

GUIDELINES FOR FORMULATION OF NGO PROJECTS



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Chapter 1. Introduction

This manual/guideline is for the use for project planners in small- and medium-sized NGOs.

The manual is based on experience gained from project designing work, workshops, project planning literature such as “Guide to NGO projects” published by the Project Association (an umbrella organization for Danish NGOs) and DANIDA guidelines for formulation of small NGO projects.

There are many ways to design a NGO project. Experiences indicate that NGO project proposals often are not clear to the donors, in assessing whether the project proposal should be supported financially. In order to have a mutual understanding, the project ideas should be clear to the partners involved with the project formulation and implementation. Poor formulation may cause well-intentioned ideas to fail in the project implementation. It shows that a good idea is not enough to produce a good project. To achieve a good project, the project idea must be prepared thoroughly and adapted to the local condition, together with the partners and the target group.

The objective of this manual is to illustrate how projects can be improved and designed. A number of tools for project preparation are explained and illustrated. Often a project can be formulated with the use of all the tools. In other cases a few tools will be sufficient.

By gaining familiarity with each tool, it is the hope, that project planners will be able to select the right tools, relevant for their project.

The illustrated tools are based on the so called Logical Framework Approach (LFA), the general term for the method, which has been used for more than 30 years for designing development projects. The method is used by many development organisations and has recently been updated by DANIDA. This updating aimed to simplify the LFA method in order to secure participation and to form a base for discussions between the partners involved with the project formulation and implementation. This is clearly reflected in the new DANIDA guidelines for preparation of NGO projects.

The manual can be used as a general illustration on how projects can be formulated and is not adjusted to any specific donor agency. An examination of most donor agencies’ application guidelines for NGO projects shows that the principles described in this manual can be applied in most standard applications. A number of donor agencies guidelines are listed in Volume 2 of this manual.

The following chapters of the manual contain:

- Introduction to different LFA steps, followed with
- A case showing how the tool can be used

The nutrition situation in villages in the province “Rubadunia” is used as case throughout the manual.

The final chapter 4 contains a project design for the Rubadunia case illustrated through an LFA project Matrix. By reading the manual and at the same time referring to the final project Matrix, hopefully the connection between the LFA steps becomes clearer.

Chapter 2

Before designing the project

What is a project?

In order to formulate a project it is important to have a clear understanding of what a project is. Most projects will have the following characterization:

Specific objective

- Projects ought to have specific objective. Projects need to be precisely planned to achieve these objectives.

Focused on changing conditions

- The objectives for projects are often to change the conditions, for example improve living standards for a specific chosen target group or environment.

Limited duration, size and resources

- Projects with limited lifespan and size within specific objectives can be achieved with limited resources. Hence it is important to formulate the project realistically considering time and resources requirements.

Across existing organisations

- Projects often run across existing organisations. This could call for co-operation between a number of organisations in order to reach the objective.

Project planners, who wish to formulate a project, need to focus on clear project objectives targeted on improved conditions for the project target group/area. These objectives must be realistic in relation to lifespan, size and resources available as well as the possibilities of involving other organisations for co-operation.

Does the project fit to your organisation?

Project initiators often have good ideas. Before the idea is formulated into a project proposal it is important to consider, whether the idea fit into your organisation's objectives. A least 3 questions must be answered:

Does the idea fit the NGO's strategy?

- Most NGOs have an objective and strategy on what the NGO wants to achieve through its work. Among others is to secure backup from the members, to discuss whether the idea fits with the NGOs strategy and objective.

Does the NGO have the capacity to carry through the project?

- Implementation of projects requires many resources i.e. time, competency as well as organisational and administrative experience. Once the NGO gets involved, a lot of manpower will be tied to the project. It is important to consider whether the NGO has the necessary manpower not only to formulate the project but also to take on the long work to implement and monitor the project.

What are the NGO's special experience and know-how?

- Many organisations are involved in environmental development projects. It is important to consider what kind of knowledge and experience the organisation has in relation to a specific project. This could be done by asking whether the organisation has special attributes (such as local knowledge, local environment or special technical know how) to be involved in the project.

Does the project fit with the partner organisation?

Many projects are being implemented through co-operations with local organisations or CBOs. To secure a successful implementation it is important to consider the following:

Does the idea correspond with the partner's strategy?

- To secure a local project commitment, it is important to assess whether the project idea correspond with the local objective and strategy.

Does the local partner have the capacity to implement the project?

- The local partner will play a major part in implementing the project. Hence it is important to consider the capacity of the local partner to implement and monitor the project activities such as to keep a close contact with the target group.

Does the local partner have special knowledge/skills?

- In the course of interaction with the NGO, it is important to find out whether the local partners have any special knowledge and experience. It must then be considered, whether the local partner is the right choice or if other organisations or local authorities should be involved.

Does the project fit the donor's demands?

Different donors have different requirements for the applicant, project type, area etc. Before the project idea is formulated into a project proposal, it is important to assess whether there is a possible donor for the project and whether the proposal fit the donor's priorities.

This does not mean that the NGO is subject to donor demand.

On the other hand, it hardly serves a purpose to work out a detailed project proposal if no donor will support it.

Chapter 3. Formulation of project

Project formulation can be divided into 3 main phases:

Analysis
Decision
Planning/Designing

The work process within the 3 main phases is based on the Logical Framework Approach (LFA).

The analysis is often quite comprehensive:

Part 3.1 (Project analysis-phase) describes the 6 tools for analysing the project background:

- Project idea discussion
- Target group analysis
- Political analysis
- Risk analysis
- Problem analysis
- Objective analysis

Part 3.2 (Project decision phase) describes 3 tools for comparing and selection of projects:

- Consideration concerning project possibilities
- Resource analysis
- Selection of target areas

Part 3.3 (Project design phase) describes the 5 steps and tools for working out the detailed project planning:

- Formulate overall objective (development objective)
- Formulate project objective (immediate objective)
- Formulate project outputs
- Formulate project activities
- Formulate project input(s)

Table 2.

Case: The state of nutrition in the villages in Rubadunia

The NGO “Healthy Children” has since it was started 5 years ago been working with the information work about children’s health in developing countries.

The chairwoman has earlier worked as volunteer in the Rubadunia province and has contact to a local NG, Rubadunia Children Welfare (RCW). RCW was established 3 years ago by people connected to the church and so far have mainly worked with smaller project initiated by the church in Rubadunia. RCW wishes to expand the work and have suggested a project co-operation, “Healthy Children” which will cover the region.

Rubadunia covers 100.000 km² and has 500.000 inhabitants of which 50.000 lives in the province capital, Rubadunia City, the rest in smaller villages. The village population lives on subsidiary farming. The main crop is corn (maize). The production just about covers the daily need, hence no extra production to sell. The transport conditions are bad, especially in the raining season it is difficult to reach the faraway villages.

The village children mainly live on corn. Due to the lack of other crops and periods with too little corn, the state of nutrition among the village children is poor. This leads to a high infant mortality.

The ministry of agriculture states that low agriculture produce and poor knowledge about agriculture production is causing the critical situation. The village councils complain about hardly any assess to agriculture input such as fertilizer for the corn production.

The ministry of health has primary health post in 10% of the villages. A health staff educated only in basic vaccination campaigns and not in nutrition operates the health posts. Hence the information about nutrition in the villages is limited.

Women are often locked in the traditional role, which leads to low education level, i.e. women knowledge about nutrition is poor.

The old tradition is still dominant and the village councils have strong influence on decisions taken by the single families or the whole village. Bigger initiatives such as new projects will have to be approved by the village councils.

“Healthy Children and RWC have agreed upon designing a project with the objective to reduce the infant mortality in the villages.

3.1 Project analysis-phase

Project idea discussion

Project planners often believe they have the final project idea right from the start. Very often it happens that we, as the project makers interpret the project idea based on our own perception on what is required – and forget that the target group may have misunderstood what is to be done. Project ideas should be prepared through a co-operation between the NGO and the partner(s).

As the first step, it is important that the project idea be discussed broadly. This can be done by formulating a number of questions related to the focal problems. Depending on the situation of the project, certain questions could be asked:

- Why do young people migrate from the villages to the capital?
- Why are children poor educated?
- Why are there differences between women’s and men’s workload?
- Why is the drinking water polluted in many villages?
- Why are there bad conditions in the slum areas?
- Why is there bad nourishment among the village children

The broad debate finishes with specifying the main outlines of the project idea: what is/are the focal problem(s)? – who is the target group(s)?

In “our” case the preliminary discussions concluded that the main cause to the high infant mortality is malnourishment. The focal problem can be formulated as given below:

Table 3.

Case: focal project problem/-question

- Why is there bad nourishment among the village children in the region around Rubadunia City?

Target group analysis

Projects are about people. However during project formulation, people are often forgotten:

- Either the people that are supposed to benefit from the project are forgotten.
- Or the people – often too many – involved with the project-implementation are forgotten.
- Or (finally) the people, although not directly involved in the project but important as decision maker are forgotten.

Therefore, it is important to determine as early as possible in the process who will 1) benefit from 2) carry out/implement and 3) take the necessary decisions in order to start and implement the project.

A project will typically have the following target groups:

Primary target group:

- People who will benefit from the project at the end.
In our case the primary target group: malnourished village children

Secondary target groups:

- People involved in the project-implementation. The secondary target groups can be divided into 2 subgroups:

Internal target group:

People involved in carrying through of the project. People carrying out the practical project work.

External target group:

People with influence outside the project, such as decision makers for approval of the project. In our case, for example the village councils or the health authorities.

It is important to realize which groups are involved in the project, what part they play – and not the least – what motives they have for joining the project. This can be done by analysing each target group regarding:

- Involvement in the project
- Interest in the project
- Reservations/fear about the project
- “Strength” in relation to the project
- “Weakness” in relation to the project

Target group analysis for the Rubadunia case can be carried out by using the Table 4 (pull out the page).

Table 4.					
CASE: ANALYSIS OF TARGET GROUPS					
Group	Project involvement	Project Interest	Fear for the project	Strength	Weakness
Primary target group					
malnourished children	Users of better food	Better health	Change of living conditions		Almost no understanding for nourishment
Secondary target group					
Internal target group					
Health staff	Training of mothers on nutrition	Help children. Do their job Get promoted	Not enough knowledge to advice	Presence in all villages. Good contact to the mothers	Poor educated
Mothers	Advised by health staff. Better food for the children	Improve on the children health	Dependent on others advice and expensive food	Knowledge about cooking Knowledge about the children	Poor influence on how the husband use the family money
Fathers	From “no involvement” to “active support to the mothers”	Improve on the children health	Expensive food	Is able to provide useful support to the mothers	Might oppose the project because of ignorance or intentional dislike
Rubadunia Children Welfare	Training of health staff	Help children. Recognition of the organisation	Being “ruled” by the Ministry of Health	Experienced in nutrition training	Few personal are fully competent
External target group					
Village Council	Approval of project	Better health for children. Stronger political position	Change in council authority and women’s role	Strong influence which can be good for the project	Fear of interfering from “outside”
Ministry of Health	Approval that the health staff can work with nutrition	Better health for children. Better Gov. reputation in the villages	Medical healthcare might be given a low priority	Able to pay salary to the health staff	Poor contact to the villages

Political analysis

Project designers often focus too much on their project idea and overlook the conditions outside the project. Often political aspects will influence the project idea whether it will be approved and whether the project will achieve its results or fail.

Therefore, it is important at the project idea phase to clarify what political conditions will influence the project idea.

Table 5.

Case: Political questions

In “our” project idea concerning malnourished children it is important to find out:

- How is government policy on nutrition?
- How is the policy for training the village based health staff?
- How are the families’ attitudes towards nutrition?
- How are the village council’s attitudes towards nutrition?
- Is the project idea in accordance with the existing policy, or are there major differences?
- If there are differences, these must be explained and accounted for
- How does the project idea take in account ongoing activities; innovative? supplementary? or overlapping?

Risk analysis

Often enough project designers focus mainly on the approval of the project idea that they forget the risks which can lead to a project failure. Hence, it is important to assess the conclusions from the target group and political analysis whether it indicated that the project *will not* succeed.

Table 6.

Case: Risk aspects

- If it comes to all, will the Ministry of Health approve the training of health staff?
- Does the Rubadunia Children Welfare have such a high turnover of personnel, that the training of health staff will *not* be possible?
- Are the village councils reluctant/negative to the training of the village women?
- Do we have sufficient information about for instance the village structure, gender and nutrition?

Problem analysis

At times, project designers have a narrow understanding of what problems the project idea seeks to solve. The reason for this is often a lack of thorough understanding of the magnitude of the problems and the limitations in the everyday life of the target-group.

Therefore the next step is to describe the complexity of problems that exists in the area.

The following will go through the problem and objective analysis and choice of strategy (up to the project planning phase), based on the basic question/focal problem which was formulated earlier (part 3.1)

- Participatory Workshop

Ideally, a Participatory Workshop is carried through together with the project planners and the representatives of the target group.

Start with:

- Formulating the problems related to the focal problem through “brainstorming”, then
- Discuss each single problem and clarify the meaning.

Humans have an odd way of thinking out solutions and often forgetting to specify *which problems* to solve. During the brainstorming, each problem is written down in a short and exact sentence.

It is important to formulate the problem as a “negative situation”.

A “negative situation” is the state of things which one is dissatisfied with.

Example: "Malnourished children" is a negative situation and as such it is described as a problem. Contrary, the sentence “nutritious food for the children” does not express a problem but a “solution”.

It is important that each problem-formulation *does not* contain 2 or more problems. If you have more than one problem, each should be formulated separately.

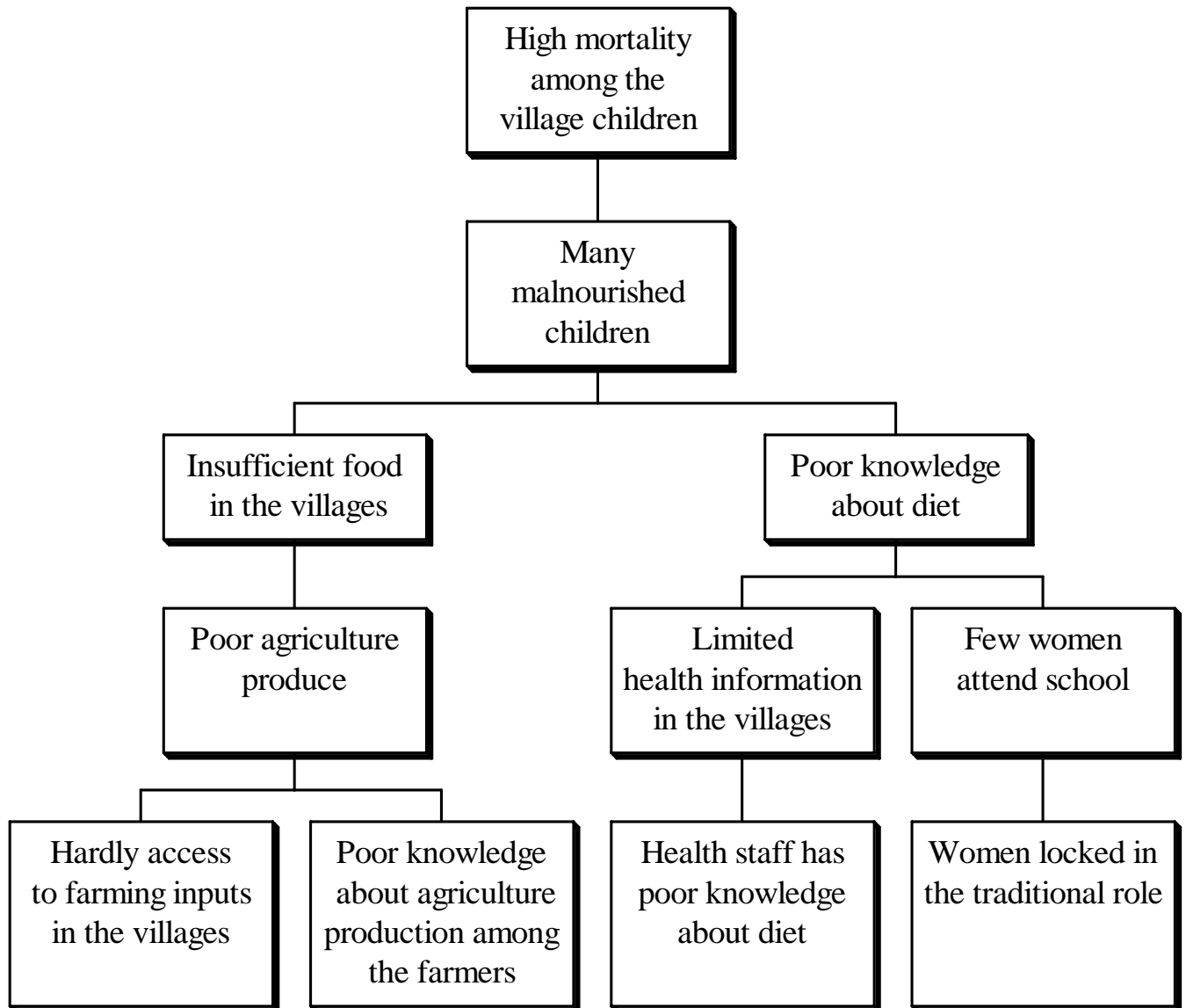
Problems are never to be formulated as a “lack” situation. Example on this is “lack of food”. If this is accepted as a problem there is only one solution: “more food”. This is not necessarily correct as more food can be sold in the black market or it is too expensive for the families with children to buy. On the other hand, if the problem is described as “malnourished children”, it could open up for the relevant discussion whether more variety of food, cheaper food, etc. are needed.

- Finally, find out how the problems are interrelated through a “cause – effect” coherence to build up a “**problem tree**”

The “causes – effects” interrelation between the problems can be clarified by asking whether each individual problem lead to one another, for example “insufficient food in the villages” lead to “malnourished children”, and “poor knowledge about diet” lead to “malnourished children”. In both cases there are probable cause/effect connections.

Table 7.

Case: Rubadunia Problemtree



The *problem tree* is a hierarchical presentation of the interrelation between the problems related to the focal problem. In table 7 the lower boxes are the roots whereas the upper boxes symbolises the trunk of the tree. Problem trees, just like the trees in nature, have many different shapes. If there are many interrelated problems, the roots can be extensive.

In table 7 the project idea originates from the focal problem: “Many malnourished children”. Below the box with the focal problem are the “*causes to the problem*”. Two causes have been given: “Insufficient food in the villages” and “Poor knowledge about diet”. Each of these causes forms a problem (or an unsatisfactory situation). In the boxes below you

continue to explain the causes to these 2 problems. In this way the roots of the problem tree continues downwards.

Above the box with the “focal problem”: “Many malnourished children”, there is a box containing the text: “High mortality among the village children” Here the *effect or the consequence* of the focal problem is described.

It should now become clear that the problem tree is made, first by formulating the focal problem which is the cause for discussing the project. In the boxes below the focal problem is a hierarchy of “causes” formulated and in the boxes above the focal problem the “effects” on the target group or the area are stated.

The problem analysis is finalized once the project makers agree that the problem tree provide an adequate/suitable picture of the situation in the project area.

Objective analysis

The problem tree provides a picture of the interrelation between existing problems. Based on this picture, the next step is to visualize the “intended future situation” and to work out an *objective tree*.

- Reformulate to positive future situation

For example can the problem “Limited health information in the villages” be reformulated to “Relevant health information available in the villages”

- Check for realistic objective

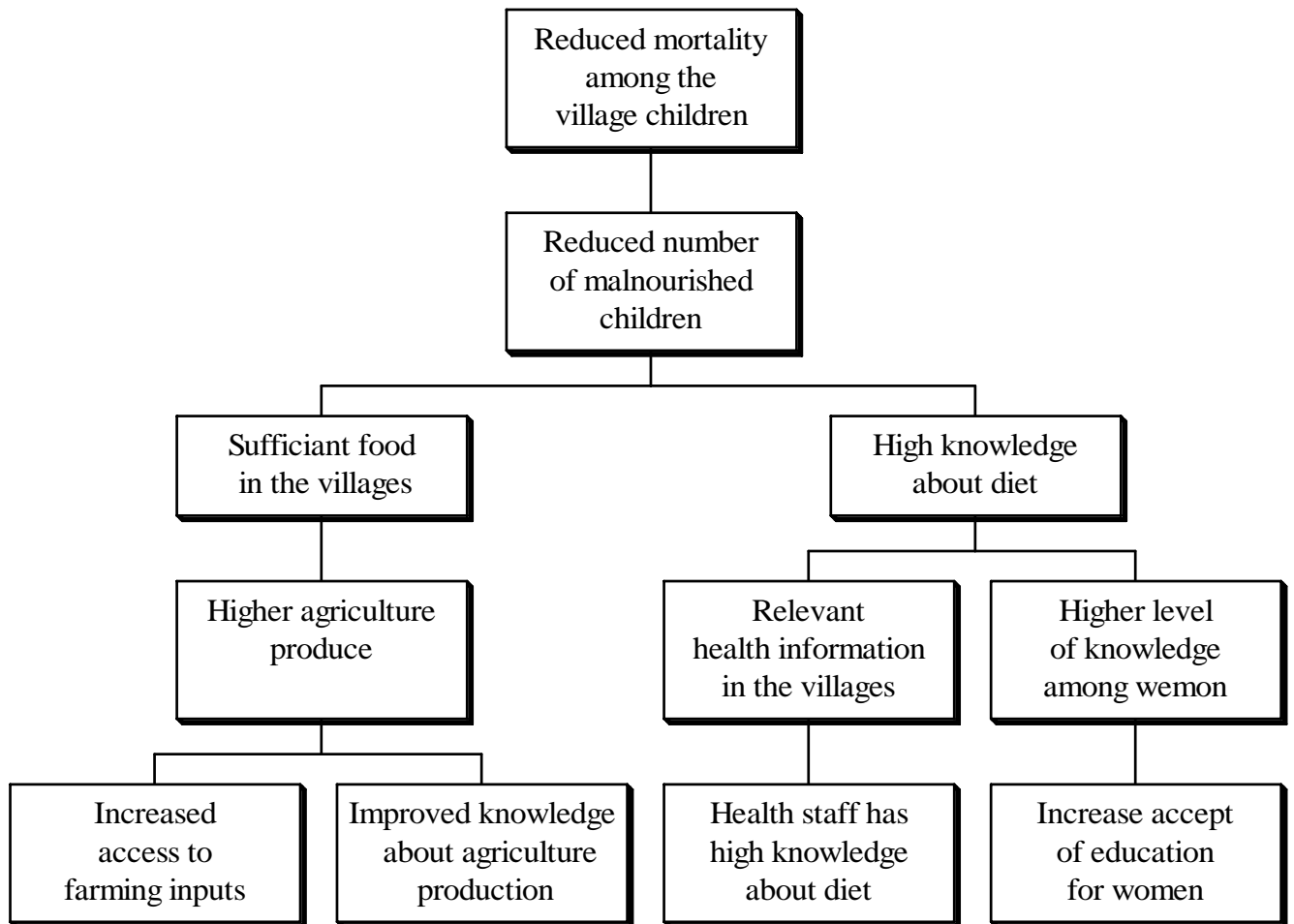
To the problem “*High* mortality among the village children” the objective “*No* mortality among the village children” will be unrealistic. A realistic objective would be “*Reduced* mortality among the village children”.

The objective must be thoroughly formulated. If it is difficult to formulate an objective maybe the problem has been wrongly or inaccurate formulated.

Table 8 shows an objective tree for our case.

Table 8.

Case: Rubadunia Objective Tree



After formulating the all objectives for all the problems from the *problem tree*, an *objective-tree* is formed showing all the interrelated objectives.

The logic of the objective tree is checked by examining whether the objectives are interrelated through means/objective relation. I.e. whether an objective can be regarded as a mean to achieve a higher objective.

Comment on the arrows and arrangement of the objective tree

The arrow indicates the direct interrelation between one cause and one effect.

While considering the elaboration of the objective tree most suitable for the further project work, one can freely move up and down the before deciding on the final “tree”.

3.2 Project decision phase

Based on the focal problem that is lying behind the project idea (“Many malnourished children”) a range of factors such as target groups, political conditions, problems and objectives have been described and discussed in the analysing phase. It is important to remember that the project at *the present moment* is not final yet. The next phase is the project decision phase/phase. In this phase the information from the analysing phase will be assessed. On these grounds it is possible to consider and conclude what will be the exact substance of the project.

Project possibilities

The object-tree (table 8) contains many intermediate objectives. If we find that our project cannot cover all the outlined intermediate objectives, the size of our project must be limited.

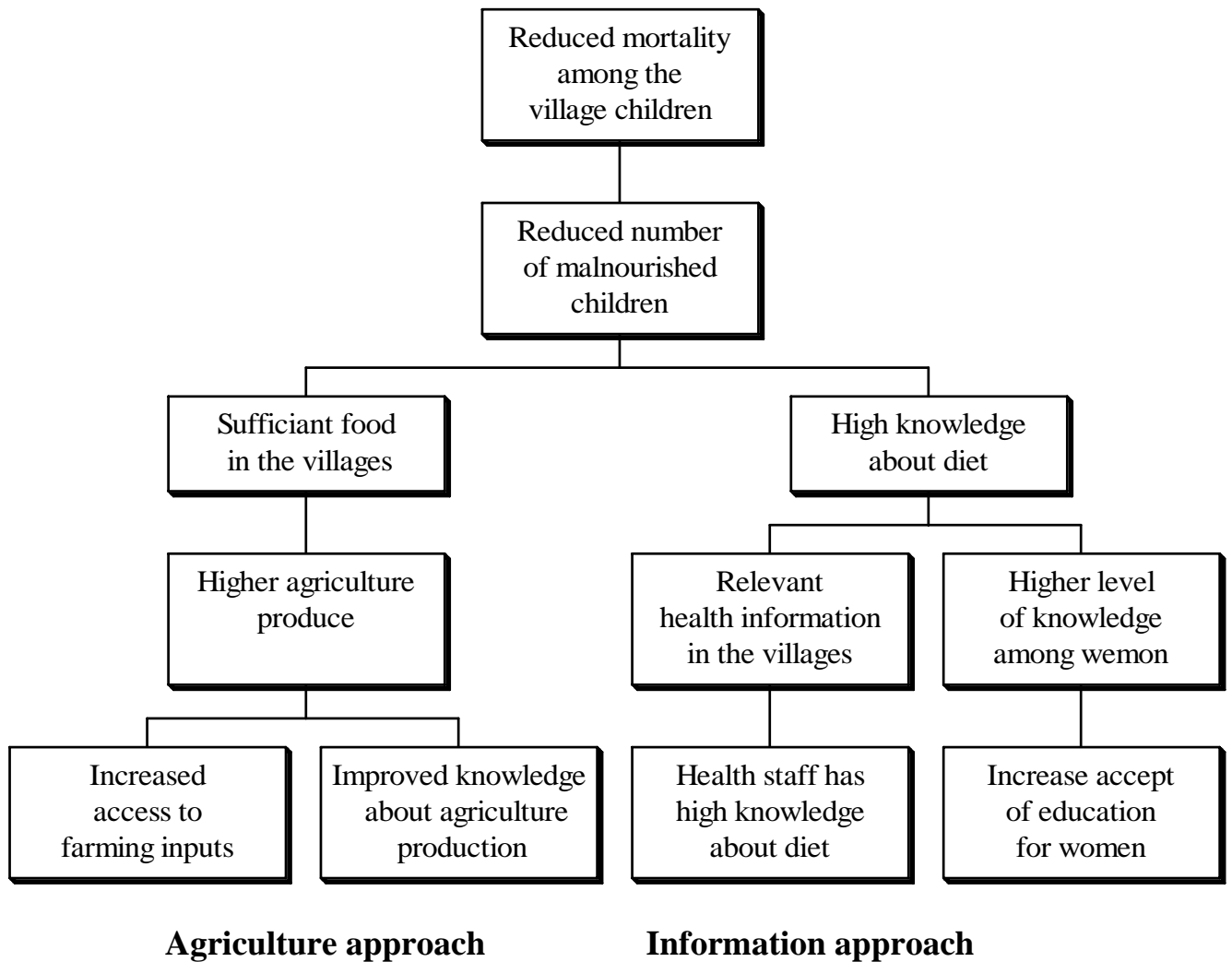
In the objective-tree, repeated in table 9, two project-possibilities or project approaches lead to the project-objective (“Reduced number of malnourished children”): The left is the “farming/agriculture approach”; the right is the “information approach”.

If the project cannot cover both possibilities it will be necessary to limit oneself to one of the approaches.

Table 9.

Case: Objective-tree showing the “project-possibilities” or the “project–approaches”

Case: Rubadunia Objective Tree



Resource analysis

The next step is an overall analysis of the resources needed.

Here the resources needed are; one, for the implementation of the project, and another, for the resources available is specified. Through here, for each option, one can:

- Estimate the necessary economical resources as well as where to find the funding.
For example, the agriculture approach (the delivery of agriculture input) is estimated to need more money than the education approach.
Relevant question: what resources are available for a future project?
- Estimate the necessary human resources needed.
- The “agriculture approach” requires the presence of agricultural advisers. On the other hand the “information approach” depends on the presence of health staff.
Relevant question: Can these professionals be provided for the project?
- Estimate which organisations should take part in the project, and how the co-operation can be arranged.
- Could be the government, the local NGO, CBO or the village councils?
Relevant question: Are there certain limitations in the co-operation with certain partners?
- Estimate the strengths and weaknesses of these organisations.
For example: the consultant lives far from the project site, whereas the teachers live within the local area.
Relevant question: Are there organisational conditions which at the present phase can pose a serious problem for a successful project?

Comparison and selection

After listing the alternative project possibilities, a comparison of how the conditions, revealed during the analysing phase, will influence the project possibilities, as well as how far the economical and human resources will suffice. We can compare and chose between the different project possibilities by using the following two matrixes (table 10 and 11):

Table 10.				
Case: comparison between agriculture and information approach				
	Cost	Local support	Institutional sustainability	Uncertainties
Agriculture approach	High	High	Medium	High
Information approach	Low	High	High	Low

In the Rubadunia case we conclude that the Information Approach seems to be inexpensive, less uncertainty as well as more sustainable considering the institutional strength (to be able to implement the project in a successful way).

Table 11.			
Case: Selection of project approach			
Choice of project approach	Strategy	Project ownership	Primary target group
Increased agriculture production	Delivering of agriculture inputs	Ministry of agriculture	Farmers
Increased knowledge about nutrition	Conscience about nutrition	Village council, and possible women groups	Women and children

Table 11 shows that the choice between agriculture or information approach will have major consequences for those who will be the “project owners” and those who will be the primary target group.

It is important that the partners and the project target group are involved in decision making.

Based on the considerations in table 10 and 11 we are able to make the necessary limitation for our project:

Table 12	
Case: Comparison and selection	
<p>In the Rubadunia case there seem to be much in favor for nutrition Information Approach.</p> <p>The following conditions have been conclusive: Fewer expenses Larger institutional sustainability Less uncertainty Sympathy for “local ownership” RCW strength in information work for women and children</p> <p>In relation the organization “Healthy Children” the nutrition information approach seems to be the obvious choice because the organization has special knowledge about children, health and nutrition</p> <p>Conclusion: In the following we will concentrate on the designing of a nutrition information project.</p>	

3.3 Project design phase

The project planning phase is about working out the project matrix. An example of the matrix is illustrated in table 25 and table 26.

Matrix description (Pull out table 25)

The left matrix column is called “Description”

The 2 upper rows describe the **project objectives**:

- Overall objective and
- Project objective

The rows below describe the **project itself**:

- The concrete Outputs which our project shall provide
- The concrete actions or Activities, which shall provide the project results/outputs
- The concrete resources or Inputs, which are necessary for carrying out the project activities

The logic or interrelation between the 5 rows can be explained as:

The Overall Objective can only be achieved if the Project Objective is fulfilled. In order to achieve the Project Objective the Project Results/Outputs must be carried through. Outputs are, as the words indicate, the outcome of the completion of the Activities. The activities can only be carried through, if the Inputs are available.

One can work through the matrix from the bottom up:

Inputs are (the) prerequisite for the activities, which are prerequisite for the Outputs, which are prerequisite for the Project Objective, which are prerequisite for the achieving the Overall Objective.

Below it is explained how to formulate each layer in the Matrix. Case story as example.

Overall objective (Development objective)

*The objective which is **expected to be achieved in the long term**. Achieving the Development objective is not only dependent on our project but also from other initiatives and projects. Our project can only be regarded as **part** of the development/improvement that has to happen in order to achieve the overall objective. Hence, our project is one of more “contributors” for reaching the overall objective.*

One could also state, that the Overall Objective is the social objective to our society that justify our project.

Table 13.

Case: Overall objective

By the 1st of January 2000 the health condition for 200 children in 5 villages in the Rubadunia province has been considerably improved.

Note:

The overall objective is described as the new or changed situation/state of things, which we wish to achieve, after the Project-objective has been met.

The description must, as far as possible, answer the 5 questions:

- **When?** (time)
- **Whom?** (target group)
- **Where?** (location)
- **What** has happened? (the changed situation as regards to content and substance. It is about “quality”)
- **How much** has happened? (it is about the quantity)

In the following table we control our overall objective with all the 5 questions:

Case: Overall objective				
By the <u>1st of January 2000</u> the <u>health condition</u> for <u>200 children</u> in <u>5 villages</u> in the <u>Rubadunia</u> province has been <u>considerably improved</u> .				
When?	How much?	What	Whom	Where

Project objective

*The immediate result/effect that **we - with almost certainty** – **expect to** occur once the project has been successfully implemented. We expect that the Project Objective will be achieved immediately after the project has been carried through, i.e. when the project outputs are implemented.*

Project Objective should only be a few (1 or 2) and not too ambitious. The whole idea is that the implementation of the project, in reality leads to a fulfilment of the project objective.

Table 14.

Case: Project Objective

The 1st of January 1999, 200 children in 5 villages in Rubadunia province receive nutritious food daily.

Note:

The Project Objective is described as the new or changed situation/state of things, which we wish to occur as a direct consequence of the project implementation.

The description must, as far as possible, answer the 5 questions:

- When? (time)
- Who? (target group)
- Where? (location)
- What has happened? (the changed condition/state, improved quality)
- How much has happen? (quantity)

Project Outputs

Outputs are the specific outcomes of the project as a result of the project activities.

One could say that project Outputs are products or conditions that we, responsible for the project, can “guarantee” will happened, once the project has been implemented.

Table 15.

Case: Project Outputs

1. Information and teaching material about nutrition prepared
2. Health staff competent in nutrition
3. 100 mothers in 5 villages have knowledge about nutritious food and cooking

Note:

The Project Results/Outputs is described as the new or changed situation/state of things, as a result of the project Activities.

Also here, it will be an advantage to use the 5 questions:

- When (time)
- Who? (target group)
- Where? (location)

- What has happened (the changed condition/state, improved quality)
- How much has happen? (quantity)

Repetition: Interrelation between Results/Outputs, Project Objective and Overall Objective

- **Outputs** are the products, which our project can “guarantee” delivered
- **Project Objective** the new or changed situation/state of things, which we almost certain to expect will happen as a consequence of the project Outputs
- **Overall Objective** the new or changed situation/state of things, which we wish to happen in the future. It is the Overall Objective that justifies the start of the project.

Activities

Activities are the specific actions taken to achieve the Outputs.

It is important to include all the important types of activities in the specification.

Normally we break down the specification of the activities relating to the specific Results/Outputs, in order to see the direct coherence/connection between the Activities and the Outputs.

Table 16.

Case: Activities

1. (to) Prepare or buy Information and teaching material
2. (to) Plan and implement nutrition training for the health staff
3. (to) Train women in nutrition through courses given by the health staff

Note:

Activities are formulated by using verbs. Normally the “to” is left out in the specification.

Inputs

Inputs are the resources; staff, equipment, other materials and services, etc. necessary for carrying out the activities.

Specify not only the different Inputs, but also the amount needed to pay for the expenses involved. In total - specifications will be drawn up in project budget.

Sometimes it may be useful to split up the Inputs into groups, describing from where the Input is expected:

- Local Inputs (from target group and/or the local authorities)
- Regional and/or national Inputs
- International Inputs (international donor agencies)

In table 17 and in the final Project Matrix this grouping and amount of expenses are not listed.

Table 17.

Case: Inputs

Manpower:

- RCW Staff, “Healthy Children” staff, Health Staff

Equipment:

- Teaching material for the nutrition education, kitchen utensils and foodstuffs for demonstration of nutritious cooking

Procurements to cover:

- Educational material, staff, training activities, equipment and transport

Indicators

Indicators are criteria (that can be measured out) to assess whether the project obtain/gain what it was designed to achieve.

Indicators are also helpful in the monitoring of the project progress according to the plan.

Indicators must specify the minimum achievement on a given time in order to ensure the project objectives. Hence, the indicators are used to measure the immediate or long-term success. Often it is necessary to identify more Indicators.

For ongoing monitoring and final evaluation of the project, it is important that the Indicators are:

- Relevant, in relation to what to be measured
- Specific, in relation to the target group, quality, quantity, timeframe and geography
- Measurable

Table 18.

Case: Indicators

Project Objective:

The 1st of January 1999, 200 children in 5 villages in Rubadunia province receive nutritious food daily.

Indicator:

The food which the children daily consume contain sufficiently the 4 important vitamins and minerals

Output:

100 mothers in 5 villages have knowledge about nutritious food and cooking

Indicator:

- Mothers have knowledge about the 4 important vitamins and minerals
- Mothers have knowledge about how vitamins and minerals are preserved in the cooking

For smaller NGO projects, indicators may be limited to indicators for the Project Objective.

To state those Indicators that are realistic to measure or obtain information about, within the project resources, it is necessary to state the information source to be used in connection with the measuring of each Indicator.

Make sure only to quote those Indicators, which are realistic to measure or obtain information about within the project resources. In the Matrix, it is important also to state, what source of information is used to verify each Indicator.

Example shown in the project Matrix table 26

The last column in the Matrix contains Assumptions.

The Matrix Assumptions

External critical conditions, outside the influence of the project, have to be convincingly and positively fulfilled in order to implement the Project successfully.

Information on these external conditions can be partly obtained from the analysis work (described in section 3.1), or partly from the experience the involved partners have from similar projects.

Assumptions should be identified in each level in the Planning Matrix.

All Assumptions must be formulated as “*positive situations, which must be fulfilled*”.

The logic about Assumptions are explained below and in Table 23 (pull out the page) Check Table 26 (Case project matrix), while going through the tables below, starting at the lower left corner in Table 23:

1. If the necessary Input are available and the Assumptions are fulfilled we can expect the Activities to be implemented.

Table 19.

Case: Assumptions for the Activities

- RCW staff competent in nutrition teaching
- Village councils approve on the nutrition training in the villages
- Health Ministry of will send health staff to the courses arranged by RCW and let them teach in the villages

2. If the Activities are carried through and the Assumptions are fulfilled, we can be sure that the Outputs will be achieved.

Table 20

Case: Assumptions between Activities and Outputs

Health staff stay in their jobs and carry out the nutrition training for the mother target group
Mothers will participate in the training

3. If the Outputs are achieved and the Assumptions are fulfilled we can expect to achieve the Project Objective.

Table 21.

Case: Assumptions between Outputs and Project Objective

Nutritious food will be available in the villages

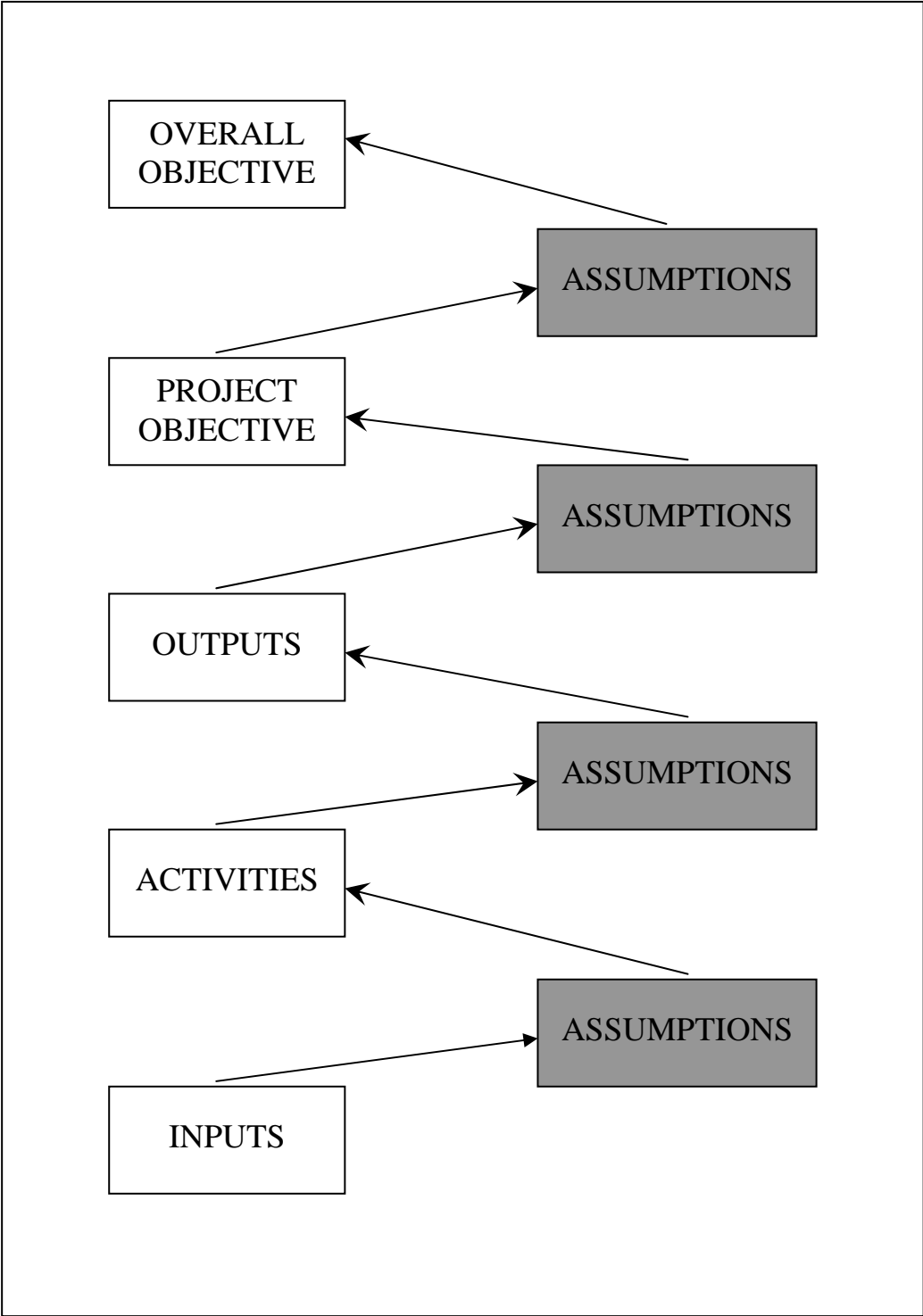
4. If the Project Objective and the Assumptions are fulfilled, we have reasons to believe that the Overall Objective will be achieved.

Table 22.

Case: Assumptions between Project Objective and Overall Objective

- No major epidemics in the villages

Table 23. ASSUMPTIONS



Assumptions, assessment on the importance, relevance and probability.

It is important to assess the assumptions suggested during the preparation of the Project Matrix. Unimportant assumptions should be sorted out before the final matrix.

The assessment can be done with the help of table 24 (pull out next page):

As an example (our case) we will assess whether the training personnel are qualified to teach

First question: Is the assumption important for a project success?

The answer is: YES

As the assumption is important we proceed to the next question;

Second question: Will the assumption be fulfilled?

To answer the question, we have 3 options:

1. YES: - If we know that the personnel are competent, we can cancel the assumption. It is no longer

an assessment because we positively and for sure know that the personnel can handle the job.

2. MAYBE: - If we suspect the personnel to be incompetent, we must stand by the assumption as

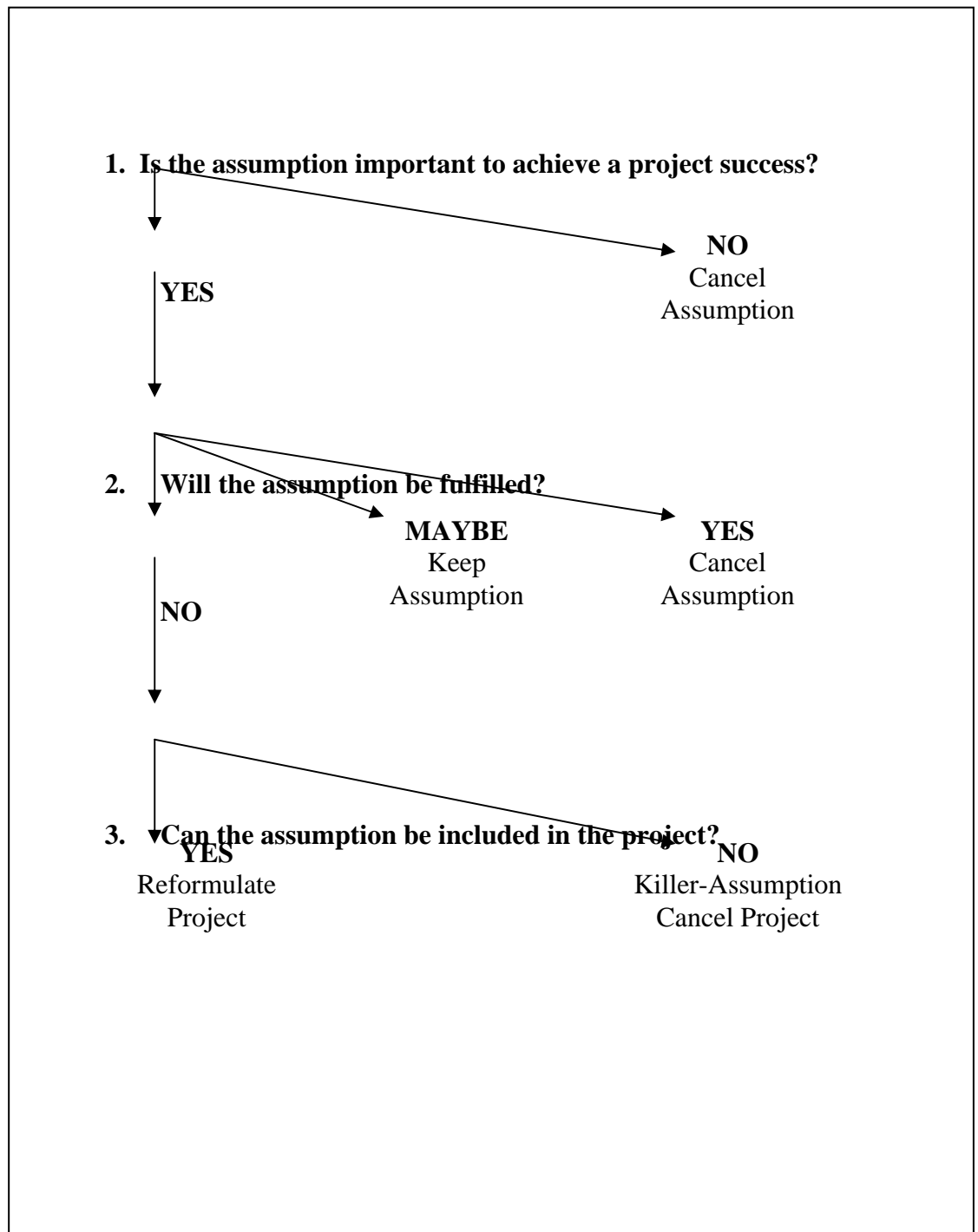
long as we are uncertain whether the personnel can *in fact* handle the job.

3. NO: - If we know for sure, that the personnel are incompetent, we proceed to the third question.

The third question:

- If our project can be reformulated in order to create more competent teaching personnel, we should include this as a Result/Output.
- If we can not include it in our project, we have a "Killer-assumption". A ticking bomb under the project, because the assumption is important and most probably can not be fulfilled. *In this case we are forced to give up the project, because it is too uncertain to implement.*

Table 24. ASSESMENT OF ASSUMPTIONS



The project planning is not finished before *all* Assumptions have been assessed. The project can still be changed by incorporating those conditions, which we originally presumed as Assumptions (important conditions *outside* the project). They (the conditions) can now become part of the project, described as an Activity followed by an Output. An Output which actually take into account the critical conditions of the assumption.

To secure a realistic project it is therefore important to check all the assumptions. Some we might neglect. Others maybe we have to include in our project in order to avoid “Killer-Assumptions”.

Conclusion our Case:

We consider the RCW staff to be competent in nutrition training. Therefore this assumption is left out after the first question; hence the assumption is not included in the final Project Matrix, table 26.

In return the Project Matrix contains 6 assumptions and preconditions; all regarded as *important conditions outside the project* which must be positively fulfilled.

	Description	Indicators & Source of Information	Assumptions (or conditions)
Objective	<p>Overall Objective/ Development objective The changed situation/stage which is <i>expected to be achieved in the long term</i>. The society related objective will justify the implementation of the project.</p>	<p><i>Criteria</i> (often called success-criteria) used to evaluate whether the Overall Objective has been achieved. Also state the source of information from where the necessary information can be obtained.</p>	<p>Conditions (critical), outside the influence of the project, that have to be convincingly <i>“positively fulfilled”</i> in order to achieve the Overall Objective <i>after the Project Objective is fulfilled</i>.</p>
	<p>Immediate objective or Project objective The immediate effect which, almost certain is <i>expected to be achieved immediately</i> after the project has been successfully implemented.</p>	<p>Same as above. In this box it is about the “Project Objective.”</p>	<p>Conditions (critical), outside the influence of the project, that have to be convincingly <i>“positively fulfilled”</i> in order to achieve the Project Objective after the project implementation.</p>
Project	<p>Project Results/Outputs The specific outcome of the project as a result of the project activities. Products or arrangements that we, responsible for the <i>project, can “guarantee”</i> have happened, once the project has been implemented.</p>	<p>Same as above. In this box it is about the “Project Outputs.”</p>	<p>Conditions (critical), outside the influence of the project, that have to be convincingly <i>“positively fulfilled”</i> in order to believe that the Activities lead to the Project Outputs.</p>
	<p>Activities All the single activities that have to be undertaken by the project in order to produce the outputs</p>	<p>Principally the same as above. In this box its about “Activities”</p>	<p>Conditions (critical), outside the influence of the project, that have to be convincingly <i>“positively fulfilled”</i>, allowing for the presence of the given Inputs at the right time.</p>
	<p>Inputs The resources; staff, equipment, other material and services etc. necessary for carrying out the activities.</p>		

Table 26. Case: Project Matrix for Rubadunia project			
	Description	Indicators & Source of Information	Assumptions (or conditions)
Overall Objective	By the 1st of January 2000 the health condition for 200 children in 5 villages in the Rubadunia province has been considerably improved.	Cases of illness reduced by 50% <i>Source: Health post statistics</i>	
Project Objective	The 1 st of January 1999, 200 children in 5 villages in Rubadunia province receive nutritious food daily.	The daily food contain sufficiently vitamins and minerals according to WHO-standard	No major epidemics in the villages
Outputs	4. Information and teaching material about nutrition prepared by 1.1.98 5. 25 Health staff competent in nutrition by 1.7.98 6. 100 mothers in 5 villages have knowledge about nutritious food and cooking by 1.10.98	Posters and 1 illustrated brochure <i>Source: Project review</i> 25 participants have accomplish the course and passed the examination <i>Source: Course reports</i> Mothers have knowledge about the 4 important vitamins and minerals as well as knowledge about how they are preserved in the cooking <i>Source: Household inquiries</i>	Nutritious food will be available in the villages
Activities	1. RCW: Prepare educational material. 2. RCW: Test of educational material. 3. RWC: Plan nutrition courses for the health staff. 4. RWC: Put together teaching team 5. RWC: Holding nutrition courses for the health staff. 6. Village approval to conduct nutrition training for the mothers in the villages. 7. Plan nutrition training 8. Carry out nutrition training of the village women.	<i>Source showing the activities have been carried through: Reports evaluation etc.</i>	Health staff stay in their jobs and carry out the nutrition training for the mother target group Mothers will participate in the training
Inputs	<u>Goods and equipment provided for by RCW</u> for nutrition training, kitchen utensils for demonstration of nutritious cooking. <u>Staff</u> RCW, organization “Healthy Children”, Health staff. <u>Money to cover</u> Education material, trainers, other project staff, equipment, transport and training expenses		The village councils approve the training to take place in the villages The Ministry of health will send its health staff to the courses arranged by RCW and let them teach the village women

Chapter 4

Finalising the work

Project matrix for our case

All information from the analysing, project selection and planning phase are now united in the Project Matrix.

Our case could look like the Matrix shown on table 26.

After finalising the Matrix the Project Idea is now formulated. Now, one must secure that that the Project is in line with the considerations which we made in chapter 2, whether the project conform to the

- organisation
- partner organisation(s)
- possible donor

Subsequently comes the discussions with the partners on who will be responsible for what Activities as well as to work out a detailed Project Implementation Plan and a Project Budget. Should the project, at this time, turn out to be too comprehensive, it might be a good idea to divide the Project into phases.

If the Project is divided into phases it might be necessary to work out a Project Matrix for each phase depending on the total size of the project.

Advantages and limitations using the LFA as a tool for planning or “planning language”

There are obvious advantages, because LFA:

- Clarify the *objective* and the justification of a project proposal
- Identify the need for *information*
- Defines the *principal elements* in the project
- Requisite an analysis of the *project environment* at an early stage
- *Facilitate the communication* between the involved parties
- Determine the project *success criteria*
- Compel the project planner to think *realistic*

At the same time one must be aware of the obvious limitations while working with the LFA. An uncritical and unreflective use of LFA can:

- **Lead to/result in a *rigid implementation***
The responsible personnel insists on adhering to the project Results and Activities as formulated in the Matrix from the beginning, *despite that crucial conditions have developed during the project-formulation.*

It is important not to let the LFA be a “straitjacket” that will prevent common sense when the reality moves away from the intentions in a project design.

- Create a false “safety blanket”
- Accentuate LFA as the only useful method and hereby *disregarding other relevant analysis tools*.

Supplementary remarks about the LFA

The name

LFA has many names:

- LogFrame
- Logical Framework
- Logical Framework Approach
- Logical Framework Analysis

LFA in two stages

As describes in this manual, project preparation with LFA consists of two phases which together forms the LFA:

Problem Analysis phase (page 11 – 22) + <u>Project Matrix phase</u> (page 22 – 34) = LFA
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The LFA-Matrix is a sum up of the project. Along with the preparation of Matrix a detailed background material have been selected and analysed.

In this manual we have focused on the LFA and the LFA Matrix.

The precondition for working out a LFA Matrix, which summarize the whole project on one page, are that the project planners (the organisation and the partners) beforehand have to prepare the project material that answers the various questions in detail.

For larger projects, the normal application practice (as in DANIDA case) is to prepare a “Project Document” according to the format together with the application form (see volume 2).

Final Remarks

It is our hope, that the tools in this Manual will help the project designers to analyse their project ideas, chose the right ideas and take the necessary steps in a coherent and logical project planning.

The tools should be used in a flexible and participatory interaction between the partners and the target group.