Managing complex projects
(and making them successful)

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Information Communication Technologies for the Research and Dissemination of Cultural Heritage – the Epoch project

Why planning techniques

Funding of projects takes place on
- Direct contact
  - Work is funded as part of ongoing budget, ot through direct negotiation
  - "Business as usual" but:
  - A well-structured proposal helps
- Competitive call
  - Work is funded in competition with other proposals
  - A structured proposal is necessary for evaluation and comparison

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International opportunities

- International institutions (e.g. the World Bank, the World Fund, etc.)
- European Union
  - Participating in EU programs as 3rd country
    - European Framework Programmes – presently 6th, 2004-2008
    - Specific programmes e.g. Culture, Environment
  - Participating in EU co-operation programs for specific world regions (EuropeAid) e.g. URBAL, Euro-India
  - In all cases involvement of a partner from an EU member state is required.
- Bi-lateral agreements with a specific country or EU
  - Involvement of a partner from the relevant country usually required

Some jargon

- **Program** (sometimes *programme*): set of actions decided by a funding body to fund activities. It has goals, priorities and conditions. Conditions on participation determine participants' eligibility. Usually the submission of proposals must follow a procedure and use prescribed forms.
- A program may have a continuous submission scheme (and proposals are evaluate periodically) or scheduled deadlines (**calls**) for submission.

Jargon (cont.)

- **Project**: set of integrated actions aimed at achieving some result, which fits into the program goals. Before being approved, it is a project proposal, or just a **proposal**.
- A project has an objective, a work-plan, deliverables, milestones, and success indicators. It should also include a risk assessment /contingency plan.

More jargon

- Objective: the project aim. It must be clearly expressed and be unique, as far as possible. There may be subordinate goals/positive effects.
- Work-plan: the complex of the activities envisaged by the project to achieve its objective. They must be necessary and economic. The work-plan organizes activities into a temporal and logical sequence.
- Deliverables: the project results. They must tangible (e.g. increase of public awareness is not a deliverable) and "deliverable" (i.e. the restoration of a monument is not a deliverable; the report on restoration is).
- Milestones: dates at which "important" events take place.
- Success indicators: parameters that allow to measure – directly or indirectly – the quality of the results. They must be objective (not subject to subjective evaluation), measurable and/or quantifiable. For example: the number of visitors of an exhibition.
- Risk assessment: statement of potential failure risks and actions planned (the contingency plan) to avoid them or reduce their impact.

Other elements

Other elements of a proposal include
- ✦ Analysis of the state of the art: justifies innovativeness (if requested)
- ✦ Motivation: explains the objective
- ✦ Description of partners: explains their eligibility and supports the strength of the partnership
- ✦ Partners' role: shows the fitness of the chosen partners
- ✦ Financial plan and partners' effort: of course!
- ✦ Ethical implications: concerns any overarching / mainstreaming ethical policy established e.g. equal opportunities
- ✦ Any other element requested by the funding body

Project methodologies

- ✦ Methods for compiling a project (proposal) guarantee
  - ■ Clarity of description
  - ■ Comparison
  - ■ Fair evaluation
- ✦ They usually turn into management tools when the project is approved
- ✦ They provide a way for periodic review/assessment/audit by the funding body

SWOT analysis

- Named after the words Strength, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats
- Born for strategic planning in industrial companies
- A way of analyzing a proposition (action, decision, whatever)
- Useful for introducing and discussing action(s) in the body of a proposal
- In general too simple to support a complex project

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SWOT

- Strength: what is good now
- Weakness: what is bad now
- Opportunity: what may be good in the future
- Threats: what may be bad in the future

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SWOT matrix

Strength	Weakness
◆ Advantages of proposition?	◆ Disadvantages of proposition?
◆ Capabilities?	◆ Gaps in capabilities?
◆ Competitive advantages?	◆ Lack of competitive strength?
◆ Resources, Assets, People?	◆ Reputation, presence and reach?
◆ Experience, knowledge, data?	◆ Financials?
◆ Likely returns?	◆ Own known vulnerabilities?
◆ Reach, distribution, awareness?	◆ Timescales, deadlines and pressures?
◆ Innovative aspects?	◆ Cash-flow, start-up cash-drain?
◆ Location and geographical?	◆ Continuity, supply chain robustness?
◆ Value, quality?	◆ Effects on core activities, distraction?
◆ Accreditations, qualifications, certifications?	◆ Reliability of data, plan predictability?
◆ Processes, systems, IT, communications?	◆ Morale, commitment, leadership?
◆ Cultural, attitudinal, behavioural?	◆ Accreditations, etc?
Opportunities	**Threats**

SWOT matrix

Strength	Weakness
Opportunities	**Threats**
◆ Activity developments?	Political effects?
◆ Competitors' vulnerabilities?	Legislative effects?
◆ Lifestyle trends?	Environmental effects?
◆ Technology development and innovation?	IT developments?
◆ Global influences?	Demand?
◆ New markets, vertical, horizontal?	New technologies, services, ideas?
◆ Niche target markets?	Sustaining internal capabilities?
◆ Geographical?	Obstacles faced?
◆ Activity development?	Insurmountable weaknesses?
◆ Information and research?	Loss of key staff?
◆ Partnerships, agencies, dissemination?	Sustainable financial backing?
◆ Volumes, production, economies?	Economy - home, abroad?
◆ Seasonal, weather, fashion influences?	Seasonality, weather effects

Project cycle management

PCM

PCM consists of 6 steps
* Programming
* Identification
* Appraisal
* Financing
* Implementation
* Evaluation

PCM

The Project Cycle: Major Documents and Decisions
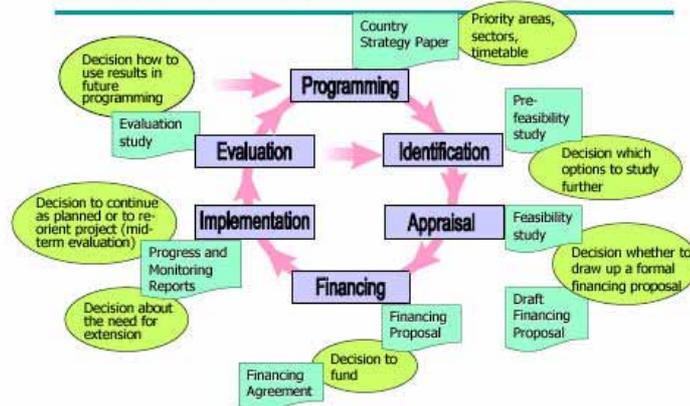
Structure of a project

1. **Summary**
2. **Background:**
   - Overall EC and Government policy objectives, and links with the Commission's country programme or strategy, commitment of Government to overarching policy objectives of the EC such as respect of human rights
3. **Sector and problem analysis**, including stakeholder analysis
   - Project description: objectives, and the strategy to attain them
   - Including lessons from past experience, and linkage with other donors' activities
4. **Description of the intervention**
   - Objectives, and strategy to reach them, including project purpose, results and activities and main indicators
5. **Assumptions, rirsks and feasibility**

Structure of a project

6. **Implementation arrangements**
   - Physical and non-physical means
   - Organisation and implementation procedures
   - Timetable, implementation schedule
   - Estimated cost and financing plan
   - Special conditions and accompanying measures by Government / partners
   - Monitoring and Evaluation
7. **Quality factors**
   - Participation and ownership by beneficiaries
   - Policy support
   - Appropriate technology
   - Socio-cultural aspects
   - Gender equality
   - Environmental protection
   - Institutional and management capacities
   - Financial and economic viability
   - **Annex: Logframe**

The Logical Framework Matrix

Vertical and Horizontal Logic
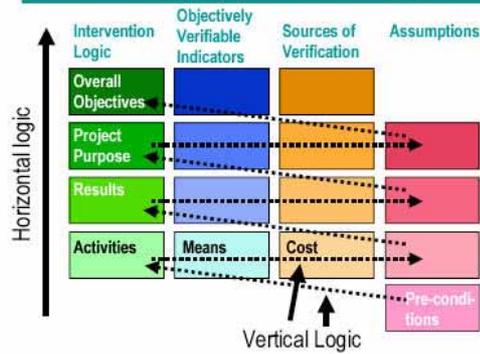
References

- European Framework programmes:
    - www.cordis.lu
- European Co-operation:
    - http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/index_en.htm

- In particular, the handbooks on PCM and the Logical Framework matrix is here:
    - http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/qsm/project_en.htm
- This is a summary page, with links to two excellent manuals.

Acknowledgement

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