and support programme evaluation.

Do It Yourself (DIY): Build a simple timeline and include start & end dates,key milestones etc

SUPPORTING LITERATURE

Reports & Guides

- FAO – *Project Cycle Management Guidelines*
  https://www.fao.org/4/ak211e/ak211e00.pdf

- European Commission – *Project Cycle Management Handbook*
  https://www.betterevaluation.org/tools-resources/aid-delivery-methods-project-cycle-management-guidelines or *https://capacity4dev.europa.eu/library/aid-delivery-methods-project-cycle-management-guidelines-europeaid-2004_en*

- World Bank – *Designing Effective Projects*
  https://wedocs.unep.org/items/89b8c605-18f5-483d-b04a-691d3d94f09e

Articles

SMART Objectives in Project Design

https://www.ucop.edu/local-human-resources/_files/performance-appraisal/How+to+write+SMART+Goals+v2.pdf

- Widely used framework for writing measurable objectives

Videos

1. **Project Management Basics Explained in 10 Minutes**
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ThDdHETxA-g

Tools

Collaboration & Writing

- Google Docs → https://docs.google.com

Task Management

- Trello → https://trello.com
- Asana → https://asana.com

Brainstorming & Visual Planning

- Miro → https://miro.com
- Google Jamboard → https://jamboard.google.com