



Sourcebook on sound planning of ESF programmes



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Acknowledgement

This sourcebook was written with the support of Benedict Wauters, external consultant.

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Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2007

ISBN 92-79-03258-5

Printed in Belgium

PRINTED ON WHITE CHLORINE-FREE PAPER

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INTRODUCTION

At the eve of a new financing round of the Structural Funds, it was essential to reflect on the planning process for the future European Social Fund (ESF) programmes, notably on the basis of the lessons learned from the EQUAL Community Initiative. The seminar on "sound programming of the new European Social Fund programmes" brought together politicians and managers to clarify the programming process, to learn about specific methods and tools for sound planning and to share experience from across the whole of Europe.

This report was drafted as a result of an ESF seminar which was held in Vilnius on 17-18 November 2005. It aims at providing more than a factual account of the seminar. Therefore, it is written as a sourcebook, drawing upon many sources of good practice, from inside but also outside the EU. It is hoped that this can be a "living document" that can continually be updated with new tools and experiences. It is in full accordance with other Commission guidance but it is less focussed on *what* should be present in programming documents and more on *how* programmers can draw up quality programming documents.

The seminar was organised by the EQUAL unit together with the EQUAL Managing Authorities from Lithuania, Italy, Poland and French speaking Belgium. It proved to be of great interest to the Member States, attracting almost 200 delegates from all over the EU as well as Bulgaria and Romania.

The seminar was also a kick-off for a series of follow-up seminars organised by the Commission's EQUAL unit

together with the ESF co-ordination unit in December 2005 on innovation and transnational cooperation and in January 2006 on partnership and gender mainstreaming. Therefore the Vilnius seminar did not specifically address those issues (for which separate guidance notes are available¹) but focussed on generic planning of ESF programmes.

The seminar provided an opportunity to exchange experience and plans regarding key success factors for planning the new programmes:

- a strategic approach oriented towards the objectives of the new "Integrated guidelines on jobs and growth",
- a wide partnership in support of reforms and a shared ownership of the objectives of the European strategy for growth and jobs, and finally the capability to facilitate and enable learning and the delivery of reforms.

During interactive workshops, the seminar participants identified key challenges that confront them when planning the next generation of ESF programmes. They also identified useful approaches, including from EQUAL, to tackle those challenges. Finally, they formulated a number of priorities to be addressed by themselves as well as the Commission (see annex 1 for details). The importance of mainstreaming EQUAL principles and the support for institutional capacity in Convergence Regions and Cohesion Member States was also underlined.

In addition, the EQUAL Managing Authorities of Lithuania, Italy, Latvia, Poland, Hungary, United

1 http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equal/news/200606-reflection-notes_en.cfm

Kingdom, French-speaking Belgium and Sweden had organised an information market to showcase and explain their experiences concerning effective planning of projects and programmes, by applying a jointly developed toolkit for planning, monitoring and evaluation of innovative and transnational projects. The evaluation of the application of this toolkit² by more than 400 Development Partnerships concludes that this method has been very useful as it enabled better quality project management. It also allowed decreasing design problems considerably and ensured high participation levels and less disagreement among partners. Therefore, it could be regarded as a widely applicable planning method.

The source book is structured around the four main issues identified in the workshop discussions, being:

- strategic orientation and coherence,
- stakeholder engagement,
- delivery planning,
- monitoring and evaluation.

Addressing these issues is essential for ensuring good governance of ESF programmes.

In Annex 2, various useful references are listed. The sourcebook draws heavily on the work of the UK Prime Minister's Strategy Unit whose deputy-director was a speaker at the conference.

2 The **EQUAL Partnership Development Toolkit** – a practical guide to participative planning, monitoring and evaluation for facilitators of EQUAL Development and Transnational Partnerships, European Commission, Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, September 2005.

STRATEGIC ORIENTATION AND COHERENCE

1

1.1 INTRODUCTION

With its Communication "Working together for growth and jobs: A new start for the Lisbon Strategy" of February 2005, the Commission launched a revamped Lisbon Strategy.

The **Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs** (2005–2008) that aim to support the Lisbon Strategy, were proposed by the Commission and approved by the Council (July 2005), presenting common priorities to the Member States' national employment policies. The employment guidelines are now integrated with the macro-economic and micro-economic policies and are set for a three-year period. These new employment guidelines are even more streamlined. Numbering eight they fit within three priorities: attract and retain more people in employment, increase labour supply and modernise social protection systems; improve adaptability of workers and enterprises; increase investment in human capital through better education and skills.

Every Member State draws up a **National Reform Programme** (NRP) (until 2005, these were the National Action Plans) which describes how the Employment Guidelines are put into practice at the national level. They present the progress achieved in the Member State over the last 12 months and the measures planned for the coming 12 months; they are both reporting and planning documents. In addition, the Member States need to ensure that the social inclusion and social protection/pensions as well as education and training processes (all using the open method of coordination)

feed into their response to the Employment Guidelines. At the same time, the "Cohesion Policy in Support of Growth and Jobs: Community Strategic Guidelines, 2007–2013" draws attention to the following:

- the strategic dimension of cohesion policy is strengthened to ensure that Community priorities are better integrated into national and regional development programmes;
- efforts are made to ensure greater ownership of cohesion policy on the ground. This is reflected in a reinforced dialogue in the partnerships between the Commission, the Member States and the regions, and in a clearer and more decentralised sharing of responsibilities in areas such as financial management and control.

The cohesion policy exposes three main transversal priorities for 2007–2013:

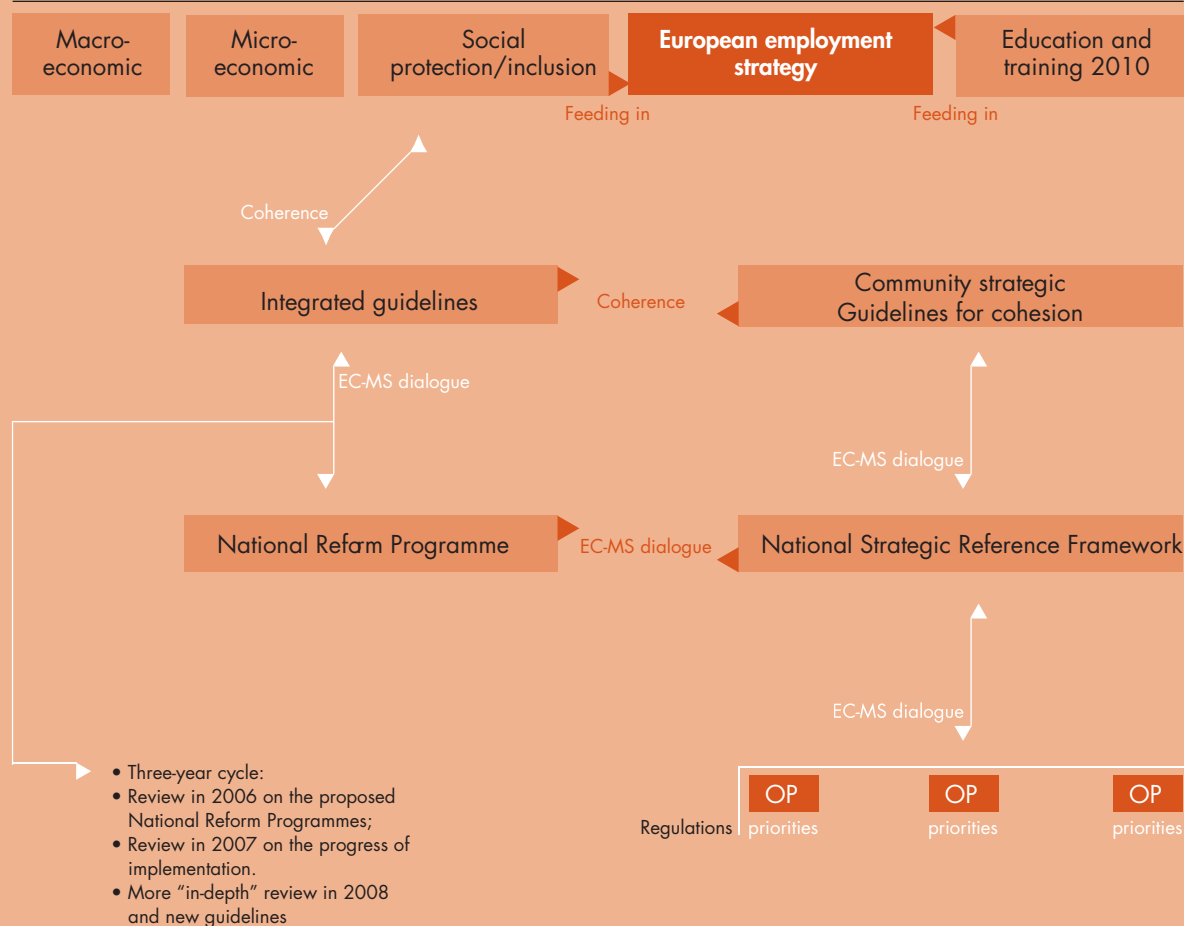
- improving the attractiveness of Member States, regions and cities by improving accessibility, ensuring adequate quality and level of services, and preserving their environmental potential;
- encouraging innovation, entrepreneurship and the growth of the knowledge economy by research and innovation capacities, including new information and communication technologies;
- creating more and better jobs by attracting more people into employment or entrepreneurial activity, improving adaptability of workers and enterprises and increasing investment in human capital.

Consistency between The Employment Guidelines and the third cohesion priority is ensured as these are virtually identical.

Figure 1

Overview of the new Structural Funds policy context

Lisbon Strategy: Jobs and Growth! + Gothenburg



A great deal of attention is devoted to the concept of "good governance". This concept also finds its place in the ESF regulation (see below) where it is linked to institutional capacity building and the promotion of partnership (adequate participation of social partners and non-governmental organisations).

The **new general regulation for the Structural Funds** defines common principles, rules and standards for the implementation of the ERDF, the ESF and the Cohesion Fund. Based on the principle of shared management between Commission, Member States and regions, this regulation describes programming requirements, as well as common standards for financial management, control and evaluation.

The **ESF regulation** provides ESF specific requirements.

The focus on a strategic approach to programming is the key change compared with the current programming period. Member States should set out national objectives, in line with the CSG, in the National Strategic Reference Frameworks (NSRFs), along with a strategy to achieve these objectives. The NSRFs must also ensure that the assistance from the funds is consistent with the National Reform Programme.

The NSRF should therefore present a consistent strategy for the concerned Member State to respond to the EU objectives.

The next step is to further operationalise the strategy set out in the NSRF through the operational programmes (OP). Thus, the strategy of the OP should be seen as an integral part of the whole strategic approach (CSG – NRP – NSRF – OP).

Other crucial issues of the new ESF Regulation are:

- promotion of innovation and transnational cooperation which gives important opportunities to go beyond traditional actions and to reinforce all ESF activities;
- strong focus on the adequate involvement of all partners in preparation, implementation and monitoring of the ESF support;
- the focus on institutional capacity, which constitutes a priority for ESF interventions in the next programming period; the priority will support Convergence regions in their efforts to reform and modernise their administrations. Interventions under this priority will be extended to the whole territory of Cohesion countries. In comparison to the current and previous programming periods, the new priority will focus on supporting reforms or comprehensive modernisation of the administration and not on ad hoc actions. Under this priority, support will be provided to the development and design of policies

and programmes, as well as to their delivery and implementation.

To summarise and conclude, it is crucial for the strategic approach to ensure coherence and logic of the objectives and indicators:

- between strategic documents;
- between programmes;
- within one programme.

The Operational Programmes' objectives must clearly contribute to the objectives established at national level, which in turn respond to the objectives established at EU level.

Moreover, the clear link between the needs, objectives and results must be ensured.

Figure 1 provides an overview of the new context for the structural funds that has been described above.

Documentation:

- Working together for growth and jobs – A new start for the Lisbon Strategy COM(2005) 24, February 2005
- Delivering on growth and jobs: a new and integrated economic and employment co-ordination cycle in the EU. SEC(2005) 193 February 2005
- Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs (2005-2008), Council document, April 2005

All above documents are to be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/growthandjobs/key/index_en.htm

- Cohesion Policy in Support of Growth and Jobs: Community Strategic Guidelines, 2007-2013 COM(2005) 0299, June 2005: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/2007/osc/index_en.htm

- Speech at the Vilnius seminar by Mrs L. Samuel, Deputy Director General DG Employment, Social Affairs and EQUAL Opportunities

- Presentation at the Vilnius seminar by Mrs M. Donnelly, Head of Unit of the ESF coordination unit

Both documents can be found at:

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equal/news/20051125-vilnius_en.cfm

- Structural Funds regulations:

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/official/regulation/newregl0713_en.htm

1.2 SITUATION ANALYSIS

TOOLS

PESTLE ANALYSIS

What it is: P(olitical) E(conomic) S(ocio-cultural) T(echnological) L(egislative) E(nvironmental) trend analysis tries to identify in a systematic way the key factors that can influence the policy objectives relevant for an ESF programme and analyse the trends that are caused by these key factors.

It is therefore key to start with an analysis of **the policy objectives at both EU** (see reference material listed under

1.1 for starting points), **national, regional and local level** as these are the high-level aims to which a programme will need to contribute. Special attention should therefore be devoted to understanding new or recently modified policies as overlooking these may pose a serious risk to the external coherence of programme objectives to the overarching policy objectives. For new policies, "policy characteristics analysis" is a useful tool (see reference in "Documentation" below) to help managers better understand the dimensions and dynamics of the policy, where it came from, and where support and opposition are likely to be strongest. This understanding can carry over into more detailed appraisal, such as stakeholder analysis (see Chapter 2).

At national level, the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) provides for the overall policy direction of the Structural Funds. Regional and local policy objectives, if relevant, should first be put into the perspective of the NSRF. This can be done using a simple grid with NSRF objectives on one axe and regional local objectives on the other. This will also reveal potential policy gaps at the local and regional level. This step is also useful for identifying potential sources of co-financing.

The next step is to identify those **factors that in the past had the most impact** on these overall policy objectives. This may even concern other EU or national policies and legislations e.g. income tax or environmental legislation. It may also concern general economic, socio-cultural, environmental or technological factors. For example, a key driver influencing employment objectives in many Member States has been changing population demographics leading to a trend of an ageing population which in turn has led to increasing delocalisation of manufacturing industries to low-wage countries (an economic trend).

Figure 2

PESTLE analysis

<p>ECONOMIC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business cycles GNP trends Interest rates Inflation Unemployment Disposable income Wage cost De(re)valuation 	<p>SOCIO-CULTURAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population demographics Income distribution Social mobility Lifestyle changes Attitudes to work and leisure Consumerism Unions Levels of education 	<p>TECHNOLOGICAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speed of technology transfer Rates of obsolescence Government spending on research / Cooperation of industry and science / Patent protection Government and industry focus on technology New discoveries Speed of technology transfer Rates of obsolescence ICT developments
<p>POLITICAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taxation policy Local government/devolved administrations 	<p>LEGAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertising laws Employment Law Competition Law Health & Safety Law Regional legislation Taxation (VAT, social) Subsidy policy Foreign trade and investment regulations 	<p>ENVIRONMENTAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental impact Environmental legislation Energy availability and cost Energy consumption Waste disposal

It is essential to look out into the future far enough to match the lifespan of the programme as some factors may exert influence only over the longer term.

A next step is to assess whether there are **new factors** that may drive performance concerning relevant policy objectives. These are harder to identify. Therefore, it is useful to use a normative framework that pre-specifies certain driving factors.

An example of a normative framework is Michael Porters' competitiveness framework which uses as a starting point the fact that competitiveness is determined by the productivity of the economy, which is measured by the value of goods and services produced per unit of the nation's human, capital, and natural resources. Productivity depends both on the value of products and services, measured by the prices they can command in open markets, and the efficiency with which they can be produced.

The following preconditions provide the opportunity to create wealth but do not create wealth themselves:

- sound fiscal and monetary policies (macro-economic)
- a trusted and efficient legal system
- a stable set of democratic institutions
- progress on social conditions.

The productivity of a region is ultimately set by the productivity of its companies. An economy cannot be competitive unless companies operating there are competitive.

Wealth is created at the micro-economic level of the economy through:

- the sophistication of companies operations and strategy
- the quality of the micro-economic business environment in which firms compete.

Broadly, companies must shift from competing on endowments or comparative advantages (low-cost labour or natural resources) to competing on business-specific competitive advantages arising from superior or distinctive products and processes.

Endowments such as natural resources play a declining role in competitiveness as the resource intensity of the economy falls, and as technology substitutes for resources or opens up new resource locations.

Moving to more sophisticated ways of competing depends on parallel changes in the micro-economic business environment. The business environment can be understood in terms of four interrelated areas:

- the quality of factor (input) conditions e.g.:
 - physical infrastructure: ICT, transport, energy
 - administrative infrastructure: administrative burden, red tape for start-ups, swift justice
 - technology infrastructure: availability of scientists and engineers, quality research institutions, enterprise / university collaboration
 - human resources: quality of education especially in maths, science and management
 - capital markets (venture capital, credit, equity)
- the context for firm strategy and rivalry:
 - incentives: e.g. labour-employer relations, intellectual property protection, bankruptcy rules, corporate governance rules
 - competition: e.g. locally based competitors with intense competition
- the quality of local demand conditions e.g.:
 - stringent environmental regulation
 - demanding regulatory standards

- government procurement of advanced products
- presence of demanding buyers who manufacture sophisticated products /services
- the presence of the related and supporting industries (clusters)

Clusters affect competitiveness in three broad ways:

- They increase the productivity of constituent firms or industries. Firms with a cluster have more efficient access to specialised suppliers, employees, information and training than isolated firms. The presence of a full range of inputs, machinery, skills, and knowledge promotes greater efficiency and flexibility than vertical integration or relationships with distant suppliers.
- They increase the capacity for innovation and productivity growth. Opportunities for innovation can often be perceived more easily within clusters, and the assets, skills and capital are more available to pursue them.
- They stimulate and enable new business formation that supports innovation and expands the cluster. The local presence of experienced workers and access to all the needed inputs and specialised services reduces the barriers to entry. The many local options for employment in other cluster companies lower the perceived risk of failure.

Of course, there are other frameworks that can be used, concerning overall competitiveness (see references) as well as for more specific issues.

Once all the relevant factors that drive performance (e.g. demographics) concerning policy objectives (e.g. growth of the economy) have been identified, the **actual trends** (e.g. pressure on public finances) that are driven by these factors (based on both qualitative and quantitative data) can be analysed. This entails analysing whether a trend has been increasing or decreasing in the past and what is expected in the future, taking into account a specific timeframe, based on an understanding of the relevant drivers behind the trend. Finally, it should be assessed whether this trend is positive or negative, relative to a policy objective. This again can be done in a grid that lists the trends on one axis and the objectives on another.

Why it is useful: this analysis provides a knowledge base that will serve as input for the S(trength) W(eaknesses) O(pportunities) T(hreats) analysis. It is most useful when it is combined with scenario planning and benchmarking (see below).

Documentation:

- PESTLE analysis at: http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/strategy/downloads/survivalguide/skills/s_pestle.htm
- National/regional competitive advantage at: <http://www.isc.hbs.edu/economicdevelopment.htm>
- A Study on the Factors of Regional Competitiveness at: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/studies/study_en.htm
- Technical note 3 on policy characteristics analysis at: http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/democracy_and_governance/publications/ipcindex.html

BENCHMARKING

What it is: benchmarking is the analysis of historical data over time or cross-sectional data to make comparisons relative to another entity (for example a country or region).

The European Commission provides a wide range of indicators that can be useful for benchmarking, for example:

- Joint employment reports and joint reports on social inclusion: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/employment_strategy/docindic_en.htm and http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/soc-prot/socincl/indicator_en.htm
- Progress towards the Lisbon Objectives in Education and Training: <http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/progressreport06annexes.pdf>
- The innovation scoreboard and other innovation-related data can be found at: <http://cordis.europa.eu/innovation-smes/src/policy.htm>

- European Competitiveness data and Entrepreneurial Climate Surveys: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/enterprise_policy/competitiveness/index_en.htm and http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/enterprise_policy/survey/eurobarometer83.htm
- Internal market scoreboard: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/score/index_en.htm
- EUROSTAT data including the structural indicators and general and regional statistics can be found at: <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>
- Global entrepreneurship monitor: <http://www.gemconsortium.org/default.asp>

Why it is useful: trends analysis is more useful if trends can be put into perspective by comparing them to, ideally, best-in class performers or an EU-wide average or target level. It should be used in the first place to increase understanding of the reasons for differences, rather than prompt specific actions, as in some cases it may make sense that there are differences without this being necessarily detrimental.

Documentation:

- Benchmarking at: <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/strategy/downloads/survivalguide/index.htm>

SWOT (STRENGTH-WEAKNESSES- OPPORTUNITIES-THREATS) ANALYSIS

What it is: a SWOT analysis (see Figure 3) summarises the relationship between environmental factors over which the government has by definition little direct control (e.g. competition from China) and resources that are in principle at the disposal of a country to be used to achieve government objectives (e.g. high quality universities).

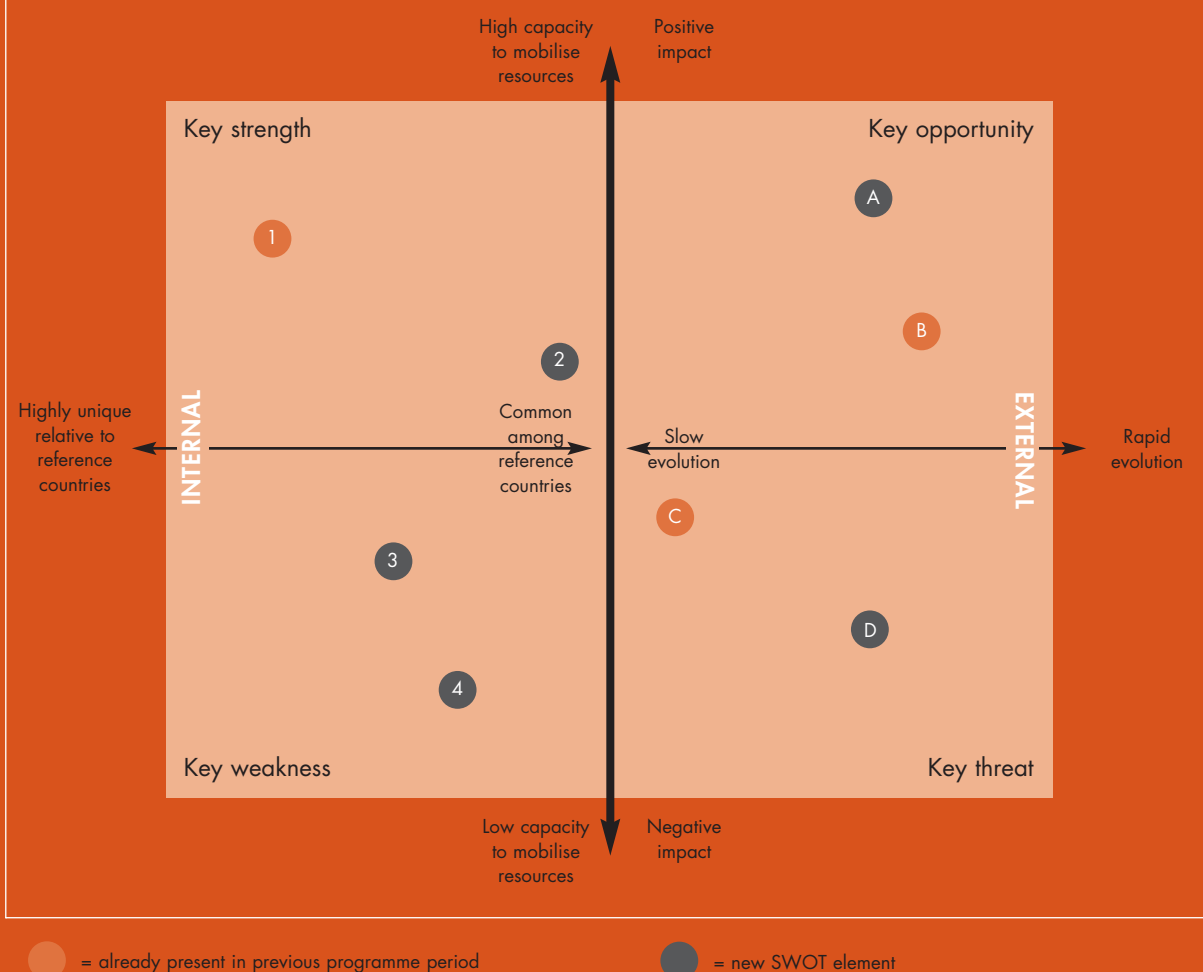
The (normative) PESTLE analysis will have identified the driving factors and the trends over time associated with these factors.

Some of these factors are resources the country or region can draw upon to reach its objectives: these are **strengths**. If resources are absent or cannot be mobilised easily, these are **weaknesses**. It is important not to confuse weaknesses (or strengths) with operational constraints

(or advantages) related to programme implementation (e.g. ESF administrative burden). In addition, it is necessary to determine whether these resources are common (i.e. all reference countries have them) or unique. Resources that can be easily mobilised and that are unique are key strengths whereas those that cannot be mobilised and are not unique are key weaknesses.

A country/region that ensures participation of the broadest possible range of actors in a strategic partnership will have more resources at its disposal (more possible strengths). If these actors are not involved, they may be seen as external factors and their actions may then even become threats. Stakeholder analysis is a useful tool to ensure the relevant actors are included in the programme (see Chapter 2).

It is important to keep this analysis at the level of the country (or region) and not at the level of the programme

Figure 3 SWOT analysis of ESF programming


since, at this point, the strategic context is being established. How the programme will act within that context will be determined using problem trees (see further).

Some factors are not within the direct sphere of control of a country/region (e.g. competition from China), although the country/region may be able to influence these factors indirectly to a lesser or higher degree (e.g. through the World Trade Organisation). The impact of these factors on the objectives of a country/region can be positive or negative, making these factors respectively **opportunities** or **threats**. In addition, the evolution of these factors can be fast or slow. External factors that are evolving quickly and are negative are key threats. Those that are positive and evolving quickly are key opportunities.

Some of the strengths may even have been the fruit of a previous ESF programme (having amended a weakness). Likewise, some of the weaknesses may have already been identified by such a programme but have

still not been amended. Opportunities and threats may also have retained their relevance since an earlier programme. In Figure 3, orange represents newly identified resources/trends while grey represents still relevant resources/trends from an earlier programme.

It is good practice to limit the total number of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to 12, while trying to maintain a good balance between them. This facilitates the next step which is to take these 12 factors as a basis to formulate strategic priorities. This can be done by means of assessing each strength and weakness as to how relevant these are in terms of the identified opportunities and threats (see Figure 4). When only weak resources are available in the face of threats, it is usually not very cost-effective to invest in these resources. However, it may be worthwhile to invest in searching for and/or creating opportunities, especially within an ESF context, if these resources are groups of people who would otherwise risk being left out of the loop.


Figure 4 SWOT priority formulation matrix


Why it is useful: a SWOT allows identifying the main strategic issues to be addressed. These issues can then be further explored using a problem tree.

Documentation:

- Technical note 1 on strategic management: http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/democracy_and_governance/publications/ipcindex.html
- SWOT: <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/strategy/downloads/survivalguide/index.htm>
- SWOT-analysis as a basis for regional strategies: www.nordregio.se/Files/wp0104.pdf

SCENARIO PLANNING

What it is: scenario planning builds on the PESTLE analysis which already identified high (positive or negative) impact drivers of change in the external environment (which became opportunities and threats in the SWOT). Scenario planning takes this analysis one step further by acknowledging that some of these drivers are highly uncertain. This means that the external environment could present widely different futures than the one derived from a traditional PESTLE analysis.

It is important to identify good scenario dimensions to provide a meaningful framework for developing scenarios.

For example, the UK DTI scenarios (see references below) are built in relation to two main dimensions: social values and systems of governance. Social values range from individualistic values to more community orientated values. It takes account of social and politi-

cal priorities and the pattern of economic activity that results from them. Systems of governance deals with the structure of government and the decision-making process. It ranges from autonomy where power remains at a national level to interdependence where power increasingly moves to other institutions, e.g. up to the EU to down to regional government. From these two dimensions, 4 scenario frameworks are derived (see Figure 5). The scenarios are then presented as storylines which provide more detail in a number of areas: economic and sectoral trends, employment and social trends, regional development, health, welfare and education and the environment. These details will of course differ according to the scenario within which they are framed.

The different scenarios can be used to assess whether the strategic priorities that were established on the basis of a traditional PESTLE/SWOT still hold under alternative futures (see Figure 6).



Figure 5 Scenario planning framework example

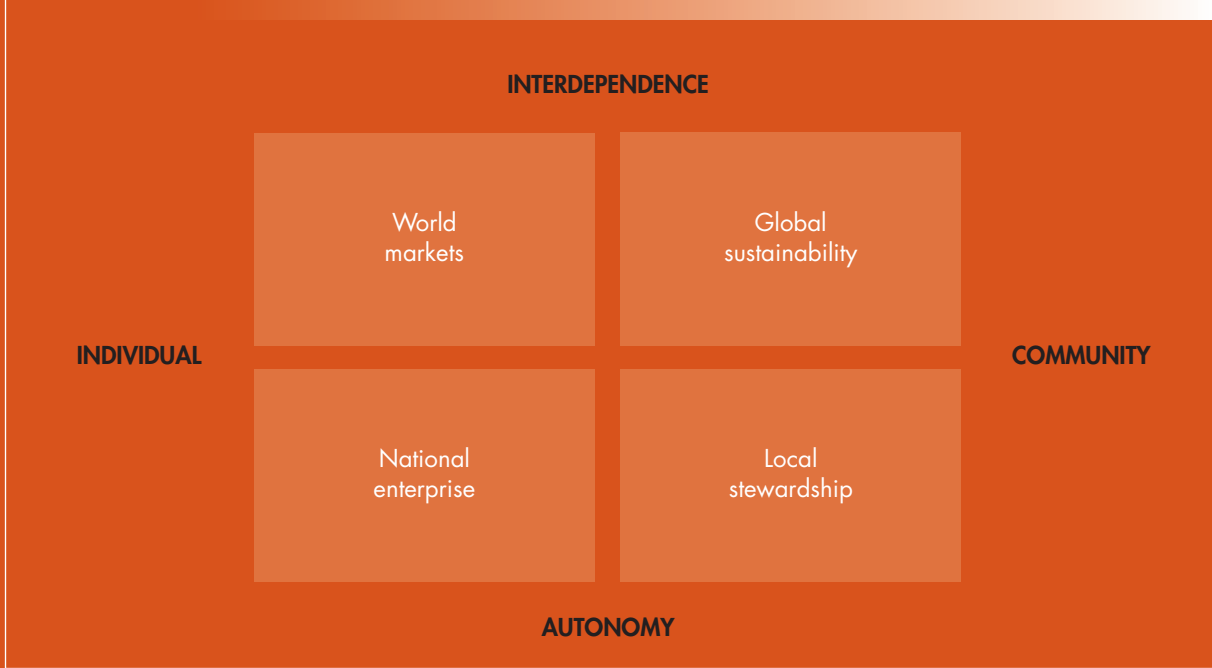


Figure 6 Robustness testing using scenarios

	Scenario A	Scenario B	Scenario C
Priority 1	++	++	++
Priority 2	--	--	++
Priority 3	--	++	++

++ very robust -- not robust



Why it is useful: in a PESTLE analysis the key drivers are frequently linked only to past trends which are assumed to evolve in line with the past. However, scenario planning challenges that assumption by acknowledging that

uncertainty may surround some of these drivers. By doing so, it can help to make programmes more robust, i.e. designed to handle a broader range of possible futures.

Documentation:

- European Commission Forward Studies Unit: http://ec.europa.eu/comm/cdp/working-paper/index_en.htm
- Scenario development: http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/strategy/downloads/survivalguide/skills/evidence_base.htm
- UK Department of Trade and Industry scenarios: http://www.foresight.gov.uk/Publications/Current_round_General_Publications/Foresight_Futures_2020_Revised_scenarios_and_guidance/index.htm

PROBLEM TREE ANALYSIS

What it is: a problem tree analysis brings together different people's perceptions of problems into a single agreed set of related problems. A problem is an existing negative situation and should not be used to describe the absence of a desired situation. For example, an existing negative situation can be 'the skills of the target group do not meet the needs of the employers'. Whereas the absence of a future desired situation can be 'the target group lacks trainings'. The former is a real situation felt by both the unemployed and employer, whereas the latter is not necessarily the problem but rather one of many possible solutions desired by some of the actors in the field.

Generally a problem tree is constructed during a participative workshop as follows:

- A general starter problem or rationale (which can be derived from the SWOT-generated priorities) will have been identified before the workshop.
- Once you have clarified the problem, write it on a card and place it in the middle of a wall/board.
- Give all the stakeholders cards of the same colour (e.g. yellow) to write their own ideas on about the associated problems, which either cause the key problem or are an effect (result) of the key problem. Within any group different people will see the same problem in different ways so you should encourage each person present to say what they think. The exercise captures all the different perceptions and insights which you must include as they form the basis of understand-

ing the whole problem. Try to describe the problem in terms of how it affects people. Use a phrase; for example, instead of using 'lack of skills' it is preferable to describe the problem in more detail such as 'existing skills do not match employers' needs'. If it is difficult to express a problem in concrete terms, try adding the specific target group to the problem and in that way the problem will become specific.

- The workshop leader should then place all the cards on the wall below or above the starter problem to create a hierarchy of cause and effect. If it is a cause, it goes on the level below, if it is an effect, it goes on the level above and if it is not a cause or an effect, it goes on the same level where it can create a new column of causes or effects.
- The workshop leader should then create different vertical columns of cause and effect problems.

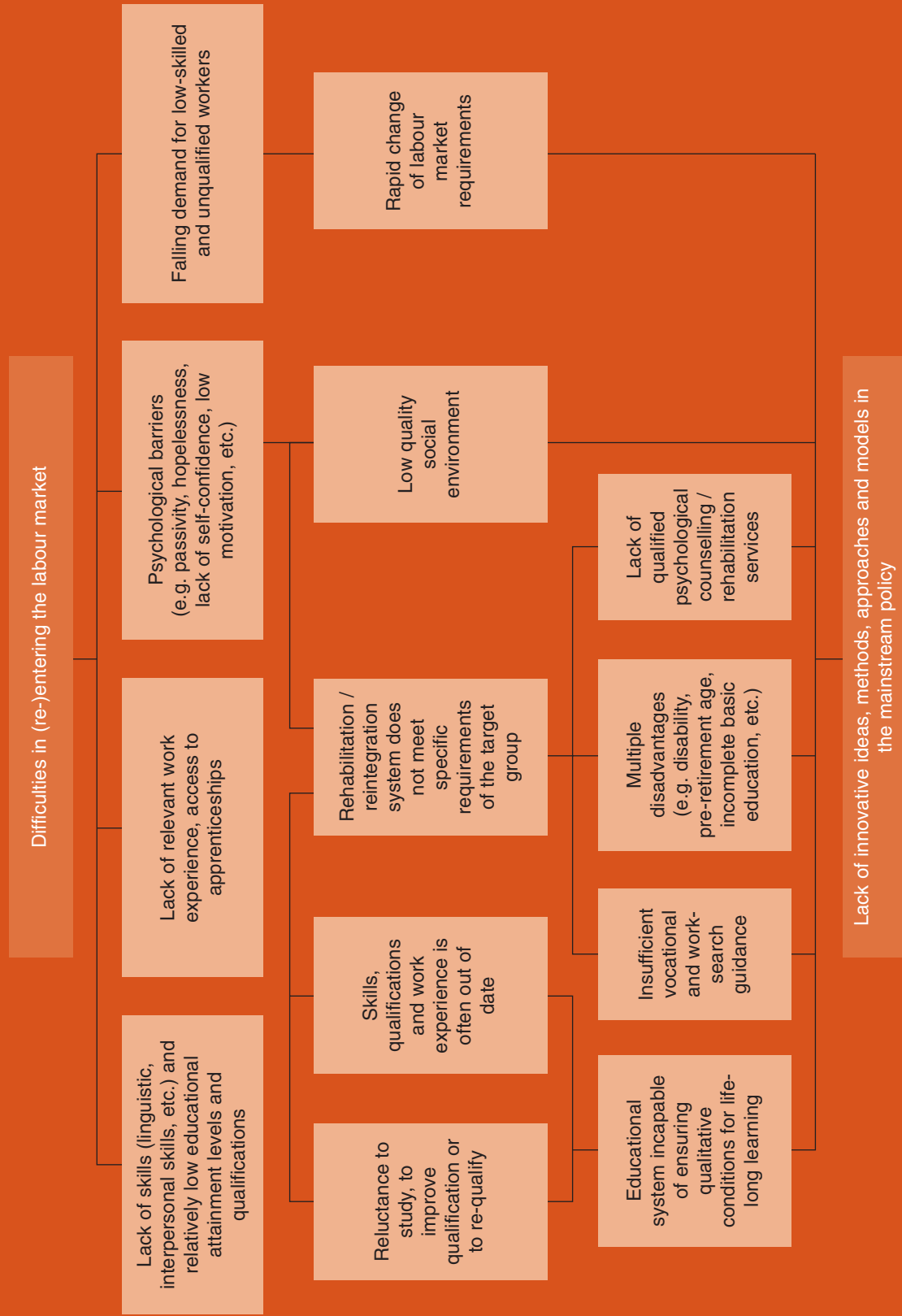
The exercise is complete when the top of the problem assessment could also be at the very bottom as the main cause. A continuous negative cycle of cause and effect is then revealed. At this stage you should make a final review of the hierarchies in terms of clear cause-and-effect relationships (see Figure 7 for an actual example of a problem tree³). In this respect, problem trees are a simplified form of systems theory.

Why it is useful: a problem tree provides a more comprehensive picture of how different problems are related to each other and attached to different stakeholders. It ensures that a perspective is not one-sided or focussing merely on symptoms.

3 This problem tree is given purely for illustration, without judging its methodological soundness.



Figure 7 Lithuanian EQUAL Managing Authority example



Documentation:

- Asian Development Bank sector improvement oriented approach:
http://www.adb.org/Documents/Guidelines/Logical_Framework/chap01.pdf
- Systems thinking in: <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/strategy/survivalguide/index.asp>

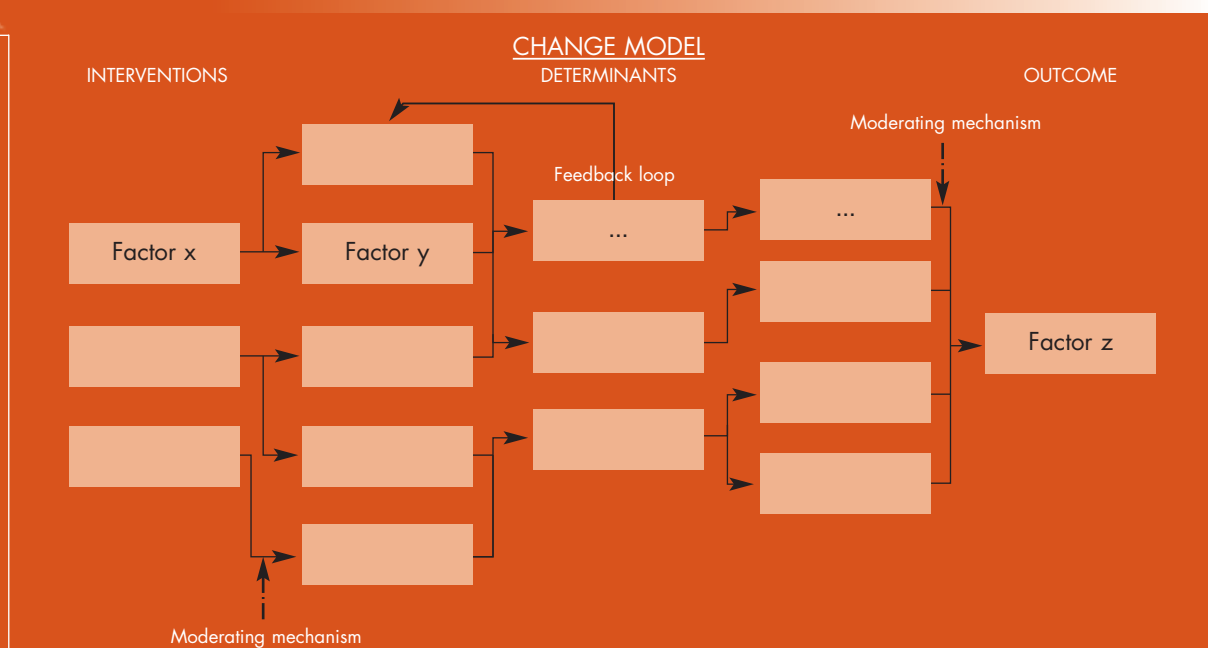
OBJECTIVE TREE

What it is: once a problem tree has been constructed, it is relatively easy to turn the negative, undesired existing situations into positive future situations. Objectives are not activities. An activity will use verbs such as 'to improve', 'reduce', 'construct' and so on. An objective is a description of what it will be like once something has been improved, reduced, constructed, and so on. For example, "low quality social environment" (see problem tree above) will become "high quality social environment". This is done for the entire problem tree. Sometimes just turning the problem into a positive statement does not make sense as the objective would be unrealistic. In this case, a more suitable alternative positive situation needs to be formulated.

The objective tree is actually a simplified representation of a more comprehensive "change model". A change model tries to identify the drivers of change (e.g. factor x in Figure 8) that will be affected directly by the intervention. It also determines all the intervening factors between these drivers (e.g. factor y) and a more distant outcome (e.g. factor z). An example could be a pro-

gramme that tries to improve student's school performance. The intervention could consist of financial sanctions targeted at the parents. This aims to address the key change driver of parent attention to discipline concerning their children. This could then further impact on children's attendance (an intervening factor) at school which then may lead to better performance. Moderating mechanisms (that are not directly involved in a cause-and-effect relation) may also exist, such as gender issues (e.g. parents may have more influence on girls than on boys). It is clear that this "model" could be expanded to take into account many more drivers and intervening factors. The differences with an objective tree are:

- Feedback-loops;
- Moderating mechanisms;
- Usually focused more on beneficiary result, rather than on the ensuing broader impacts;
- Taking into account not only bottlenecks as determinants, but also other, more positive factors that help explain why change for beneficiaries will occur; the advantage of this is that it may be important, next to solving bottlenecks, to take action in order to ensure that positive factors are not weakened.

Figure 8**Comprehensive change model representation**

The change model can also be based on scientific theory), instead of the perceptions of stakeholders. Experience shows however that “stakeholder” theory tends to be as reliable as “scientific” theory. In addition, stakeholder theory is closer to actual practice and uses a language that is instantly understood.

The next step is then to prioritise between these objectives in a coherent way, deciding what YOU will do and what you assume someone else will take care of or what you think is not really crucial to solving the key problem. In a participative setting, this can be done by using vot-

ing: an equal number of votes (e.g. 10, depending on the size of the objectives tree) is given to each participant. These votes can be allocated to the different objectives (ranging from 10 votes to one objective or 1 vote for 10 objectives). This will highlight the objectives that are a high priority for most of the stakeholders. This will provide the basis for constructing the intervention logic (see Section 1.3).

Why it is useful; by focusing on a positive image of the future, it will be easier to identify actions that will make this future happen.

Documentation:

- Asian Development Bank sector improvement oriented approach:
http://www.adb.org/Documents/Guidelines/Logical_Framework/chap01.pdf
- Theory of change website from the Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change:
<http://www.theoryofchange.org>

DATA GATHERING

In order to use the aforementioned tools, you will need to compose a base of evidence. This can be done in the ways listed below, as well as by involving stakeholders (see Chapter 2).

INTERIM AND EX-POST EVALUATIONS

At this stage, the interim and ex-post evaluations of previous programmes can provide first indications of major weaknesses, opportunities and threats that still exist and give ideas on what should be done about these. It may also identify strengths that can be used for the new programme.

These evaluations can also be used to find out what activities have worked well or not so well in the past to address problems/objectives that are still relevant. In this respect, it may also be useful to look at evaluations of other countries/regions.

In addition, they may provide sources for good indicators.

OTHER SOURCES OF DATA

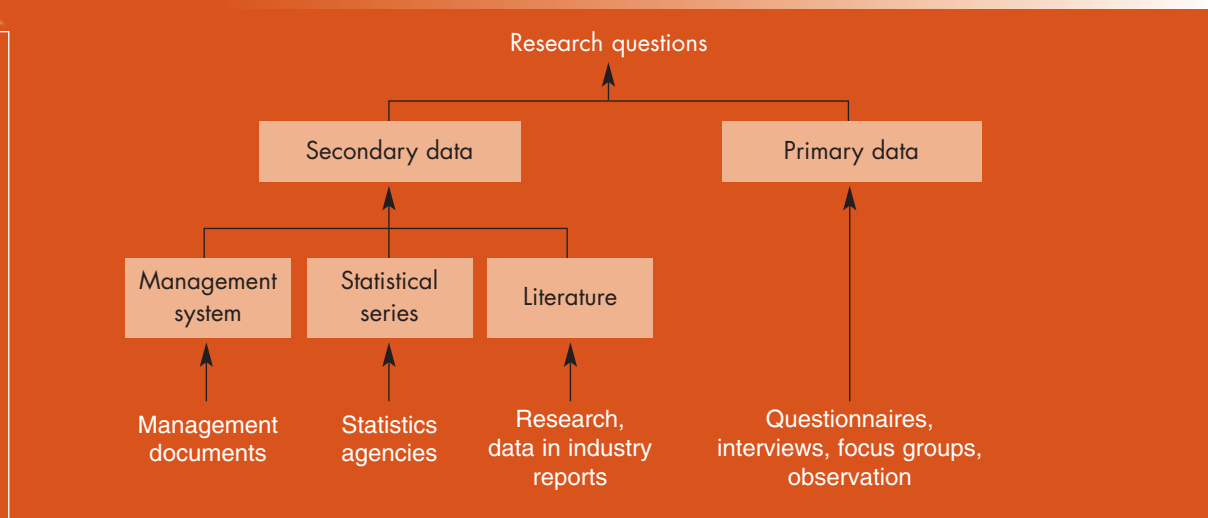
Typical uses of data in strategy work include measuring or describing:

- Trends — the changing state of the world over time
- Preferences — what the public and stakeholders value, and what they think about certain issues
- Resources — how much is spent, lost, earned, saved, invested, etc.
- Performance — the outputs or outcomes of an intervention or service
- Benchmarks — how the current situation compares to other similar situations
- Forecasts — what the future may hold.

There are many different sources of data. If data already exists, this is referred to as secondary data (e.g. the interim and *ex post* evaluations referred to above). If data still has to be gathered, this is referred to as primary data (see Figure 9).

Figure 9

Sources of data

**Documentation:**

- Data types and sources, surveys, interviews and focus groups at:

<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/strategy/downloads/survivalguide/skills/index.htm>

http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/strategy/downloads/survivalguide/skills/eb_data.htm

http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/strategy/downloads/survivalguide/skills/eb_surveys.htm

http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/strategy/downloads/survivalguide/skills/eb_interviews.htm

1.3 PROGRAMME DESIGN

What it is: the “logic” of any intervention can be expressed in terms of implementation-related objectives concerning outputs, and those concerning effects such as results and impacts (intermediate and global), with connected indicators:

Operational objectives / outputs:

- represent the services, changed attitudes/practices or knowledge available due to the intervention; everything that is obtained directly in exchange for the inputs;
- are normally under the entire responsibility of operators;
- are reported on using indicators through the monitoring system.

Examples are: number of trainees whose training was paid by the programme; percentage of this training of which the quality is certified; products that were disseminated, etc.

Specific objectives / results:

- represent the immediate advantages of the programme for the direct beneficiaries in terms of changes which occur for them in terms of their action due to the use of an output (e.g. due to having

received knowledge from training, a beneficiary is now actively applying for jobs);

- should be known by operators, as part of their normal assessment of their own activities from the point of view of the target population, so they should be quantified, using indicators, during the implementation of the intervention.

Examples are: the businesses improving their processes based on consultancy services, trainees looking for work.

Global or intermediate objectives / impacts: these represent the consequences of the intervention beyond its direct and immediate interaction with the targets:

- for direct targets of the intervention which appear or which last into the medium term (intermediate impacts): e.g. the placement rate of trainees after twelve months; the survival rate of businesses that received programme support. Some impacts are also unanticipated (there are referred to as spin-off effects);
- that affect, in the short or medium term, people or organisations that are not direct targets (global impacts). These impacts may be similar (e.g. improvement of the quality of life for people living near a rehabilitated industrial wasteland; improvement in the quality of beaches near a new purification plant).

They may, in contrast, spill over to affect people or organisations far from the programme, as in the case of macro-economic impacts.

The mechanisms of impact propagation can be separated into two categories:

- market effects (e.g. impact on suppliers or sub-contractors of assisted firms);
- non-market effects (e.g. positive impact of the improved image of the region or negative impact of a deterioration in the environment). As non-market effects or externalities are not reflected in the price system on which individual socio-economic actors largely base their private decisions, and because these decisions have economic consequences for other actors, it is particularly useful to take these effects into account.

Due to the time lag or their indirect nature, impacts cannot easily be known to operators during their daily management of the programme; impact indicators are therefore quantified from time to time only, usually during evaluations.

A first step in constructing the intervention logic is to take the prioritised objectives of the objective tree exercise and **to identify those objectives you think the programme can realistically aim for**. This step is essentially setting the level of ambition of the programme. The higher up in the objective tree you go, the more ambitious the programme will be. Any objective in the tree can in principle be reformulated as a specific objective, but you should focus on those that are realistic. Once you have this focus, you can reformulate the objective by adding parts of higher and lower objectives in the tree. You should also focus the formulation on clarifying the immediate advantage that is intended to benefit the beneficiaries (see above). In the new ESF programmes, each Operational Programme priority axis should ideally have one specific objective. Failing to achieve such a specific objective equals failure of that specific programme priority.

Once the specific objectives have been identified, the objectives that contribute to these should be selected in the objective tree and reformulated as operational objectives (in terms of services, changed attitudes/practices, knowledge available, written deliberately in the past tense – see above) and those that follow from the specific objectives should be formulated as global objectives (see above). Again, in both cases, this entails synthesising multiple objectives out of the tree.

The next step is to determine the broad actions that will achieve the operational objectives of the intervention logic. It should be clear who will be the target groups/sectors/areas for the actions and which organisations will be involved in the action in terms of delivering services, changed attitudes/practices, knowledge (intermediaries) and how they will do this, using which inputs.

Inputs relate to the resources and activities to be run, in order to achieve the outputs/operational objectives:

- they consist of financial, human, material, organisational or regulatory means used to implement interventions;
- they are the joint responsibility of operators and financiers;
- they are regularly quantified using indicators by monitoring systems.

It is good practice to look at some possible alternative actions and means that may lead to delivering on the programme objectives and to choose the most appropriate ones, based on experience and analysis. Together, inputs and outputs form the full set of operational objectives of the programme.

Finally, part of the resource allocation is to specify funding requirements for the different priorities and actions within the programme. This can be done in three ways:

- in a participatory way based on the priority setting exercise (see objective tree above);
- in an analytical way, based on benchmarks and an estimate of the efforts required to bridge any gaps;
- in a political way, based on existing budgets for existing policy priorities; this approach has the advantage of facilitating access to public co-financing.

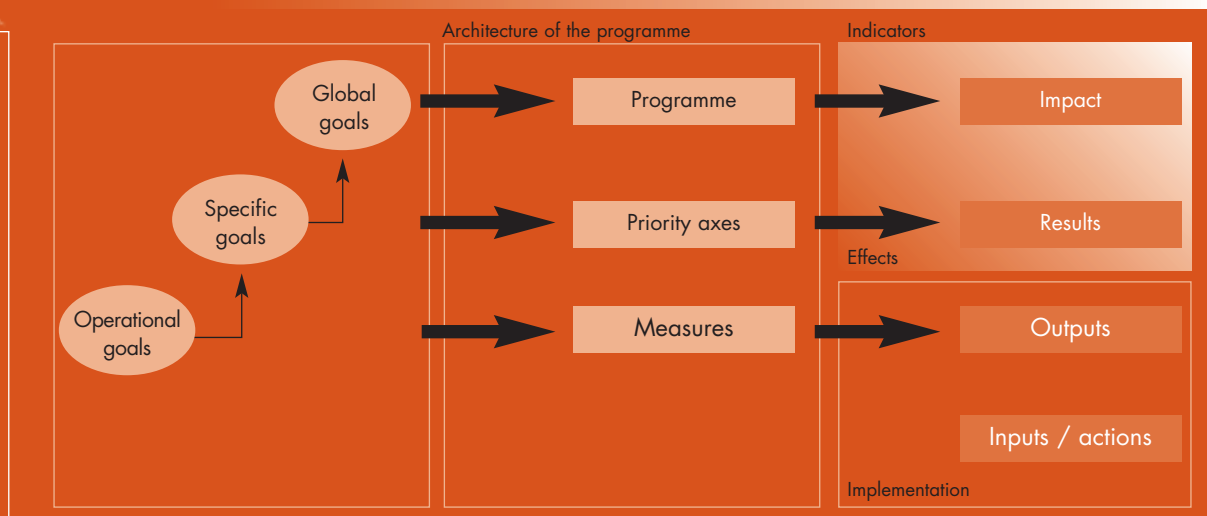
Ideally, a combination of the three approaches is used, with the political approach as a starting point. This should also be contrasted with the capacity to absorb funding (to avoid N+2 de-commitments).

Figure 10 provides an overview of the relation between the objectives, the architecture of the programme and indicators.

Why it is useful: the intervention logic allows you to explain and illustrate the programme more clearly for key stakeholders. It also helps you identify and collect the data needed to monitor and improve programming, as well as to evaluate it.



Figure 10 Relation of intervention logic and programme architecture / indicators



Documentation:

- Logic model guide: <http://www.wkkf.org/Pubs/Tools/Evaluation/Pub3669.pdf>
- Logic model at: www.evaled.com

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

2

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The experience of earlier programmes, and especially of EQUAL, demonstrates that ensuring broad partnership is vital for the successful implementation of reforms. Moreover, experience with previous programming periods shows that engagement of all stakeholders in the very early stage of programming is crucial for the successful implementation of a programme. What is programmed now must be implemented later. Someone will have to take responsibility for the implementation of actions on the ground. The co-financing must be ensured. It is therefore crucial to reach agreement and commitment of the stakeholders before the programme is finalised.

2.2 STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

What it is: the first step is to make an inventory for each stakeholder, involved in or affected by the intervention, of what their needs are. These needs may not relate to the problems as identified in the problem tree exercise. They may relate to more mundane elements such as augmenting the position of power of one of the stakeholders. Be careful to select only those two or three interests and/or expectations that are most important. The interest can range from highly positive (scoring ++) to highly negative (-) or absent (0) (see Figure 11).

Each stakeholder is then also assessed in relation to their importance to the successful implementation of an intervention (e.g. in a Structural Funds context, some national actors may hold the necessary co-financing to comple-

ment the EU funding) in terms of resources that the group possesses that could be brought to bear in the decision-making or implementation of the programme. Can the group offer some special knowledge or information? Would the group's status and presence be key to implementation? If the group appears to have resources that can be brought to bear, it is important to know whether the group is capable of mobilising those resources quickly or only slowly. Again this will range from highly important (++) to very low importance (-).

Finally, relations of stakeholders between themselves are studied, focusing on alliances and/or antagonistic positions. This is important as, for example, an alliance between an uninterested but relatively important actor and an interested but relatively unimportant actor may create a different picture.

In order to prioritise efforts it is necessary to identify the most important or key stakeholders – i.e. those who are most affected by or most capable of influencing the strategy and its implementation. Combining this with an understanding of how interested each stakeholder is likely to be will then enable the team to differentiate their approach to engaging with them (see Figure 12):

- Stakeholders who are highly supportive and highly important should be closely involved in planning
- Stakeholders who are highly important but not positively interested need to be closely managed with the aim of increasing their level of interest. To do this, it is helpful to determine the benefits that the project can offer to them, and identify how those benefits can be sold to the stakeholder. It may also mean compelling them (e.g. by exerting authority).

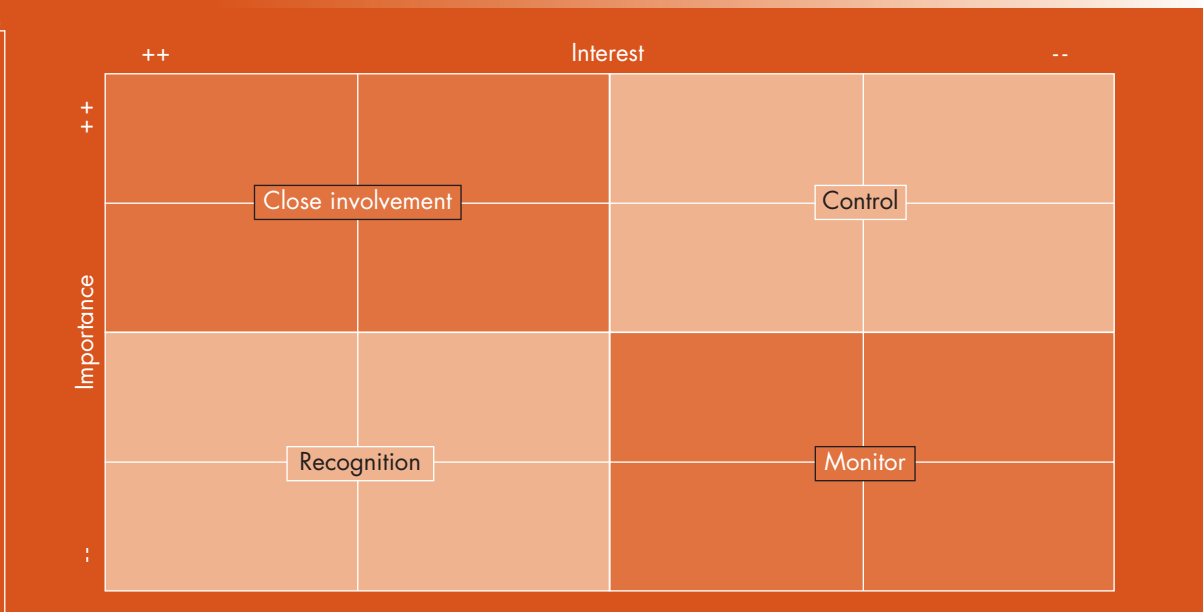


Figure 11 Stakeholder analysis framework

Stakeholder	Importance of the stakeholder: influence in implementation (mandate, mobilisation of knowledge, contacts, people, finance, etc.) High ++ / low --	Interest of stakeholder (based on needs) High ++ / low --	Relations with other actors Optimal -- / Sub-optimal ++
Actor 1			
Actor 2			
Actor 3			
...			



Figure 12 Stakeholder strategies



- Stakeholders who are interested but of little importance could provide a distraction and should be acknowledged but then managed accordingly (e.g. to be informed but without involving them further)
- Stakeholders who are neither positively interested nor important should be monitored to ensure that their level of importance does not change, but otherwise should not be allowed to distract.

Why it is useful: it may be useful to engage in a formal stakeholder analysis to confirm the problem definition and deepen the assessment of relevant needs (see Section 1.2). The stakeholder analysis will also indicate whose interests should be taken into account when planning. Stakeholder analysis can be complemented and fed into network analysis and forcefield analysis.

Documentation:

- Technical note 2 on stakeholder analysis:
http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/democracy_and_governance/publications/ipcindex.html
- Managing stakeholders and communications at: <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/strategy/survivalguide/index.asp>

2.3 OTHER STAKEHOLDER-ORIENTED ANALYSIS TOOLS

FORCEFIELD ANALYSIS

What it is: forcefield analysis is a tool for understanding opposing forces and their effect on change and making decisions. Helping or driving forces are those issues that drive you toward change. Hindering or restraining forces are those issues preventing you from achieving change. During the problem-solving process, the forcefield analysis allows you to display those forces which are both helping or driving and hindering or restraining the process of closing the gap between a problem and a desired state.

A scale (1 to 5) such as the one listed below (see Figure 13) could be used:

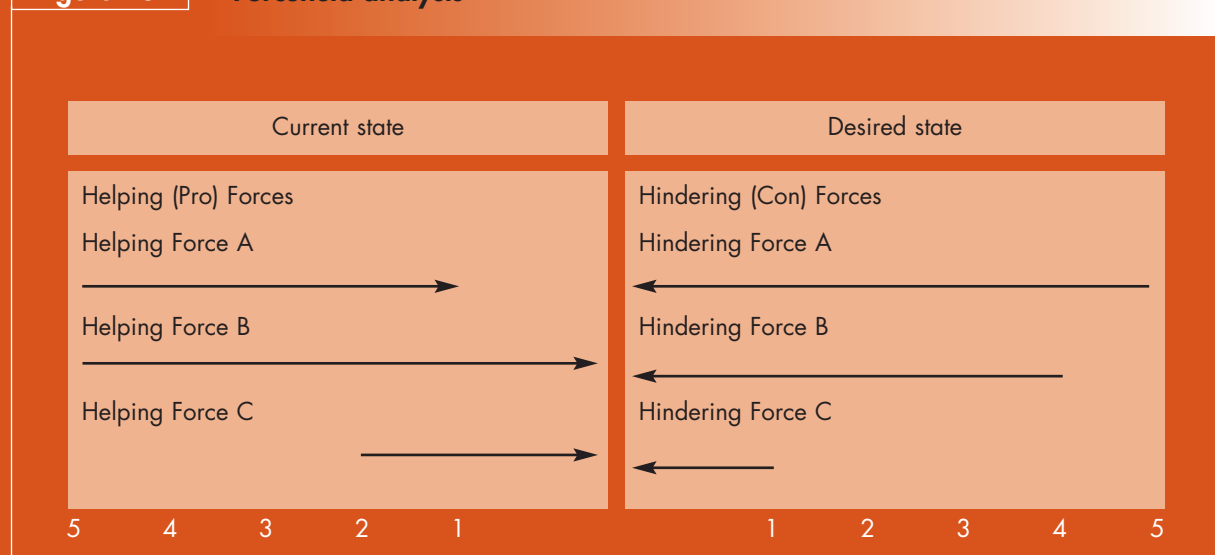
- Almost no effect on the drive toward change;
- Relatively little effect on the drive toward change;
- Moderate effect on the drive toward change;
- Important factor in the drive toward change;
- Major factor in the drive toward change.

Finally, to each of the helping or hindering forces, you can associate a particular stakeholder.

Why it is useful: it is particularly useful as a “first-cut” mechanism for sorting out positions of different stakeholders, and for giving the manager a quick impression of where major opposition and support lie.

Figure 13

Forcefield analysis

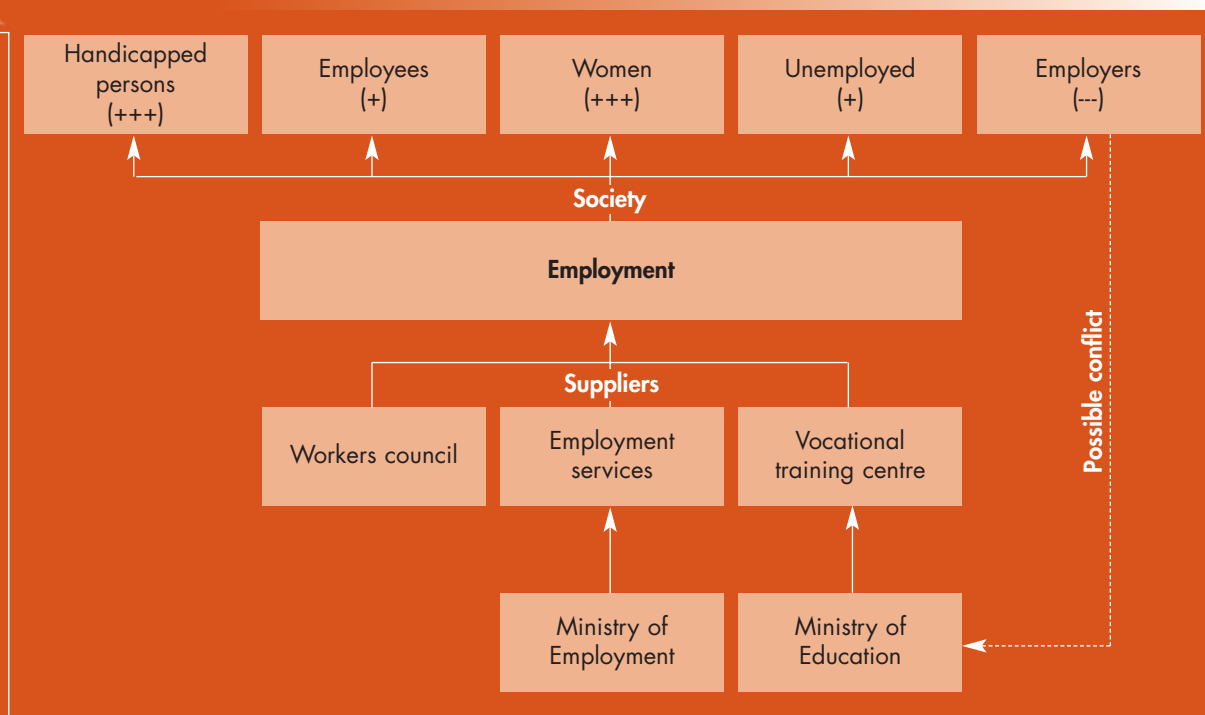


NETWORK ANALYSIS

What it is: this is done by analysing, first, what the different points are through which a programme passes to become approved and implemented? Second, who are the actor(s) in charge of each step? Third, how can stakeholders gain access to these actors? Are there other actors, though not officially part of the process, which have substantial influence over those who decide?

Why it is useful: network analysis allows us to determine the connections of different actors to the programme and each other. The network analysis can be combined with a forcefield analysis (using + and - that indicate how strong opposition or support is).

Figure 14 Example of network diagram



Documentation:

- Technical note 5 on Management & the Environment for IPC:
http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/democracy_and_governance/publications/ipcindex.html

2.4 PARTICIPATIVE WORKSHOPS WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Because policy implementation crosscuts the nominal authority and statutory responsibility of any individual agency, management of the implementation process calls for mechanisms that bring together the relevant parties in ways that reduce the potential for conflict and increase the possibilities for effective coordination.

The use of workshops throughout the life of a policy reform reinforces the strategic management process

cycle by creating periodic venues for taking stock of progress, comparing targets with accomplishments, revising plans, addressing conflicts, reinforcing or re-negotiating agreements, and sustaining new behaviours among participants. These outcomes serve to operationalise the iterative, adaptive nature of strategic management in a way that is clear, visible and practical.

One specific way of running a workshop is the METAPLAN moderation method. This is a group facilitation technique that works with visualisation. It is not a data gathering or analysis technique as such but supports other techniques

(e.g. problem trees, SWOT, etc.) in a group-work setting. A typical METAPLAN session is carried out as follows:

- all participants write on cards in response to a question called out by the moderator;
- moderator collects, reads cards aloud and pins them on a board;
- similar/related cards are clustered together;
- objections raised by participants during clustering are put next to the cards;
- the clusters are given names;
- voting dots can be attributed to particular clusters to indicate what is most important and should be discussed in more depth.

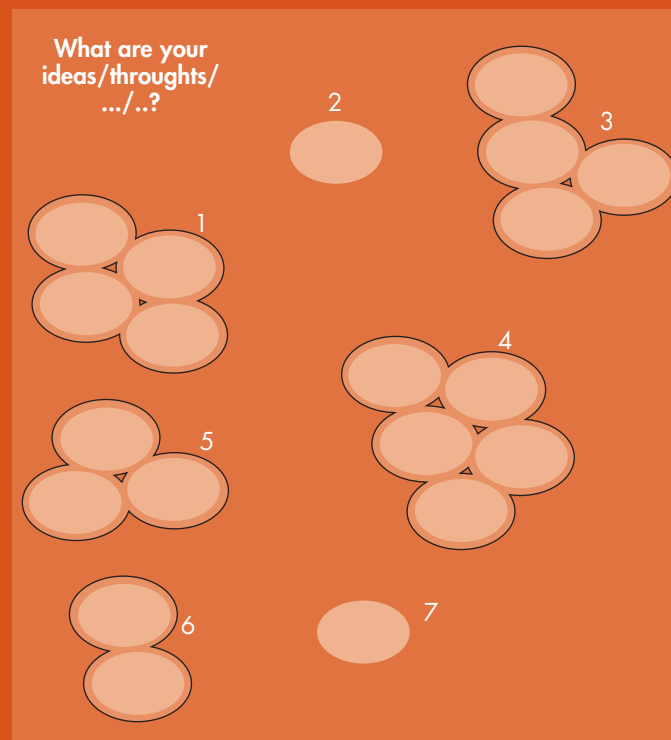
Figure 15 shows a typical METAPLAN output.

Instead of this inductive way of working, the moderator can also use pre-established formats such as a SWOT analysis, where participants write strengths, weaknesses, etc. on the cards.

Apart from METAPLAN workshops there are many other ways to ensure participation (see references).

Figure 15

Representation of a METAPLAN session output



Documentation:

- Technical note 6 on workshops for strategic management of policy reform: http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/democracy_and_governance/publications/ipcindex.html
- Metaplan moderation method: <http://www.metaplan.de/Schriftenreihe.asp>
- King Baudoin Foundation participatory methods toolkit: http://www.kbs-frb.be/code/page.cfm?id_page=153&id=361&lang=EN

DELIVERY PLANNING

3



3.1 INTRODUCTION

Thinking about implementation aspects while developing a programme can be considered as good practice.

Experience shows that countries which use existing structures and systems for ESF absorption achieve high rates of spending. The other conclusion which can be drawn from the previous programming period is the need to simplify the structures. The Structural Funds require establishing complex structures: Managing Authority, Paying Authority, audit, monitoring and evaluation bodies are the most obvious examples. Some countries even overcomplicate the system by multiplying management and implementation bodies.

It is up to each Member State to establish a system which is in line with national administrative arrangements and division of responsibilities. But it is worth bearing in mind that multiplication of management layers requires strong coordination and thus may cause significant problems.

To use committed funds, expenditure must be incurred first. Simulating the implementation of a programme is essential for deciding the right split of the budget between priorities and between years. This in turn is essential for avoiding decommitments in the future. The efforts to engage all stakeholders and to ensure their commitment, the preparation of a system to ensure

good quality projects, putting in place back-up plans, etc. are also extremely important to avoid N+2 decommitments.

3.2 ACTIVITY PLANNING AND FORECASTING

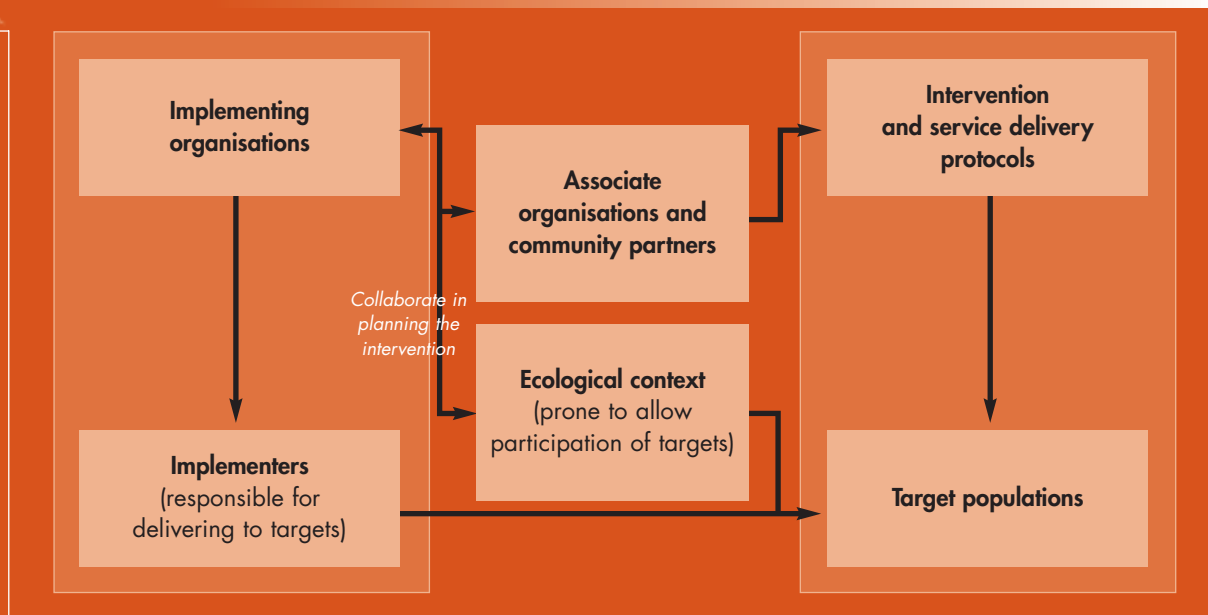
What it is: activity planning answers in detail the questions regarding actions (what, how), timing (when), resources (with what), responsibilities (who) and milestones (an important aspect to be delivered at a specific time), as well as key links between the different programme actions that will achieve the operational objectives.

A useful way to plan activities is by drawing up an “**action model**”⁴. The action model has a management orientation. It is the detailed “theory” of how the implementation of the intervention should work. Therefore it relates to and expands on the inputs and actions already defined in the intervention logic. Figure 16 shows the relation between the different components of an action model.

The starting point of an action model should be the target populations (beneficiaries) under the different actions that address the specific measures of a programme.

4 This broadly follows the approach of H. Chen, Professor at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, in his book **Practical Program Evaluation: Assess and Improve Program Planning, Implementation, and Effectiveness**. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. 2005. His work has been recognised as one of the landmarks in programme evaluation.




Figure 16 Action model representation


A description of the targets should contain:

- eligibility criteria (geographical, characteristics of persons, severity of need, etc.) restricting delivery to only part of the population;
- description of actual target needs;
- target readiness assessment: mental (willingness to recognise the problem / motivation to accept solution) and physical (e.g. health status) readiness.

It is clear that targets can both be persons and/or organisations (e.g. SMEs).

One should then ask what intervention and service delivery protocols are required as well as who should be the implementers responsible for running these protocols.

Intervention and service protocols:

- intervention protocol which details the nature (what is it based on, e.g. call for projects, infusion into the budget of government agencies), content (how it will work, e.g. projects around prevention or remediation) and specific activities / schedule (what steps, when, how long) of the intervention;
- service delivery protocol: details target processing procedures (intake, screening, assessment, service delivery), responsibilities (who does what), setting (where will the service be delivered), communication channels (face to face, mail, etc.).

Implementers:

- those persons who will deliver the service to the targets or the "beneficiaries", e.g. business support consultants;

- description of the implementers should detail the required level of qualifications and competency (and sometimes also commitment and enthusiasm).

The elaboration of the description of the implementers and the intervention and service protocols should be done together with the implementing organisations (those organisations who will receive ESF funding) as these will have to:

- put technology / equipment in place;
- recruit, train, supervise implementers and other staff – this role includes performance monitoring and feed-back;
- allocate resources (including co-financing, external expertise);
- plan and coordinate: sometimes several organisations will have to work together to deliver a service to the targets and this will entail considerable coordination.

Finally, there may be a role for associate organisations and community partners whose support is (sometimes legally) required to carry out an intervention. Again, their profile should be identified, as well as what is expected of them and how the working relationship will be established. For example, an expenditure programme seeking to address equal opportunities issues in Islamic communities in European cities may not be able to operate without the sanction and involvement of the local community organisations. These should probably also be involved as from the planning phase.

In the same vein, one should take into account that the "ecological context" relates to necessary conditions that favour target participation in the intervention. For example, an intervention that aims to reduce drug use by young mothers by means of workshops should investigate whether childcare is available to the target group during

those times when the workshops will be held. Otherwise, this may impede participation. In general, the ecological context concerns:

- social, psychological, material support from immediate social units (family, friends, peer group, neighbourhood) and physical environment (childcare, transport availability), etc.
- community norms, culture, political, economic processes, etc.

It is clear that action models are useful only where a programme has relatively predictable and homogenous actions, which will be implemented in the same way across different implementing organisations. Action models targeting beneficiaries should therefore reflect a consensus of the implementing organisations, together with the Managing Authority. This consensus should be reflected in what is asked by the Managing Authority in its application forms for project proposals, as well as in any agreement with implementing organisations.

The Managing Authority itself can also draw up an action model of how it will support the implementing organisations (which can be seen as the target populations of the Managing Authority).

When all the components of the action model have been identified it is necessary to work out detailed resource requirements over time. **Forecasting** is a planning tool that identifies and tracks past trends and extrapolates them into the future.

Why it is useful: firstly, to make sure bottlenecks can be spotted ahead of time and to avoid ensuing N+2 decommitments; secondly, to enable evaluators to easily evaluate programme implementation (whether the action model was sound, was implemented as planned, impacted on the change model as foreseen); and thirdly, based upon evaluation work, to allow the Managing Authority to understand and promote best practice solutions.

Documentation:

- Designing an implementation plan: http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/strategy/downloads/survivalguide/skills/pd_designing.htm
- Forecasting: http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/strategy/downloads/survivalguide/skills/eb_forecasting.htm

3.3 QUALITY ASSURANCE

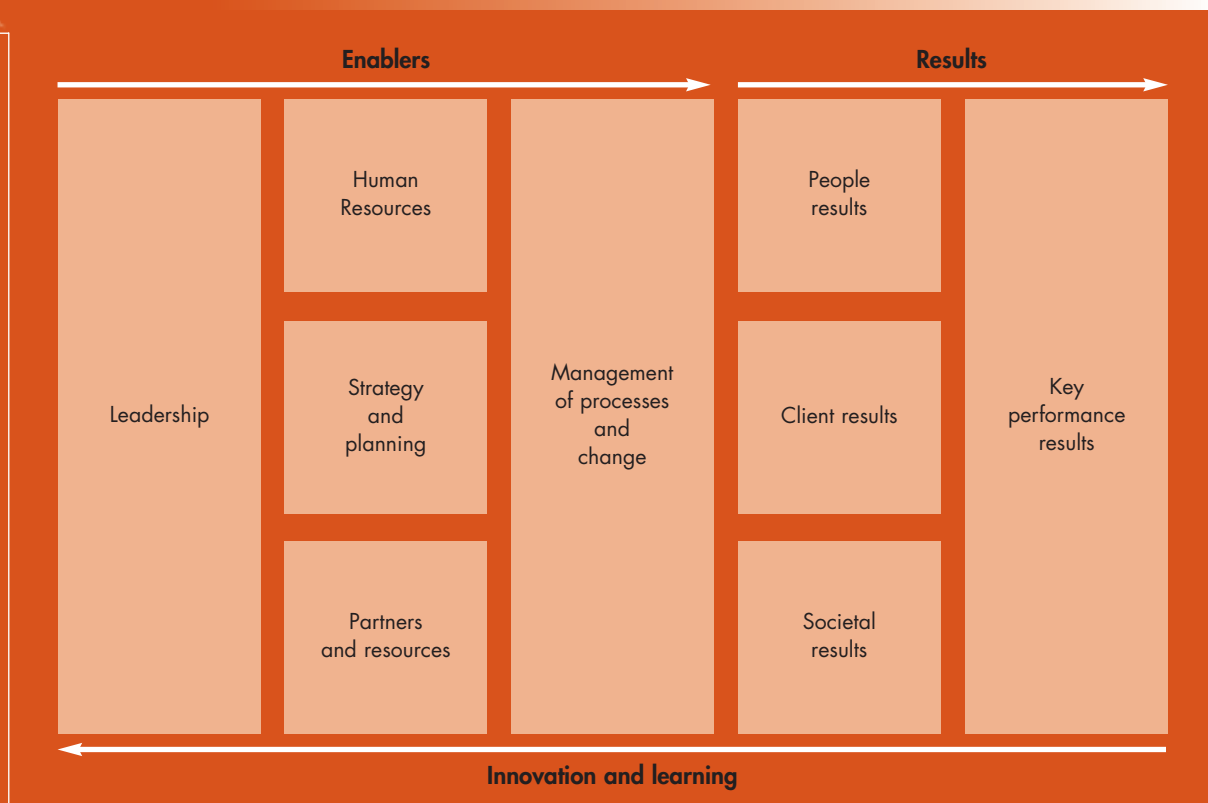
What it is: organisational analysis aims to generate an understanding of the resources that are at the disposal of implementing organisations and which tasks they perform well or poorly. This can help in understanding the ease or difficulty with which new strategies can be adopted. There are many different frameworks for conducting such an analysis. EFQM and its public sector derivative (available free of charge), CAF, provide excellent self-assessment materials.

Also, it should be clear that there can be no quality programmes without quality projects. It is therefore essential to put in place mechanisms that ensure that only excellent projects, which contribute to the programmes goals, will be financed. The EFQM and CAF tools can also be used at the project level, as demonstrated by the Belgian Flemish-speaking EQUAL programme that made the use of CAF mandatory for all projects.

In addition, the EQUAL community initiative has provided guidance for planning for Development Partnerships. The EQUAL programme has demonstrated that such guidance is essential to guarantee the quality of projects that strive for cross-border cooperation and/or innovation. Many of the tools mirror the programme level, using tools such as stakeholder analysis, problem and objectives trees and a logical framework and therefore help ensure consistency between programme and projects.

Other tools exist to serve specific purposes, such as the UK ESF sustainable development toolkit, which provides a checklist to assess whether ESF projects are balancing economic, social and environmental concerns properly.

Why it is useful: standardised tools can help safeguard quality; furthermore their use allows for standardised data that can be analysed across projects and programmes in different Member States. This can support the exchange of best practice.


Figure 17 CAF model
**Documentation:**

- Organisational analysis: http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/strategy/downloads/survivalguide/skills/eb_organisational.htm
- European Foundation for Quality Management: www.efqm.org
- Common assessment framework for the public sector: www.eipa.nl/default.htm
- Partnership Development Toolkit – A partnership-oriented planning, monitoring and evaluation guide for facilitators of EQUAL Development and Transnational Partnerships: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equal/about/key-doc_en.cfm
- In addition, a short introductory video of the planning process can be viewed at: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equal/news/20051125-vilnius_en.cfm
- Swiss economic development cooperation: <http://www.seco-cooperation.admin.ch/dienstleistungen/00602/index.html?lang=en>
- UK ESF sustainable development toolkit: http://www.esf.gov.uk/02_About_ESF/20_Sustainable_Development/14_Sustainable_Development_Toolkit.asp
- CAF toolkit for partnerships can be obtained (in English) at: www.equal.be (see downloads – self-evaluation model)

3.4 RISK MANAGEMENT

What it is: whatever the purpose of a programme may be, the delivery of its objectives will be surrounded by uncertainty. Risk is defined as this uncertainty of outcome. The risk has to be assessed in respect of the combination of the likelihood of something happening, and the impact which arises if it does actually happen. Risk management

includes identifying and assessing risks (i.e. “the inherent risk”) and then responding to (i.e. management of) them.

The resources available for managing risk are, however, finite and so the aim is to achieve an optimum response to risk, prioritised in accordance with an evaluation of the risks. Within any programme some amount of risk taking is necessary – the only way to avoid risk is to do

nothing at all which is guaranteed to ensure that nothing is ever achieved.

An organisations response to risk is sometimes called “internal control” and may involve one or more of the following:

- to decide to tolerate the risk;
- to transfer the risk (to delivery partners / others);
- to treat the risk in an appropriate way to constrain the risk to an acceptable level (i.e. develop counter-measures to risk);
- to actively take advantage of the materialised risk, regarding the uncertainty as an opportunity to gain a benefit.

The possible risks to an individual objective or task may fall into one of a number of distinct risk categories - i.e. political, media, financial, policy development/ implementation, legal, procurement, etc. There are also potential risks that may need to be considered during the programme planning phase as they may have a bearing upon programme/project design/plans or outcome/product specifications, etc.

New risks can be identified at all times and at all levels. Programme and Project Managers should actively pro-

mote a 'risk aware' culture within their Programme and ensure that people are encouraged to raise new risks and identify counter-measures.

All risks should be assessed (or rated) against the probability of them becoming live and, if they do, what their impact upon the concerned Programme or Project would be (i.e. if risk materialises then will it cause Programme or Project to fail?).

All identified risks need to be not only identified and assessed, but more importantly they need to be actively managed or addressed so that they are constrained to a tolerable level (i.e. within the organisations/programmes' risk appetite). The assessment and management of risk are (respectively) recorded and monitored using a risk register.

A useful way to assess if risk management is well addressed has been developed by the UK Treasury, based on the earlier referred to EFQM/CAF methodologies.

Why it is useful: risk management allows to actively manage potential threats to reaching objectives.

Documentation:

- UK Department for education and skills “programme management website”:
<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/ppm/index.cfm?fuseaction=content.view&CategoryId=7&ContentID=83&SiteID=1>
- UK Treasury risk management framework:
www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/17A/81/17A8166B-BCDC-D4B3-16668DC702198931.pdf

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

4



4.1 INTRODUCTION

It is extremely important that we learn continuously from the implementation.

Effective on-going monitoring and evaluation systems are not only important because we have to control the programmes, but also because they enable us to learn what goes wrong and allow us to adjust the programmes accordingly.

Experience shows that evaluators should be in interaction with programme managers throughout the programme cycle (see Figure 18). At the start of the programme, evaluators can support analysis and design. Once the programme is underway, evaluators can help improve implementation (ongoing evaluation). At the end of the programme and a few years after programme end, evaluators can be used to extract the lessons learnt and assess what was achieved.

4.2 INFORMATION SYSTEMS, REPORTING AND REVIEW MECHANISMS (SCORECARDS, REPORTS, MEETINGS)

Monitoring systems start from the objectives, their indicators and targets. They need to foresee adequate collection of data to feed the indicators.

Various indicators can be elaborated in connection with the intervention logic (see earlier). When formulating

indicators, a number of quality guidelines have to be respected: first, regarding every indicator, second regarding the indicator system as a whole (see Figures 19 and 20).

The different types of indicator have already been discussed in connection to the objectives in the intervention logic. However, it is important to note that the relevance of the types of indicators changes during the lifetime of the programme. Their source of data is also different, e.g. some results will be picked up by the monitoring system but to ascertain others, evaluation data may be necessary.

The indicators can be inserted into a scoreboard to ensure a good overview of what is happening. The scoreboard can look differently depending on the management level and the domain of interest of the audience.

On the basis of the scoreboard and reports that accompany it, meetings are scheduled and discussions should take place. These discussions can be about the reasons why the indicators are not on target:

- whether this is due to external events, not under the control of management;
- whether this is due to a misconception of the links between the drivers of change or the influence of the intervention on those drivers;
- whether this is due to internal factors, under the control of management;
- whether the indicators do not measure what they are supposed to and require adaptation or whether the targets were, set inappropriately.

Figure 18 The policy, programme and project cycles

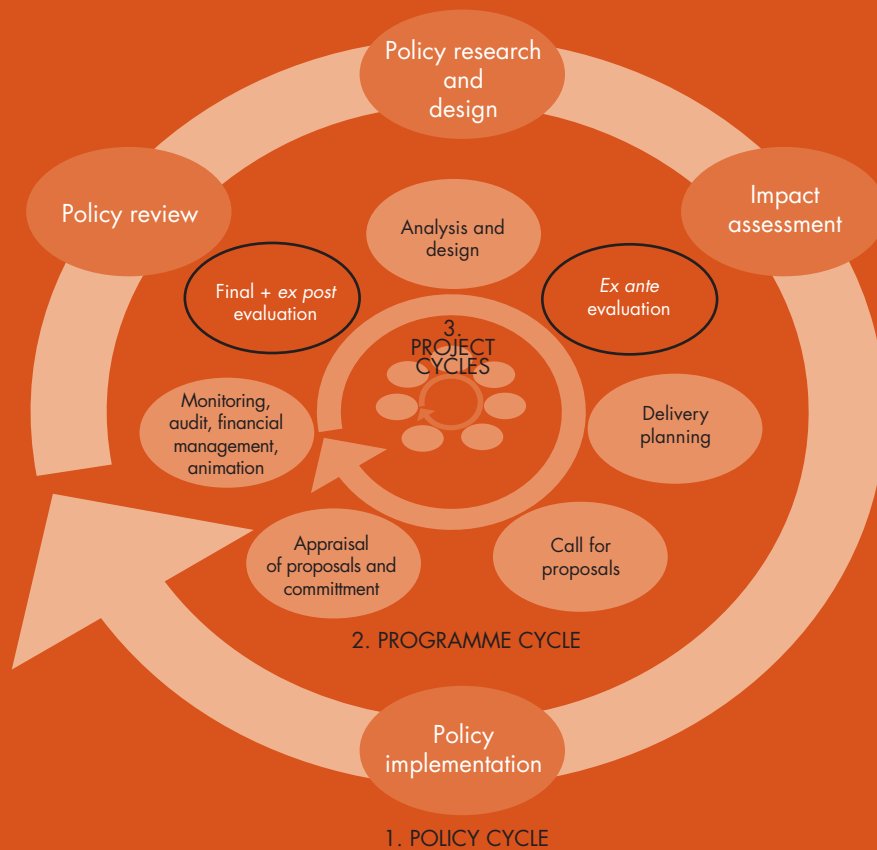


Figure 19 Quality assessment for individual indicators

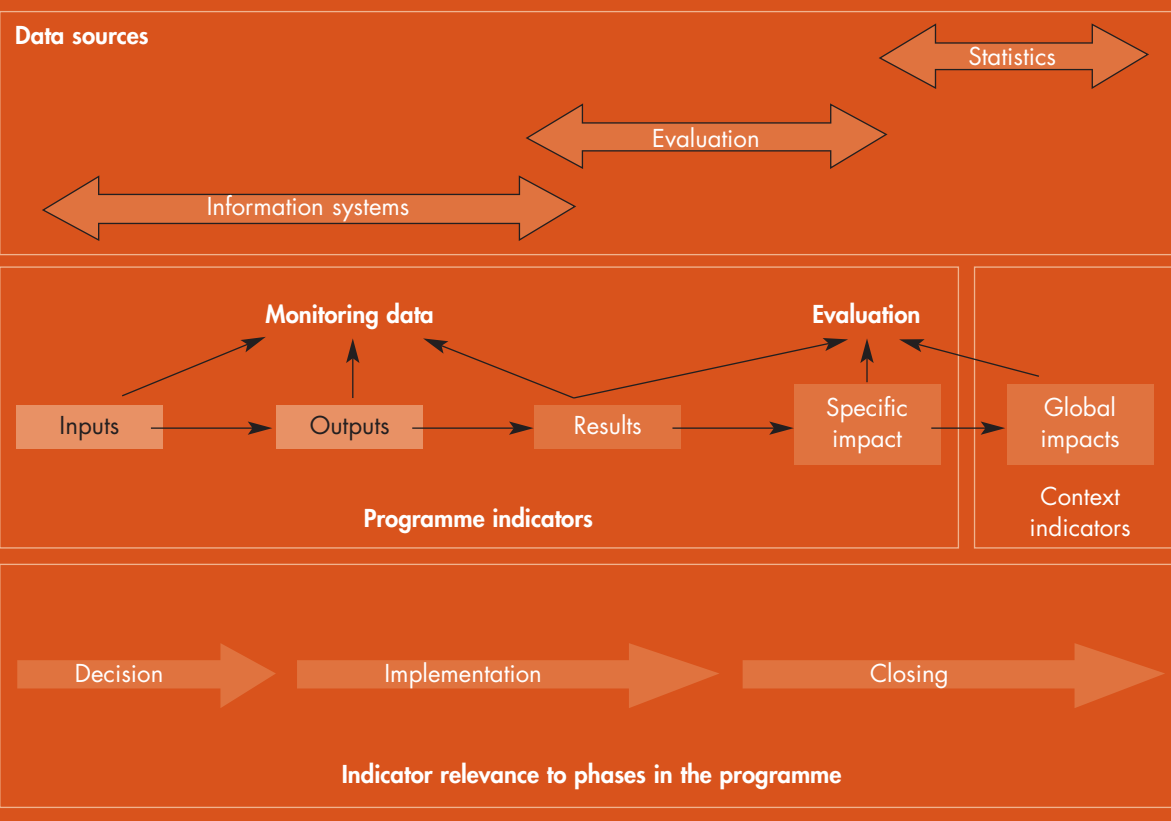
Feasibility	Is it feasible / cost effective to collect the data in a timely matter?	Validity	Clearly understandable without ambiguity, reflecting the concept to be measured
Regularity	Does quantification of data take place regularly enough?	Comparability	Do measures allow comparisons to be made (to a norm, internal, external performance comparison)?
Freshness	Is the delay between the gathering of data and its transformation into an indicator (quantification) appropriate?	Actionable	Depict aspects that can be influenced by action (never total control)
Reliability	Do measurements by different persons provide the same value?	Effective	Drives right action; cannot be cheated upon easily
Credibility	Is the method of gathering information and converting it into an indicator sound?	Sensitivity	Are changes induced by action picked up by the measure?



Figure 20 Quality assessment for an indicator system

Coverage	Is more than 75% of expenditure covered by the system?
Balance	Is there a balance between, on the one hand, results and impact measures and on the other input and output measures?
Selectivity	Is the quantity of information provided to users manageable; each user can handle only about 10 indicators
Relevance	Are measures used primarily those related to important objectives?

Figure 21 Sources and use of indicators



Why is it useful:

- to clarify objectives;
- to provide support for a rationale for intervention and resource reallocation (help in defining territories eligible for assistance, in analysing the regional context, in diagnosing economic and social problems to be

addressed, and in assessing the needs that the programme has to meet)

- to support monitoring
- to support evaluation including identifying what would have happened in the absence of the initiative (the counterfactual - see below).

Documentation:

- EC Indicators guidance: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/working/sf2000_en.htm
- Creating indicators at: www.evaled.com
- Information into intelligence: <http://www.eprc.strath.ac.uk/iqnet/reports2.cfm>

4.3 EVALUATION

TYPES OF EVALUATION THROUGHOUT THE PROGRAMME

What it is: the main evaluation criteria are defined in relation to the programme's maturity: in the planning stage (*ex ante*), during operation (interim or on-

going) and after completion (*ex post*). In addition, they are defined in terms of the intervention logic (see Figure 22).

These major evaluation criteria, which can be found in most evaluation manuals, are understood as described in the table.

Figure 22 Intervention logic and evaluation criteria

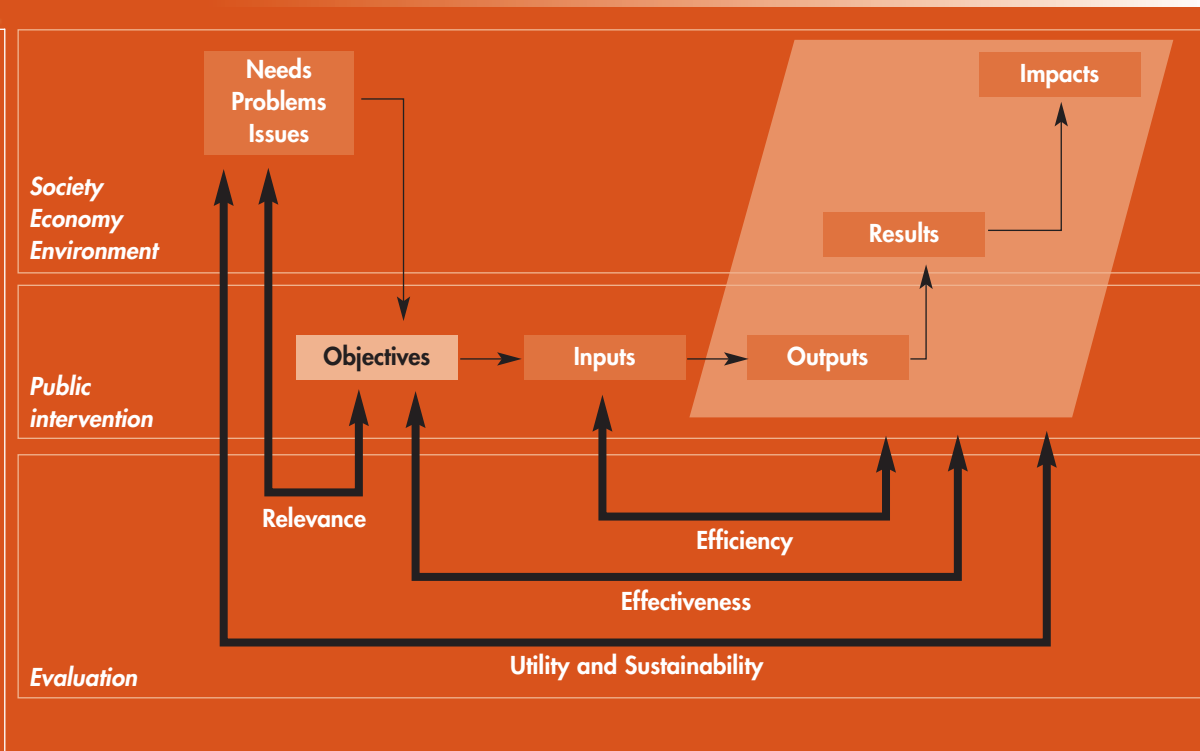


Table 1: Evaluation criteria and questions linked to the intervention logic

Criteria	General question	When
Relevance	Does the intervention seek to tackle the needs expressed by the stakeholders and target groups in a satisfactory way? To what extent are the intervention's objectives pertinent in relation to the evolving needs and priorities at both national and EU level?	<i>Ex ante</i> + ongoing
Effectiveness	How far have the intervention's effects contributed to achieving its specific and general objectives? Has the intervention achieved its Objectives and does it show an ability to solve problems and provide added value?	Throughout
Efficiency	Are the mechanisms for implementation both optimal and cost efficient? How economically have the various inputs been converted into outputs and results?	Throughout
Impact ⁵	What have stakeholders and target groups done as a result of the intervention, and what are the indirect / side / unintended effects?	<i>Ex post</i>
Sustainability	Do the effects (outcomes, impacts) of the intervention have the capacity to solve the problems in a sustainable way? To what extent can any positive changes be expected to last after the intervention has been terminated?	<i>Ex post</i>
Utility	Do the effects (outcomes, impacts) of the intervention have an added value for the target groups? How do the intervention's impacts compare with the needs of the target population(s)?	<i>Ex post</i>

In addition, the following criteria, only loosely related to the intervention logic, can be applicable:

Table 2: Other evaluation criteria and questions

Criteria	General question	When
Economy	The extent to which resources are available in due time, in appropriate quantity and quality at the best price	Throughout
Distributional	The extent to which disproportionate negative/positive distributional effects of a policy are minimised/ maximised	Throughout
Acceptability	The extent to which stakeholders accept the policy in general and the particular instrument proposed or employed	Throughout
Coherence	Between the objectives of sub-elements (measures, priorities) of different interventions or between different interventions (e.g. the extent to which positive/negative spill-over onto other economic, social or environmental Policy areas are being maximised/minimised).	<i>Ex ante</i>

⁵ Impact is not, as such, an evaluation criterion, but rather a level of effect of one intervention. However, given the complexity of the issue of impact and the abundance of sub-questions and techniques that have been developed around this concept, it is increasingly considered as an evaluation criterion as such.

It has also to be kept in mind that the Structural Funds need to ensure subsidiarity as well as added value.

This concept can be defined on the basis of a range of criteria:

- Economic and social cohesion,
- Policy added value in relation to Community priorities,
- Financial added value, in terms of additionality and leverage effect,
- The added value of the Structural Funds method, including partnership, multi-annual planning, monitoring, evaluation and sound financial management,
- Added value which stems from the exchange of experience and networking at a transnational, national or regional level.

Linked to the timing of the evaluation activities, two approaches can be distinguished: from start to finish of the programme, **formative evaluation** seeks to strengthen or improve a programme by examining, amongst other things, the delivery of the programme, the quality of its implementation and the organisational context, person-

nel, structures and procedures. As a change-oriented evaluation approach, it is especially attuned to assessing, in an ongoing way, any discrepancies between the expected direction and outputs of the programme and what is happening in reality, to analysing strengths and weaknesses, to uncovering obstacles, barriers or unexpected opportunities, and to generating understandings about how the programme could be implemented better.

Summative evaluation, on the other hand, is performed after a programme has been implemented to assess its results and impacts, whether it achieved its aims and objectives, and whether it was beneficial overall to those it was intended to benefit. It informs decisions about future resource allocations.

Why is it useful: evaluation serves two purposes: learning how things work and how to improve (essentially a management purpose) as well as accountability in terms of performance towards legitimising authorities (e.g. the European Commission or a relevant government department).

Documentation:

- Evaluation of Socio-Economic Development: The guide: www.evaled.com
- Evaluating EU Activities: A Practical Guide for Commission Services (2004): http://ec.europa.eu/budget/evaluation/Key_documents/evalguides_en.htm
- The added value of the Structural Funds: <http://www.eprc.strath.ac.uk/iqnet/reports2.cfm>

COUNTERFACTUAL ANALYSIS

What it is: Counterfactual analysis is an estimate of the circumstances that would have prevailed had a new programme not been introduced. By comparing counterfactual outcomes (often referred to as either control or comparison group outcomes) with outcomes measured for

those units subject to the new programme, causality or attribution can be established.

Why it is useful: Thinking about the data needs for counterfactual analysis early on will facilitate adequate evaluation of the programme.

Documentation:

- Counterfactual analysis: <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/strategy/survivalguide/index.asp>

4.4 INCORPORATING EX ANTE EVALUATION FINDINGS INTO THE PROGRAMME

Ex ante evaluation is a formal requirement. The purpose of the *ex ante* evaluation is to provide inputs which improve coherence and quality of the programme. These

inputs should be provided interactively at various stages of the programme preparation.

It is also the task of the evaluator to check whether the programme design takes into account recommendations as to various alternative options to achieve the objectives.

ANNEX 1: OUTCOMES OF THE INTERACTIVE WORKSHOPS⁶



STRATEGIC ORIENTATION AND COHERENCE

Subject area 1 Coherence with EU & national policies⁷

- EC: More flexibility: not all EU priorities have to be mandatory for each MS (11)
- EC: Make jargon (eurospeak) simpler (3)
- EC: Strategic guidelines have to be more stable (3)
- MS: Involvement of other Ministries at a very early stage in programming, put ESF on the political agenda (3)
- MS: While planning use the already existing evaluations (3)
- MS: Use research more actively to identify real problems (2)
- MS: Build the strategy from bottom-up! (1)
- MS: Try to look for best practices/models in other MS

Subject area 2 Integration of horizontal issues into programmes

- MS/EC: Provisions and incentives to make sure that horizontal issues are included (6)
- EC/MS: Simple and clear structure of implementation - administrative simplicity (4)
- MS: Take experts on board when drafting the programme (2)
- Project level: team of experts / multidisciplinary approach helps address horizontal issues (2)
- MS: Realistic goals (1)
- MS/EC: Make horizontal issues an inherent part of evaluation
- MS: At national or regional level put incentives in calls for proposals for good mainstreaming strategies

Subject area 3 Internal coherence

- EC/MS: Top down meets bottom-up (7)
- MS: Think twice: what sounds nice on paper may not be implementable (national rules, financing) (7)
- MS: Identify problems and needs (3)

6 The seminar also addressed challenges and useful practices before proposing actions. Due to the nature of the seminar methodology and the scale of the seminar, it was impossible to fully record discussions at the table. Only what was written down by participants is reflected. In most cases, subject areas were identified as a result of the discussions.

7 Next to the actions, there are sometimes references to whether this is addressed to the Commission or to the Member States; in addition, actions were sometimes prioritised by voting (the number in brackets reflects this).

- MS: Long-term forecasts to anticipate (3)
- MS: Measurable goals (1)
- MS: Identify wider/complex actions
- EC/MS: Focus
- MS: SWOT analysis
- MS: Discussion with key stakeholders/partners at all stages
- MS: Identify priorities
- MS: Organise topic-oriented meetings of institutions

Subject area 4 Process management

- EC: Simplification and flexibility of procedures (12)
- EC: Priority-setting workshops with stakeholders (6)
- EC/MS: Draw up and implement a roadmap (4)
- MS: Effective allocation of responsibilities (3)
- MS: Strategic planning teams at higher level of authority (2)
- MS: Clear objectives (political decision)
- EC: Define difference between programme and project management
- MS: Implementation studies for new objectives
- MS: Implementation capacity analysis of potential implementers

DELIVERY PLANNING

Subject area 1 Finances

- Exchanges between EC and Member States on management and financial control practices (6)
- EC: Leave division between annual budgets in financial tables completely up to MS without EU opinion (5)
- MS: To have only one MS administrative decision for one project (combining national and European funds) (3)
- EC: Solve the financial perspective rapidly (3)
- MS: Include the "cash flow" projection in the contracts (2)
- MS: More support to the stakeholders of programmes and the project managers (training, exchange of practices,...) (1)
- MS: An administrative decision for promoters general budget with identification of the source of financing
- MS: Reinforced support for operators/partners
- EC: Exchanges throughout the EU on MS managing practices
- EU: Reinforcement of EU advance
- EU: Raise the advance from EU at beginning of programmes
- EU: Delay N+2 rule to 2nd year of the programme

Subject area 2 Management of projects

- MS: Encourage making trans-national cooperation possible in the ESF (5)
- MS: Standard project framework and flexible tools (3)
- MS: Definition of responsibility (2)
- MS: Clear rules (1)
- MS: Vice versa communication with policy-makers (1)
- MS: Ongoing training on PCM (1)
- MS: Critical review of national rules and procedures
- MS: Clarify the rules to every participant
- EC / MS: Simple procedures and flexibility in improving delivery system
- EU: Make it easier to change the priorities (programme level) (changing labour market)
- MS: Split project proposal into compliance areas and project design areas
- MS: Make it easy to change implementation if necessary

Subject area 3 Implementation structure

- MS: Simplify & streamline administrative procedures by the MS (8)
- MS: Provide helpdesk in MS: finance, changes, project design (5)

- MS: Social partners' involvement more real and active in all the phases (2)
- MS: To build a system of support for social partners (2)
- MS: Decentralisation to the regional level (project selection) (2)
- MS: Provision of technical support to the project leaders (helpdesk) (1)
- EU: Work hard and fast about simplification (1)
- MS: Use own and other MS experiences from this period for the next
- MS: Use evaluation results and stakeholders knowledge and combine it with the structure already existing
- MS: More open talks
- MS: Should involve stakeholders early in order to ensure good cooperation in the next period
- EU: Clear directives from the EU concerning budget and concrete thematic aspects (clearer guidelines for audit requirements)
- Provide a solution to the budget discussions

Subject area 4 Capacity Building

- EU: A general EU training for ESF staff on good practice implementation: "ESF-University" every 6 months (12)
- EU: To introduce a system of certification of project management qualification (4)
- MS+EU: Thematic meetings with implementation structures on Lisbon targets (in different MS or EU if no MS wants a topic) (3)
- Set up support system for people responsible for planning (trainings, meetings, foras)
- Promotion of useful methodologies (3)
- EU: Prepare benchmarks (1)
- MS: Support the project promoters capacity (lessons learned, exchanging experiences) (1)
- Providing guidelines for sound programming
- EU: To use best practices and standards from non-EU organisations, global methodologies and well known tools and techniques
- Ensure continuous feedback: questionnaires, interviews
- Create possibilities for exchanging knowledge between planners on European level
- MS: Complementarity between ESF and ERDF: more effective contribution and support to ensure the infrastructure for ESF
- MS: Analyse situation, design actions
- Programme training plan, includes training materials, guidelines, etc
- MS: Identify key actors involved in designing the programme and set the cooperation mechanisms.
- To create the system of support at programme level
- MS: Assess the capacity of potential applicants and provide support to them (planning support, training, etc).
- Timely task-based capacity planning
- MS: To design new training programmes
- EC: Ensure links with ED institutions in Member States

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Subject area 1 Use of Evaluation Programme/Project Level

- EC: Involve the evaluator from the last period in the new planning (5)
- Ensure independence of evaluation (4)
- Involve stakeholders in the evaluation process (4)
- Implement ongoing evaluation
- EC: Ensure a minimum [mandatory] budget % for the evaluation
- Create tools for systematic retrieval of good practice
- Sensibilisation campaign on evaluation
- Evaluate the process
- Share results with the stakeholders
- Dissemination of the results
- EC: More money for the evaluation
- Exchange of good practices of evaluation from different countries
- Use an adapted method, PCM (project cycle management)

Subject area 2 Indicators of Achievement

- EC: Research to help identify qualitative indicators (6)
- EC: Setting up a system for data collection (5)
- Qualitative research can give good quantitative indicators (3)
- Consulting stakeholders when setting up indicators of achievement (3)
- Identify accountable and responsible project/programme managers from initial stages
- Have a good continuous reporting mechanism to avoid delays
- Must have a measurable and results-oriented process
- Provide training for projects to set indicators and monitor these effectively
- Thinking about impact means involving indicators that “work” in the long term, i.e. employability
- Use milestones to determine if you are on track
- Make needs 'smart': specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound and set indicators for achievement;
- Easily measurable does not mean the most important (risk!)

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Table 1

- Use understandable and accessible language and appropriate medias for beneficiaries (7)
- Inform politicians at EU-level & national level (3)
- Use a method that allows confidence building – identification of objectives – decision making (all levels) (3)
- EC: EU-wide TV-spot to raise awareness for ESF programme planning
- MS: Information by press (specific channels)
- Information campaign in relevant media (different languages) which are used by NGOs / local authorities.
- Explain the benefit for stakeholders in being actively involved from the beginning
- Information campaign at national / EU level
- No eternal talking shop
- National agencies to use meetings, newspapers, websites to give clear and completed information
- Programme managers: Motivate (beneficiaries) through visible progress

Table 2

- Train project evaluators on methodology to obtain real commitment (7)
- MS: Organise round tables (6)
- EC: Train “policy-makers” on methodology before preparing new programmes (1)
- EC: Support with projects & tools a common approach for programme planning (1)
- EC: Make a basic choice on adopted methodology and set up an organisation to support dissemination
- MS: Offer forum for participation including financial aid, venues, infrastructure
- MA: Involve policy-makers in working groups at the early stage of programming
- MS: Implement participative process

Table 3

- Give visibility to the cooperation with key players in order to give legitimacy to decisions taken (3)
- Capacity building for stakeholders (3)
- Take into account opinion in the first phase of planning (2)
- Institutionalise partnership with key players (2)
- Finance mainstreaming activities – soc. Partners (1)
- Motivate by allocating finances – ex. Next ESF. (1)
- EU: Use all the mechanisms to make politicians take responsibility
- Duty of reporting at ministerial level

Table 4

-
- Adopting PCM's principles (terms of reference) in programme for tackling discriminations in the labour market (11)
 - Decide about set-up of monitoring committees (3)
 - MA: To have a good practice of partnership with social and economic partners of interested areas / territories ad hoc (4)
 - Research at all levels to form baselines of real needs (1)
 - MS: Setting up website on the programming process (1)
 - MS: Make the guidance clear about stakeholder involvement at all stages from monitoring committees to programme delivery (2)
 - EC: Carry out research on good practice in all countries
 - Using experience (1)
 - Base on correct data and figures
 - MS: Organise periodical meetings/research to verify if data and figures are correct
 - Ensure all targets are aligned (1)
 - MS: Partnership with social and economic partners of interested areas/territories
 - Communication
 - Transparency & information

ANNEX 2: SOURCES OF INFORMATION



The following links provide ESF programmers with a small but manageable selection of sources for good practice in the area of public sector strategic management and programming. It is not limited to ESF related sources intentionally in order to provide a broad view of current practice across the globe. For example, some of the sources are linked to interventions for developing countries, which tend to operate broadly along the same lines as the Structural Funds. A Europe that wants to move forward should not suffer from the "not invented here" syndrome but should look for good practice across the globe.

In addition, a number of links are provided to Commission guidance related to the evaluation of EU-funded activities. Many of the tools used by evaluators are similar to the ones proposed in this report as strategic management tools. **However, it is essential to note that strategic management is an essential management task whereas evaluation is an explicit and independent appraisal of performance.**

UK PRIME MINISTER'S STRATEGY UNIT

The UK Prime Minister's strategy unit provides the Prime Minister with in-depth strategy advice and policy analysis on his priority issues. At the Vilnius seminar, the deputy director of the unit, Mrs Patricia Greer, was an appreciated speaker.

The unit currently has three specific roles:

- to carry out strategy reviews and provide policy advice in accordance with those policy priorities

- to support Government Departments in developing effective strategies and policies – including helping them to build their strategic capability
- to conduct occasional strategic audits, and to identify and effectively disseminate thinking on emerging issues and challenges for the UK Government.

<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/strategy/index.asp>

USAID'S IMPLEMENTING POLICY CHANGE (IPC) PROGRAMME

From 1990 to 1995, the Implementing Policy Change Programme (IPC) provided technical assistance and undertook studies that concentrated on the implementation and management side of policy reform in over 30 developing countries. A second phase of the project (IPC 2) began in late 1995 and continued to provide technical assistance for capacity-building and applied research for an additional five years. The unifying theme of IPC technical assistance has been the application of a strategic management process approach to policy reforms.

http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/democracy_and_governance/publications/ipcindex.html

W.K. KELLOGG FOUNDATION

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation is a non-profit organisation whose mission is to apply knowledge to solve the problems of people. Its founder W.K. Kellogg, the cer-

real industry pioneer, established the Foundation in 1930. Since its beginning the Foundation has continuously focused on building the capacity of individuals, communities and institutions to solve their own problems. The organisation awarded more than \$4.15 billion in grants to approximately 15,000 grantees. Its evaluation unit provides a range of very useful guidance.

<http://www.wkcf.org>

IQ-NET

IQ-Net is a network of regional and national partners whose aim is to improve the quality of Structural Funds programming through exchange of experience. The network exchanges experience on aspects of programme development, management and evaluation, bringing together ideas from across the EU and sharing information on good practice.

<http://www.eprc.strath.ac.uk/iqnet/>

ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

ADB is a multilateral development finance institution dedicated to reducing poverty in Asia and the Pacific. Established in 1966, they are now owned by 64 members, mostly from the region. It helps improve the quality of people's lives by providing loans and technical assistance for a broad range of development activities.

<http://www.adb.org>

HARVARD BUSINESS SCHOOL INSTITUTE FOR STRATEGY AND COMPETITIVENESS

The Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness is dedicated to the study of competition and its implications for company strategy; the competitiveness of nations, regions, and cities; and the relationship between competition and society.

<http://www.isc.hbs.edu/economicdevelopment.htm>

EUROPEAN FOUNDATION FOR QUALITY MANAGEMENT

EFQM, a not-for-profit membership foundation, is the primary source for organisations in Europe looking to excel in their market and their business. Founded in 1989 by the CEOs of prominent European businesses, EFQM is

now the hub of excellent, globally-minded organisations of all sizes and sectors, and both private and public. It provides a version of its Excellence model for the voluntary and public sector.

<http://www.efqm.org>

EUROPEAN INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

The European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA), created in 1981, is an independent institute carrying out training and research on public administration and European policies, providing a variety of services to the administrations of the Member States and the candidate countries, as well as to the EU institutions, in support of their tasks and responsibilities related to European integration.

The general aim of the Institute is to support the European Union and its Member States and the countries associated with EIPA by providing relevant and high quality services to develop the capacities of public officials in dealing with EU affairs by way of training, applied research, consultancy and publications.

The European Commission contributes to EIPA's activities and publications through the European Union budget.

The EIPA has simplified the EFQM framework for use in the public sector. All the material is available free of charge.

<http://www.eipa.nl/default.htm>

THE ASPEN INSTITUTE ROUNDTABLE ON COMMUNITY CHANGE

The Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change (the "Roundtable") was established in 1992 as a forum for people who are engaged in the field of comprehensive community initiatives. Roundtable participants from foundations, programme agencies, technical assistance providers, evaluators and public sector officials meet to discuss the lessons learned from initiatives across the country and to work on the common problems that they face.

<http://www.aspenroundtable.org>

EUROPEAN COMMISSION SOURCES ON EVALUATION

– DG EMPL evaluation website:

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/evaluation/esf_en.html

- Evaluation of Socio-Economic Development: The guide: www.evaled.com
- DG REGIO evaluation website: http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/evaluation/evaluation_en.htm
- DG Budget evaluation website: http://ec.europa.eu/budget/evaluation/index_en.htm
- DG Environment SEA website: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eia/sea-support.htm>
- SEC-GEN impact assessment website: http://ec.europa.eu/governance/impact/index_en.htm

NORDREGIO

Nordregio is a European centre for research, education and documentation on spatial development, established by the Nordic Council of Ministers.

<http://www.nordregio.se>

UK DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY (DTI)

In a world of change and competition, the DTI is working to create the conditions for business success and help the UK respond to the challenge of globalisation.

As the Department responsible for trade, business, employees, consumers, science and energy, it is in a unique position to contribute to the wider challenge of globalisation – enabling business and employees to prosper in the UK.

<http://www.dti.gov.uk>

THE KING BAUDOIN FOUNDATION

The King Baudouin Foundation is a public benefit foundation that supports projects and citizens with a commitment to building a better society. It looks for sustainable ways of bringing about justice, democracy and respect for diversity. The King Baudouin Foundation is independent and pluralistic.

It was established in 1976 on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of King Baudouin's reign and has a total annual expenditure of EUR 40 million Euro; 92% is allocated to projects.

<http://www.kbs-frb.be>

SWISS STATE SECRETARIAT FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

The Economic Cooperation and Development Division of the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), together with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), is responsible for planning and implementing cooperation with developing countries, Eastern European and Central Asian states (transition assistance) and the ten new EU states (enlargement contribution). The aim of this cooperation is to improve the living conditions of the population and to reduce disparities amongst all countries.

SECO is focusing its projects on the promotion of sustainable economic growth based on a market economy and on the integration of partner countries into the world economy. More specifically, SECO is involved in providing measures to support macro-economic policy reforms, infrastructure projects and programmes for promoting trade and investment. Important principles for cooperation are good governance and the mobilisation of private resources (capital and know-how).

<http://www.seco-cooperation.admin.ch>

UK DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION AND SKILLS

The UK Department for Education and Skills was established with the purpose of creating opportunity, releasing potential and achieving excellence for all.

<http://www.dfes.gov.uk>

UK TREASURY

The Treasury is the United Kingdom's economics and finance ministry. It is responsible for formulating and implementing the Government's financial and economic policy. Its aim is to raise the rate of sustainable growth, and achieve rising prosperity and a better quality of life with economic and employment opportunities for all.

<http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/>

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Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities

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