**THESIS**
**Susanna Ruokamo 2012**

# CHALLENGE IN CONTENT ACQUISITION FOR PROJECT PLAN CASE FUTURE LEARNING LAPLAND

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Thesis

# CHALLENGE IN CONTENT ACQUISITION FOR PROJECT PLAN
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The thesis can be borrowed.

This thesis studied the process of building a project plan for the Future Learning Lapland project. The goal of this thesis was to produce a project planning process model, which will also show the suggested roles of different parties involved in the planning process and the communication flow. The thesis goal was established during the empirical part of this thesis, as difficulties in communication were faced during the project planning of Future Learning Lapland.

The framework has been established by using a variety of theories that supports the findings and analyses made from the research. The theoretical framework laid foundation for understanding the project planning process, research methods and tools for communication between partners.

The qualitative research method was chosen and the participation observation method was conducted during the empirical part, which took place from the middle of June until the end of September 2011. The results from the observation were studied and analysed by reflecting them to the theories presented in this thesis.

The outcome of this thesis was the process model of project planning. The planning of Future Learning Lapland involved several parties; however, it still faced communication difficulties due to misunderstanding of responsibilities. In addition to the stakeholders, project coordinator, administrative and financier, the proposed improved model of this thesis included an additional party into the project planning process: the planning team. The team members are given guidelines for creating planning documents and thus close cooperation improves the mutual communication between parties. The most valuable methods and tools for communication were seen face-to-face meetings and interviews, brainstorming sessions and video conferencing. Email and phone are not the most effective tools to communicate, however necessary for everyday communication.

Key words: Project planning, communication, research methods, data acquisition

Opinnäytetyössä selvitettiin hankesuunnitelman laatimista Future Learning Lapland - hankkeelle. Tavoitteena oli luoda hankesuunnittelun prosessimalli, josta tulee esille niin osallistuvien henkilöiden roolit kuin tiedonkulku suunnitteluprosessin aikana. Esiin nousseet kommunikaatio-ongelmat Future Learning Lapland -hankkeen aikana loivat pohjan tavoiteasettelulle.

Teoreettinen viitekehys perustuu hankesuunnitteluprosessin, tutkimus- ja kommunikaatiomenetelmien ymmärtämiseen, ja teoriavalinnat tukevat tutkimuksen havaintoja ja tuloksia. Tutkimusmenetelmäksi valittiin kvalitatiivinen eli laadullinen tutkimus, jonka osallistuva havainnointi toteutettiin vuonna 2011 opinnäytetyön empiirisessä vaiheessa, kesäkuun puolesta välistä syyskuun loppuun. Havainnoimalla saadut tulokset tutkittiin ja analysoitiin heijastamalla ne opinnäytetyössä esiintyviin teorioihin.

Opinnäytetyön tuloksena syntyneessä hankesuunnittelun prosessimallissa tulee esille eri tahot, jotka ovat suunnittelussa mukana. Kuitenkin havainnot Future Learning Lapland -hankesuunnittelun kommunikaatio-ongelmista nostivat esille epäselvyyden eri tahojen vastuualueista. Tuloksena esitetyssä prosessimallissa tuotiin sidosryhmän, hankekoordinaattorin, hallinnon ja rahoittajan lisäksi hankesuunnitteluryhmä, joka työskentelee hankekoordinaattorin ohjeistamana. Tiiviin yhteistyön myötä keskinäinen kommunikaatio paranee. Hyödyllisimmiksi kommunikaatiomenetelmiksi nousivat kasvotusten tapahtuvat kokoukset ja haastattelut, aivoriihet ja videoneuvottelut. Sähköposti ja puhelin eivät ole tehokkaimmat kommunikaatiovälineet, mutta tarpeellisia jokapäiväiseen kommunikoimiseen.

Avainsanat: Hankesuunnittelu, kommunikaatio, tutkimusmenetelmät, tiedonhankinta

CONTENTS

**LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES**

**1 INTRODUCTION**

Today's world is highly ruled by projects and they are seen both in the public and private sector. Different types of projects include for example business and development even the thesis itself is a project. The core of any project is that it is temporary, set up for a fixed term; therefore it has to have a beginning and an end. For any project to run successfully from the beginning to the end it needs to be planned carefully and as detailed as possible. Often projects tend to fail as the planning phase is done in a rush and the goal and steps towards the goal are not understood. Usually there are a lot of people taking part in the project planning as it may involve various partners or it might include different departments of one single organisation. Every partner has its own ideas and the difficulty in combining these ideas into one single project can be challenging. Often the biggest challenges rise from the lack of communication between partners.

This thesis takes a look at the project planning phase with the aspect of difficulties in gathering and combining the needed information for a good project plan. The commissioner of this thesis is Rovaniemi University of Applied Sciences and it is the leading partner in a project called Future Learning Lapland. The goal of this thesis is to produce a model of project planning process for the commissioner. By reflecting on the theory and observations made during the empirical part of this thesis – Project plan for Future Learning Lapland – the process model will show the suggested roles for the partners. Methods and tools for communication are presented, yet again reflecting them on the findings from the theory and observations made. The process model itself follows the overall process model guidelines given by the commissioner and thus facilitating it for the employees in understanding it.

The thesis will first give an overview of the commissioner, Lapland University Consortium and the Future Learning Lapland project. Later the theory of project planning guidelines for European Union funded projects are presented and reflected to the case project, followed by data acquisition methods and tools. At the end of this thesis there is an oversight of the

Future Learning Lapland planning process, what went wrong with it and why. Improvements for future reference are given by explaining the project planning process model. The thesis is summed up in the conclusion chapter, followed by the bibliography used and appendices. The appendices include the main forms used in the project planning as well as the project planning process models.

## 2 RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN ROVANIEMI UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

### 2.1 Commissioner: Rovaniemi University of Applied Sciences

Rovaniemi University of Applied Sciences is a higher education institute and it is the Northernmost University of Applied Sciences in the European Union, situated on the Arctic Circle in Rovaniemi, Finland. It provides education for around 3,000 students and employs 250 people. It is promoted by its knowledge of North and its culture, atmosphere and way of life as well as the ability to understand cold environment and how to utilise it. (Rovaniemi University of Applied Sciences 2012.)

In addition to providing higher education Rovaniemi University of Applied Sciences runs a variety of different types of projects every year for its research and development. It is also a partner in many national, regional and international projects. (Rovaniemi University of Applied Sciences 2012.) For the project Future Learning Lapland, Rovaniemi University of Applied Sciences is the leading partner and the project is administrated by the School of Health Care and Sports.

### 2.2 Lapland University Consortium

Future Learning Lapland is a joint project with all the higher education institutes in Lapland: Rovaniemi University of Applied Sciences, Kemi-Tornio University of Applied Sciences and the University of Lapland. Kemi-Tornio University of Applied Sciences is situated in Southern Lapland by the Swedish border of Finland and they provide education in two cities; Kemi and Tornio. They have a wide scale of degree programmes, from business and administration to culture. Internationalisation is a crosscutting issue in all of their operations and this includes also their research and development projects. (Kemi-Tornio University of Applied Sciences 2012.)

The University of Lapland is the northernmost university in the European Union and like Rovaniemi University of Applied Sciences it is also situated on the Arctic Circle, in Finnish Lapland. The University of Lapland has four

faculties: Art and Design, Education, Law and Social Sciences. It also has its own research unit – the Arctic Centre – that interacts researchers all over the world to study the environment and people living in the Arctic region. Like its fellow Northern higher education institutes, the University of Lapland has a focus point on research and development and involves in a variety of national and international projects. (University of Lapland 2012.)

All of the three higher education institutes in Lapland form together the Lapland University Consortium (hereon referred to as LUC), in order to be able to cooperate better with each other and to provide better quality education. LUC unifies the three higher education institutes to work together and they share knowhow in the fields of Tourism and Culture, which is seen at their two shared institutes: The Lapland Institute for Tourism Research and Education situated in Rovaniemi and the Institute for Northern Culture situated in Tornio. (Lapland University Consortium 2012.)

## 2.3 Future Learning Lapland

Future Learning Lapland was initiated when all of the three higher education institutes in Lapland decided to take part in the national project called Future Learning Finland. Future Learning Finland is a national education export project run by Finpro. The project gathers national actors in the field of education together in order to create education clusters, which will design together education export products for foreign customers. Future Learning Finland started after the great international education reputation Finland gained in for example PISA survey (Ministry of Education and Culture 2012). Finpro operates the common project management and provides needed information for the partner organisations. The information includes for example market research for selected markets, product and service development and finding potential new customers. In order for a partner organisation to utilise these services from Finpro, they create together education products or services in the education cluster they prefer to belong to. (Finpro 2012.)

As mentioned before, Future Learning Lapland is a shared project of the three Lappish higher education institutes. This project is seen as a benefit to bring the LUC cooperation closer, therefore the LUC innovation programmes were taken into consideration when developing the project plan. The core idea of the project is to bring up Lapland and Lappish education possibilities and innovative solutions to the parent project Future Learning Finland and through it to the international field of education. Although all the LUC higher education institutes have joined the parent project as individual organisations, they can work together as a solid group in order to develop their products and services as well as to communicate the parent projects matters inside the consortium.

**3 PROJECT PLANNING**

**3.1 Introduction to European Commission's PCM guidelines**

Future Learning Lapland project applied for funding from the European Regional Development Fund. The European Commission has provided guidelines for project planning and management, which they expect applicants to use when applying for funding. The Future Learning Lapland project was planned by using, according to the European Commission's guidelines, the Project Cycle Management model (hereon referred to as PCM), therefore this thesis introduces the theory of PCM and how the planning of a project goes in theory. However, additional theories are introduced from other sources, as they were not found from the European Commission's guidelines, but essential to include in the project plan. Later, in subchapter 5.1 of this thesis, the project planning theory part will be referred to in the practical part of the Future Learning Lapland.

Before starting project planning, one needs to understand first what a project is. The European Commission's (2004, 8) guidelines define a project as follows: A project is a series of activities aimed at bringing about clearly specified objectives within a defined time-period and with a defined budget. A project differs from an organisation's normal daily operations mainly in the time-period, as a project has a definite beginning and an end and it is temporary, whereas organisation's normal operations are on-going with no set beginning or end (Heldman 2003, 3).

The European Commission introduced the PCM guidelines as early as in the early 1990's in order to help on the project planning process with its design and management tools. Based on Logical Framework Approach the PCM guidelines provides description for the whole project life cycle and the milestones and tasks which need to be taken care of for the project to finish. (European Commission 2004, 1-2.)

PCM consists of cycles of operations, which there are in total of five: programming, identification, formulation, implementation and evaluation & audit. The cycle is progressive, meaning that each of the steps needs to be

seen through before proceeding to the next step. The decision-making processes and criteria are defined in each phase giving the information on where responsibilities lie on. (European Commission 2004, 16.)

The project planning starts at the programming phase. During this time, research is done on national and sector levels in order to find out what financier's priorities and objectives are in granting funding. During this time problems and opportunities are analysed for possible cooperation and for finding a suitable funding instrument for which the project can be planned. (European Commission 2004, 26.)

During the identification phase the project ideas are identified according to the programme priorities and regulations and whether or not they are feasible and relevant. A term of reference is prepared and preliminary analyses on project stakeholders, problems and objectives are made and based on them a strategy is selected. Different funding programmes set certain regulations for applying the funding and they can differ broadly on the regional, national and international level. (European Commission 2004, 27, 29.)

The rest of the project planning is done during the formulation phase. It needs to be detailed and, according to the European Commission's (2004, 33) guidelines, contain the following information: management and coordination assignments, financing plan, cost-benefit analysis, risk management, monitoring, evaluation and audit arrangements (European Commission 2004, 33).

The actual project execution happens during the implementation phase. All the project results and project purpose needs to be delivered within the planned budget as well as managing the available resources efficiently. In addition to this, reporting and monitoring on the progress need to be done regularly along the project implementation. Sometimes, even though a project is well planned, unexpected things might happen and the project needs to be re-planned. Therefore the Logical Framework, Activity and Resource/Budget schedules need to be reviewed regularly in order to make

some modifications as the project comes along. (European Commission 2004, 39, 41.)

The evaluation phase is the monitoring and feedback of the project. A good evaluation takes a look into the project relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and the project's impact on its wider environment. Auditing is also done at the end of the project life cycle. There is a financial audit which is to show the legality and regularity of the project income and expenditures. A performance audit studies the efficiency, economy and effectiveness of the project activities. (European Commission 2004, 49 - 50.)

## 3.2 Logical Framework Approach

Originally designed for the US Agency of International Development, the Logical Framework Approach is an analytical process of analysing and organising information in a structured way. It supports the project planning and management throughout the whole project planning process. The logical framework approach can be divided into two phases: the analysis phase and planning phase. The analysis phase includes four main elements: the stakeholder analysis, problem analysis, objective analysis and strategy analysis, whereas the planning phase includes three main elements: logical framework matrix, activity scheduling and resource scheduling. These phases and elements need to be carried out progressively during the identification and formulation phases. (European Commission 2004, 57, 60.)

### 3.2.1 Terms of reference

Writing the terms of reference is the first activity of the project planning and it is done in the identification phase (European Commission 2004, 29). A feasibility study needs to be conducted and begin to formulate the project idea. The terms of reference is a basic plan of the project, presenting the needs for the project and problems behind them as well as the main objectives, methodology, workplan and timetable. It contains a preliminary stakeholder analysis and identification on who will take part in the project, meaning the project partners. In addition to these a preliminary budget is

included to the terms of reference, which shows rough figures on how much funding would be needed, how much the project partners can contribute and which funding instrument would be the most suitable to provide the funding. (European Commission 2004, 126, 128, 134.)

For the case project Future Learning Lapland the terms of reference was prepared after the kick-off meeting. It contained information introduced in previous chapter and it was created for the partners and administrative parties of the partnering organisations in order to provide them an overview of what was the idea and outline of the project.

3.2.2 Stakeholder analysis

Any individual, group of people, organisation or institution, which may influence or have interest in the project or might be affected by the project and its outcomes, are grouped as the project stakeholders. The stakeholder analysis shows whose problems or opportunities are studied and who will benefit or loose-out due to the project. The European Commission uses certain kind of terminology when grouping and analysing the stakeholders and there are total of three groups. First is the Stakeholders, which includes individuals or institutions and they affect or will be affected by the project either positively or negatively and directly or indirectly. The second one is the Beneficiaries, which includes people and institutions that benefit from the project implementation in whatever way. There is made a distinction of two groups: Target group(s), which includes people or institutions who will be affected positively and directly by the project at its Project Purpose level (the term will be explained in section 3.2.6). The other group of the Beneficiaries is the Final beneficiaries, which includes the ones who will benefit from the project in long-term, meaning once the development work is done, circumstances will continue to develop and improve, therefore other people or institutions can be affected positively by the project long after the project is finished. The third stakeholder group used by the European commission in their terminology is the Project Partners, which includes people or institutions that implement the project. These people or entities can also be the target

group of the project, meaning that they benefit from it as well. (European Commission 2004, 61-62.)

There are several ways to analyse the stakeholders, but perhaps the most commonly used ones are the stakeholder analysis matrix (see Appendix 1) and the SWOT analysis. All the stakeholder groups are gathered together in the stakeholder analysis matrix and if wanted, they can be grouped into the three categories, which were introduced earlier. The stakeholder analysis matrix is formed by four columns, which all have different questions or matters that the certain stakeholder group 'have to' answer. The first one is Stakeholder and basic characteristics, where the groups of people or institutions are introduced. The second column is Interest and how affected by the problem(s), the third one is the Capacity and motivation to bring about change and the fourth one is Possible actions to address stakeholder interests. (European Commission 2004, 63.) Depending on the scale of a project, the stakeholder analysis matrix may be several pages long; therefore grouping the stakeholders into stakeholders, beneficiaries and project partners will help to read the matrix. It is also advised to list under these groups all the groups of people and single entities individually and thus making it easier to understand all the stakeholders and the analysis can be understandable by an outsider as well.

One of the most used tools in business life is the SWOT analysis, which can also be an efficient tool for analysing the project stakeholders. The abbreviation of SWOT comes from the words: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. The SWOT analysis analyses the internal strengths and weaknesses of a group or an organisation and relatively also the external opportunities and threats the group or organisation might face. To create a SWOT analysis, ideas can be generated under the four headlines and once they have been understood and analysed, one can begin to create a strategy for improvements. Questions can be asked: how an organisation or group of people may address to a certain problem or a challenge, how to use and build up their inner strengths in order to overcome their weaknesses and how to utilise their opportunities over the threats they might be facing. (European Commission 2004, 64.)

From the two presented methods to analyse the stakeholders, the stakeholder analysis matrix was chosen to be used for the Future Learning Lapland project plan. This was mainly due to the fact that the matrix is commonly used and if done well, it contains thorough information of the stakeholders and thus valuable background information for the project. The stakeholder analysis was included in the terms of reference and as the project planning proceeded, it was improved and included to the final project plan document.

3.2.3 Problem analysis

The problem analysis studies negative aspects of an existing situation. It is difficult to do any kind of development work, if the roots of why to develop something are not understood. The problem analysis stage is in many ways the most critical and essential phase of the project planning, as it sets the grounds of the development work and guides other analysis later as well as the decision-making process. The problem identification begins by listing the major problems of the target groups and beneficiaries and the best way to do this is to have a brainstorming session (the term will be explained in section 4.2.4) with the project partners and the beneficiaries. All the problems shall be written down separately on a piece of paper and once it is done, an individual starting problem is selected. The starting problem is the core of a problem tree, from which different branches grow above and below of the starting problem. The problem tree shows the hierarchy of problems and it helps to understand the problem analysis by cause and effect relationship. The problem tree is created so that below the starting problem are placed the problems that are directly causing the starting problem and above the problems that have direct effects of the starting problem, thus creating the cause-effect relationship. Problems that came up during the brainstorming session are included into the problem tree if they seem relevant and can be sorted out by using a question 'What causes that?' Once the problems have found their places in the hierarchy of the problem tree, they are connected together with arrows and that way showing clearly how they link together. (European Commission 2004, 67-68.)
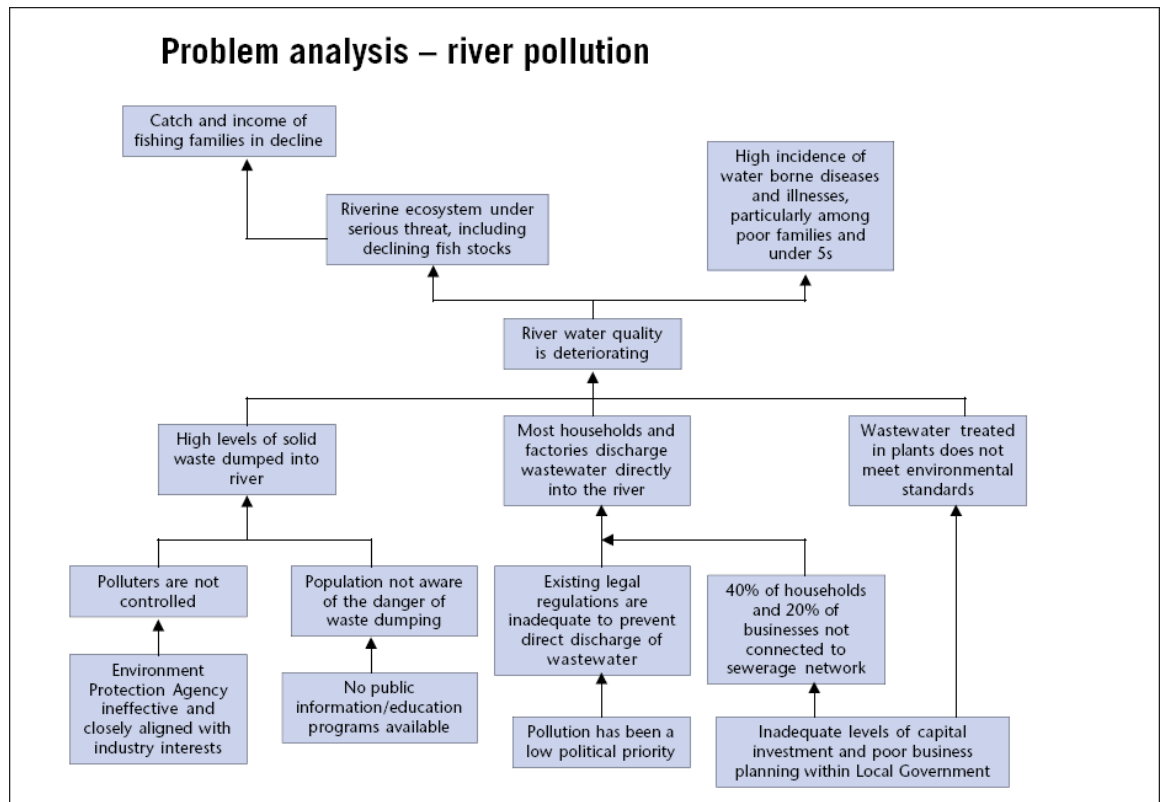
Figure 1. Example of a problem tree (European Commission 2004, 68)

Figure 1 is an example of a problem tree from the European Commission guidelines (see Appendix 2 for a bigger sized model). The starting problem in the example is the 'River quality is deteriorating'. When creating a problem tree and the causes, it always helps to ask why, for example 'Why is the river quality deteriorating?' to which one can answer for example 'High level of solid waste is dumped into the river', where one can ask again 'Why?' and continue with the branches downwards. As mentioned before, the problems that rose in the brainstorming session can be added to the problem tree, if they are a cause or an effect to the starting problem. Also as the problems are written down by one problem on one piece of paper, building the problem tree and modifying it is easy. If necessary, the problems can be modified, but it is essential to remember to formulate the problems in a negative way. The arrows show the way to read the tree, starting from bottom and following the arrows all the way up to the last effect.

3.2.4 Objective analysis

The objective analysis shows the situation in the future once the identified problems have been improved (see Appendix 3). It is relatively simple to create, as it is mainly reformulating all the negative situations presented in the problem tree into desirable and realistically achievable positive situations. Where the problem tree shows the cause-effect relationship, the objective tree shows the means-end relationship. Building an objective tree is mainly revising the negative situations or statements into positive ones, but there is also a possibility to add new objectives and, mutually, delete objectives that do not seem relevant to include in the tree. As revising, adding or deleting the statements, it is important to check the means-end relationship so that the hierarchy of the tree is coherent and valid. (European Commission 2004, 69.)

The starting problem in the Figure 1 turns into objective and positive statement: 'River water quality is improved' (European Commission 2004, 70). Instead of the river quality to be deteriorating, it is improving. Another example from Figure 1 revising the 'High levels of solid waste dumped into river' would turn into positive statement: 'The quantity of solid waste dumped into river is reduced' (European Commission 2004, 70). The positive statements are realistic and desirable to achieve.

3.2.5 Strategy analysis

The strategy selection sets the approach for the project plan, as the focus and decision on the means and ends are made. A careful consideration needs to be made whether to select all the objectives, or just some and perhaps adding something new. Criteria in helping to decide on the strategy includes: cost effectiveness, benefits for the target group(s), expected contribution to the program or policy objectives, technical feasibility, environmental impact, complementary on other projects and which results would be able to achieve. When thinking about the strategy and the combination of the means and ends, it is important to think all the criteria mentioned above and which objectives would give the most ideal outcome for the project. (European Commission 2004, 70-71.)

Figure 2 shows the strategy selection example the European Commission used in its guidelines. It is created from the objective tree and as it is visible in there, not all the objectives were selected to the project strategy. See Appendix 4 for a bigger sized model of the strategy selection.
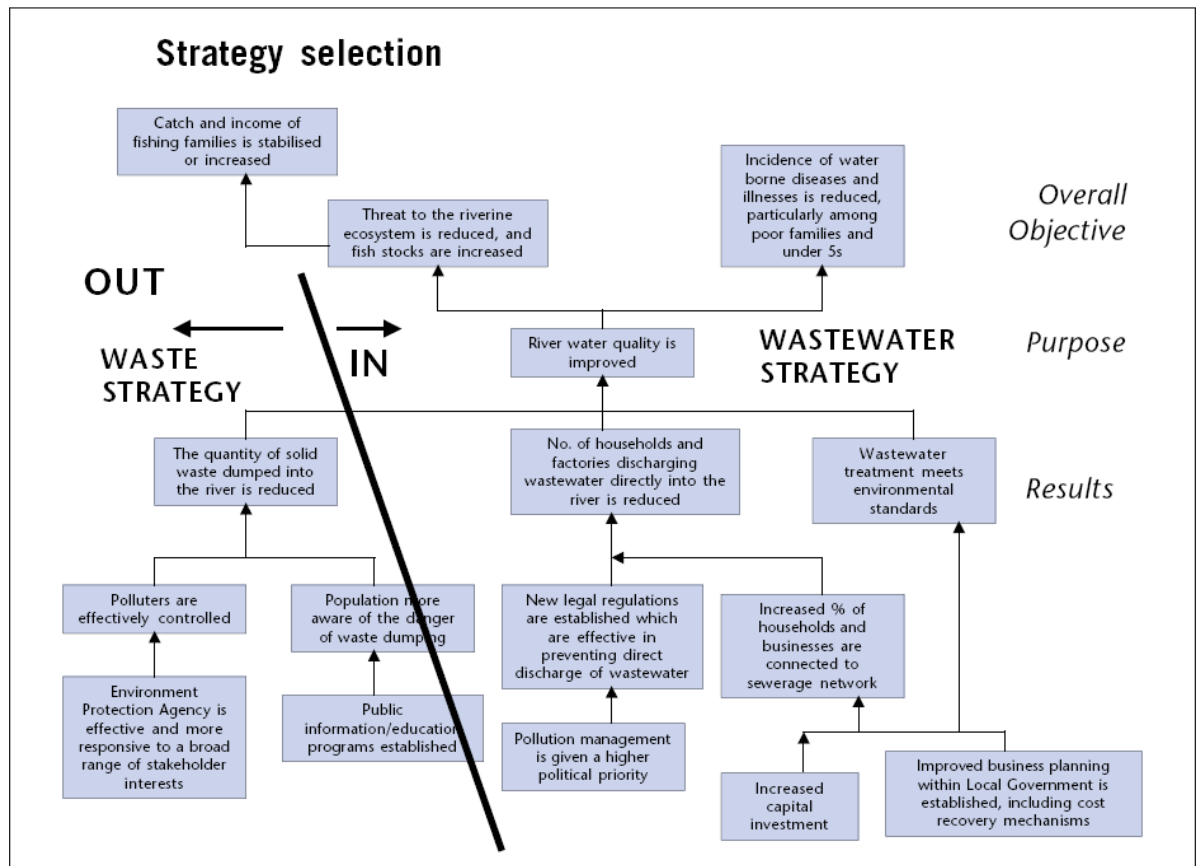


Figure 2. Example of strategy selection (European Commission 2004, 72)

The problem, objective and strategy analyses in the case of Future Learning Lapland were also made. However the goals/results of the project were given already in the kick-off meeting, before the analyses, when they would normally be planned and decided during the Logical Framework phase. Therefore building the trees and analyses were made the other way around than suggested in European Commission's guidelines by building an objective tree from the know results and based on that, the problem tree was possible to construct. Once the analyses were made, they were sent for comments to the participants of the planning process.

3.2.6 Logical Framework Matrix

The analyses done by this stage are the basis for creating the logical framework matrix (hereon referred to as logical framework). The logical framework is the summary of the project design and, depending on the scope and complexity of the project; it can be from one to four pages long. Generally it includes only the overall objective, project purpose, results and indicative activities; any other information for example details of the budget are not included. The logical framework is a useful tool throughout the project, as it not only shows what needs to be done and what kind of activities will deliver the results, but it presents also how the results, project purpose and overall objective will be achieved and the verification on how it is known that they are achieved. (European Commission 2004, 71, 73.)

Creating the logical framework starts by formulating the overall objective, project purpose, results and indicated activities into the first column of the matrix. These can be found from the strategies selected in the objective tree. The overall objective is the general goal of the project and it is the link to the policy or program, yet the project is not solving the overall problem set by the policy, but rather contributing to it. In Figure 2 it is shown that the overall objective is formulated from the 'ends' of the objective tree. When formulating the overall objective, the correct way to write it is 'To contribute to improved..' rather than 'To improve..', because it is only contributing to the policy or program priorities, not improving it fully. The project purpose is the outcome the project is aiming for, showing the expected benefits for the target group(s). It is the starting or core objective of the objective tree (see Figure 2) and it should be formulated as 'Improved..' rather than 'To improve..', since the outcome of the project is achieved at the end of the project. The results that the project will deliver can also be found in the objective tree/strategy selection, as they are the first level below the starting objective (see Figure 2). Sometimes the means below the core objective (these would be the results in the logical framework) can include two or more results that are close to each other and thus can be grouped in the logical framework as Result 1.1, Result 1.2, Result 2.1. As in the project purpose, the results should also be formulated as 'Reduced..' or 'Established..' because they will

be achieved during the project. Also, while developing the results into the logical framework, it is important to keep in mind that they are feasible and that they are contributing to the project purpose.

The results cannot be achieved without the indicative activities, which will be the last part of the first column of the logical framework matrix. The activities that are impacting on the Result 1.1 will be named as Activity 1.1.1, Activity 1.1.2. The activities should be kept simple but not too precise, meaning that not every small activity should to be added to the matrix, but rather an overall activity for example: "1.1.1 Conduct baseline survey of households and businesses" (European Commission 2004, 77). The given example of an activity includes multiple activities and tasks in order to achieve it, but they are not mentioned in the logical framework. (European Commission 2004, 71-73, 76-77.)

| Project description | Indicators | Means of Verification | Assumptions |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Overall objective** To contribute to improved family health, particularly the under 5s, and to improve the general health of the riverine eco-system (1) | - Incidence of water borne diseases, skin infections and blood disorders caused by heavy metals, reduced by 50% by 2008, specifically among low-income families living along the river (8) | - Municipal hospital and clinic records, including maternal and child health records collected by mobile MCH teams. Results summarized in an Annual State of the Environment report by the EPA. (9) | |
| **Purpose** Improved quality of river water (2) | - Concentration of heavy metal compounds (Pb, Cd, Hg) and untreated sewerage; reduced by 25% (compared to levels in 2003) and meets established national health/pollution control standards by end of 2007 (10) | - Weekly water quality surveys, jointly conducted by the Environmental Protection Agency and the River Authority, and reported monthly to the Local Government Minister for Environment (Chair of Project Steering Committee) (11) | - The pubic awareness campaign conducted by the Local Government impacts positively on families sanitation and hygiene practices - Fishing cooperatives are effective in limiting their members exploitation of fish 'nursery' areas (7) |
| **Result 1** Volume of waste-water directly discharged into the river system by households and factories reduced (3) | - 70% of waste water produced by factories and 80% of waste water produced by households is treated in plants by 2006 (12) | - Annual sample survey of households and factories conducted by Municipalities between 2003 and 2006 (13) | - River flows maintained above X mega litres per second for at least 8 months of the year - Upstream water quality remains stable (6) |
| **Result 2** Waste-water treatment standards established and effectively enforced | - Waste water from 4 existing treatment plants meets EPA quality standards (heavy metals and sewerage content) by 2005 | - EPA audits (using revised standards and improved audit methods), conducted quarterly and reported to Project Steering Committee | - EPA is successful in reducing solid waste disposal levels by factories from X to X tons per year |
| **Activities 1** (4) | | | (5) |

Figure 3. Example of key elements of a draft Logical Framework Matrix and General Sequence of Competition (European Commission 2004, 73, 84)

Figure 3 shows the sequence on completion of the logical framework and the first four steps are already explained in the previous paragraphs (see Appendix 5 for a bigger sized model). The next step (numbers five to seven) is filling the fourth column of the matrix, the assumptions. The external factors, for example technical, social and economic, are usually identified during the different analyses phases (stakeholder, problem and objective). The assumptions are factors that might influence on the project environment and yet they are out of the reach of the project management's and organisation's control. They are a big part for the project success and they need to come true. For example, once the activities have been carried out and the assumptions hold true, then the results will be achieved.

The assumptions are formulated in a positive way. As the project success depends on them, a negative assumption would be a risk. In Figure 3 there are no assumption examples for the activities part and this is because it is optional to add them there. However, it is expected to write down the assumptions for the results, project purpose and overall objective. Before including any assumptions, though, they need to be analysed. If they are not important for the project success, they are not included to the matrix. But if they are important, they need to be further assessed on whether they will hold true: 1. Almost certainly will hold true – they are not included to the logical framework, 2. Possibly will hold true – they are included as an assumption, 3. Very unlikely will hold true – a consideration have to be made if the project can be redesigned in order to influence on the external factor. If this is possible, then redesigning of the project activities, results and possibly also to the project purpose need to made, but if it is not possible to redesign the project and influence on the external factor, then the project may not be feasible. (European Commission 2004, 78-80.)

Building up the logical framework continues with the last two columns: the indicators and means of verification (numbers eight to thirteen in Figure 3). The objectively verifiable indicators check the feasibility of objectives and create the basis for the project monitoring and evaluation. They are measurable within quantity, quality and time. According to the European Commission's guidelines (2004, 81) a good indicator should also be SMART:

'Specific to the objective it is supposed to measure, Measurable (either quantitatively or qualitatively), Available at an acceptable cost, Relevant to the information needs of the managers and Time-bound, in order to know when it is possible to expect the objective or target to be achieved'. When creating the indicators, one has to keep in mind that they are independent and one indicator is indicating only on one result. As the indicators are formulated, it is good to consider the sources of verifications at the same time. They are useful in understanding the methods on 'how the information should be collected, who should collect or provide it and when or how regularly it should be provided' (European Commission 2004, 82). Therefore when considering and specifying them at the same time with the indicators helps to measure the indicators realistically. (European Commission 2004, 80-82.)

In addition of building the logical framework and when creating the assumptions, it is also good to think the risks as well. Risks are problems that might possibly threaten the project outcome and thus are important to identify and analyse during the project planning stage (Heldman 2003, 146). There are several types of risks (for example technical, environmental and financial) and when they are identified, the list can be very long; hence some form of screening should be made. When assessing the risks, two main attributes are examined: probability and impact. Risks can be examined from the previous projects; this can also be used when scanning the probability and impact of a certain risk. The rating for the probability of a risk is high, medium or low, whereas the impact is rated as severe, medium or low. (Lester 2003, 48-50.)

Table 1 can be used when analysing the probability and impact of the risks as it shows the interaction between those two. Once the analyses are made and the most probable risks with the highest impacts are understood, the risk management should be made. This means that solutions for the possibly occurring risks are thought in advance and thus if something unexpected should happen during the project implementation, the measures of action can be found from the risk assessment document. (Lester 2003, 53.)

Table 1. Probability versus impact table (Lester 2003, 50)

| Impact | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Severe** | | | |
| **Medium** | | | |
| **Low** | | | |
| **Nil** | | | |
| | Low | Medium | High |

**Probability**

In the case of Future Learning Lapland, the logical framework was firstly built by the project coordinator, who also sent drafts of it as the planning proceeded. Few comments were given during the planning of the logical framework drafts and thus it was finished after the projected comments given in the meetings, at the end of the project planning. The final logical framework included various activities and in addition to the theory of PCM, risks were included in the matrix and they were placed in the same column with assumptions.

3.2.7 Activity scheduling

The activity schedule is drafted already during the feasibility study and it analyses and graphically presents the project activities. It shows the logical sequence of the activities, their duration and dependency on other activities.

During the project planning stage the activity schedule is indicative and it will be revised and specified during the project implementation. Typical tools for making the schedule is by using tools designed specifically for the project management (for example Gantt chart) or some prefer to build it by using Excel. There are a few simple steps to use when developing the schedule. First the main activities are listed and they will create the basis for the activity schedule. These were possible to list already in the logical framework. If not done at that time, they need to be formulated at this stage with keeping in mind that they are linked to the project results. The main activities will then be broken down into simpler and manageable sub-activities. These activities will be then again broken down into component tasks. Breaking down the activities stop once the tasks are detailed enough to estimate the needed resources (for example time and people) and they are possible to assign to individuals. (European Commission 2004, 85-86.)

Once all the activities are broken down enough, the sequence of the tasks is clarified by keeping in mind the order of when the task should be completed and if some activities or tasks depend on another task to be completed before. During this time it is also useful to begin making the realistic estimations of startups of the activities and their duration. Setting up certain milestones in between the activities will help later on with monitoring and managing the project during the implementation time. Task allocation can be included into the activity schedule and set the responsibilities for achieving goals already. Possible needed expertise is advisable to find out while building up the schedule as well as it will help to analyse if the activity schedule is feasible with the human resources available. (European Commission 2004, 86-87.)

Figure 4 is an example of an indicative action schedule (see Appendix 6 for a bigger sized model). There is used the same example project as in the previous figures presented in this thesis and thus showing the first result of the logical framework and the activities for achieving it. The responsible actors are pointed out for each of the activities and the duration to which time the activity is to be carried out. As it is visible, some of the activities (1.1.5 and 1.1.7) are planned to begin before their previous activities. There can be

various reasons for this; some activities are forced to begin at certain time of the year (possible dependency to the environment for example) or parts of the certain activity could be used for the previous activity.

| Ref no | Results and Indicative Activities | Responsibility | Year 1 | | | | Year 2 | | | | Year 3 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| 1.1 | Reduced volume of waste water directly discharged into the river system | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Activities | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.1.1 | Conduct baseline survey of households and business | Contractor to local Govt. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.1.2 | Complete engineering specifications for expanded sewerage network | Contractor to Local Civil Works | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.1.3 | Prepare tender documents, tender and select contractor | Dept. of Civil Works | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.1.4 | Implement and monitor capital works | Contractor and Dept of Civil Works | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.1.5 | Identify appropriate incentives for factories to use clean technologies | EPA and business | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.1.6 | Design and implement incentive program | EPA and Local Govt. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.1.7 | Prepare and deliver public information and awareness campaign on wate-water disposal | Local Govt. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.1.8 | Etc | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Figure 4. Example of indicative Activity Schedule - prepared during the formulation stage (European Commission 2004, 88)

3.2.8 Resource scheduling

The activity schedule can be used as a base for the resource schedule as it already contains all the activities and tasks that will be carried through during the project implementation. However, it is essential to include the project management activities to the list as they are part of the project activities and therefore requires certain resources as well. The resource schedule contains information on the resources needed for the specified project activities and the cost estimates for them. Once the activities, needed resources (for example equipment) and costs for them have been listed, a cost allocation can be made between the different funding sources. Often it is required that project partners contribute to the total budget, hence in the cost allocation it is visible for them, as well as to other funding sources, where the money for different activities comes from. (European Commission 2004, 90.)

4. SPECIFY UNITS
5. SPECIFY QUANTITY
6. ESTIMATE UNIT COST
7. IDENTIFY FUNDING SOURCE
8. ALLOCATE COST CODES

PROJECT: ESTABLISHMENT OF A PLANNING UNIT, MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

1. COPY ACTIVITIES FROM ACTIVITY SCHEDULE
9. SCHEDULE COSTS
10. CALCULATE TOTAL
11. ESTIMATE RECURRENT COSTS
2. SPECIFY INPUTS
3. PUT INPUTS INTO COST CATEGORIES

| Ref | ACTIVITIES/INPUTS | Unit | Quantity per planning period | | | | Cost per unit | Funding source | Cost Codes | | Costs per planning period | | | | Project Total | Annual Recurrent Costs |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 1st qtr | 2nd qtr | 3rd qtr | 4th qtr | | | Donor | Govt | 1st qtr | 2nd qtr | 3rd qtr | 4th qtr | | |
| 1,1 | ACTIVITIES Establishing Planning unit | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | EQUIPMENT | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Computers | no. | 2 | 2 | | | 1 000 | | 3,4 | A/1.3 | 2 000 | 2 000 | - | - | 4 000 | |
| | Fax modem | no. | 1 | | | | 500 | | 3,4 | A/1.3 | 500 | - | - | - | 500 | |
| | Office furniture | lump | 1 | | | | 3 000 | | 3,4 | A/1.3 | 3 000 | - | - | - | 3 000 | |
| | SALARIES & ALLOWANCES (LOCAL) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Counterparts | mm | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 200 | | 5,2 | B/2.1 | 800 | 800 | 800 | 800 | 3 200 | 3 200 |
| | Office staff | mm | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 100 | | 5,2 | B/2.1 | 200 | 300 | 300 | 300 | 1 100 | 1 100 |
| | ETC. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Figure 5. Steps in the Preparation of a Resource Schedule (European Commission 2004, 91)

Figure 5 is an example of a resource schedule (see Appendix 7 for a bigger sized model). There have been included the specified inputs (needed equipment and salaries) and their cost categories. The quantities of needed units per equipment and salaries are given and their estimations on costs per units. In addition there is a section of funding source in order to place where the funding for a certain activity comes from. As in the activity schedule the timing of the activities is planned already, it is possible to schedule their costs in the resource schedule.

3.2.9 Budgeting

Budgeting is yet another important document not only for the project, but for the funding instrument as well. When creating a budget, it is good to review the activities and the resource table (Heldman 2003, 196). All the project expenses should be listed into the budget and they can be grouped into two groups: direct and indirect costs. The direct costs (for example human resource costs and resource or project costs) are costs that specifically arise from the project, whereas indirect costs (for example administrative costs) can be connected to the project costs, but they are not directly arising from it. The human resource costs include salaries and benefits of the personnel (vacation time and health insurance) and they often may be the largest

expenses in a project, if the project is a labour-intensive project. The resource or project costs include materials and equipment needed for certain project activities. The administrative costs are everyday types of costs that support the project and its activities, but are not directly related to the project or its activities. They include for example general office expenses (heath, rent, telephone and copier paper) that an organisation would supply in order for the organisation operate its everyday activities. Hence the project personnel utilises these commodities, should the expenses be included into the budget as well. (Heldman 2003, 194-195.)

When creating the budget it is advisable to add contingency reserves in it. Should an unexpected costs rise with the project and money need to be placed to fix the situation, the contingency reserves will allow this and thus they can be considered as a buffer to absorb. Commonly the contingency reserve is calculated by adding a certain percentage to the total budget, for example seven percentages. However it is not to be added too much as the budget can grow too big and unrealistic for the stakeholders as well as for the financier to approve it. (Heldman 2003, 196.)

The European Commission guidelines does not provide an example of a budget as it depends highly on the funding the project is applying for how detailed and what kind of information the budget needs to contain. For example the Kolarctic ENPI CBC funding program is very strict on the application process and therefore also with the budget. Often, if the project is an international one, the information needed for to apply is very detailed. The Kolarctic ENPI CBC provides a budget format and it includes individual Excel sheets for costs by countries (Finland, Sweden, Norway and/or Russia), costs by partners and the total costs of the project. In these sheets there needs to be estimated the costs for the personnel, travel, equipment and purchases, external services and sub-contracting, administrative costs and project revenues and how these costs are divided during the project duration (the amounts given for each year). The budget document is attached with other required documents to the Kolarctic ENPI CBC Program's monitoring system EMOS. The budget needs to be filled in also into the EMOS system. (Regional Council of Lapland 2012, 30-31.)

As the budgeting for a big project is time consuming it can be recommended that each partner estimates their own costs and builds the budget, rather than the project coordinator contacting every partner and estimating the costs (for example salaries) by itself. When compared to international projects, the national projects, such as the Future Learning Lapland, are not as strict. European Social Fund for example requires an application to be filled in online (EURA 2007 system) and requires in addition certificates for organisation registration and Value added tax. This means that the budget can be filled in only to the EURA 2007 system and there need to be listed at least the following costs: materials, personnel, purchases, traveling, other costs and indirect costs within the whole project duration. The funding allocation needs also be made and it is mainly to show how much of the funding comes from which sources for the whole project duration. (Euroopan unioni 2011, 15-18.)

For the case of Future Learning Lapland, the activity schedule was made, but in section 3.2.8 introduced resource schedule was left out. However, the resource schedule was placed on the budget format, by allocating the needed funding for traveling, machinery and office expenses. Due to the fact that the funding was going to be smaller than expected it was agreed with the partners not to include the personnel expenses (salaries) into the budget. However, additional application was decided to make for the next call of proposals, as the granted funding would not cover all the activities of the project plan.

## 3.3 Planning process

According to the European Commission's guidelines, the project planning process is progressive; hence the next step cannot be taken before the previous one is carried out.
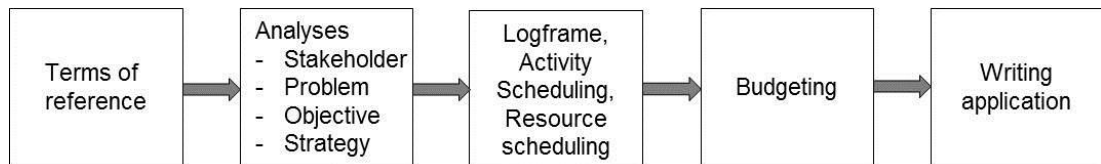
Figure 6. Project planning process in European Union funded projects

Figure 6 shows in what order the planning process should be carried out. In the theory part all the tools and how to prepare the needed documents are presented in the same order as in the Figure 6. However there is added one additional task in Figure 6: Writing the application. This part was not introduced in the European Commission's guidelines, as every funding instrument has its own procedures. As explained in section 3.2.9, the difference in applying funding for national and international projects can vary. In order to apply funding from the European Social Fund one needs to fill in the application online and provide required annexes (certificates for organisation registration and value added tax). However, when applying for example Kolarctic ENPI funding, in addition to the electronic application, there is a long list of needed annexes to be delivered before the application deadline, for example: budget specification, logical framework, project plan and registration certificate of the lead partner. Other annexes, such as financial identification form, legal entity files and registration certificates of the partners can be delivered after the application deadline, nevertheless before the signing of the Grant Contract. (Regional Council of Lapland 2012, 5-6.)

The parties involved in the project planning can be found from the overall governance of projects, meaning the whole management of the overall project life cycle. Figure 7 shows one kind of project governance model, with different parties and decision-making and feedback paths.
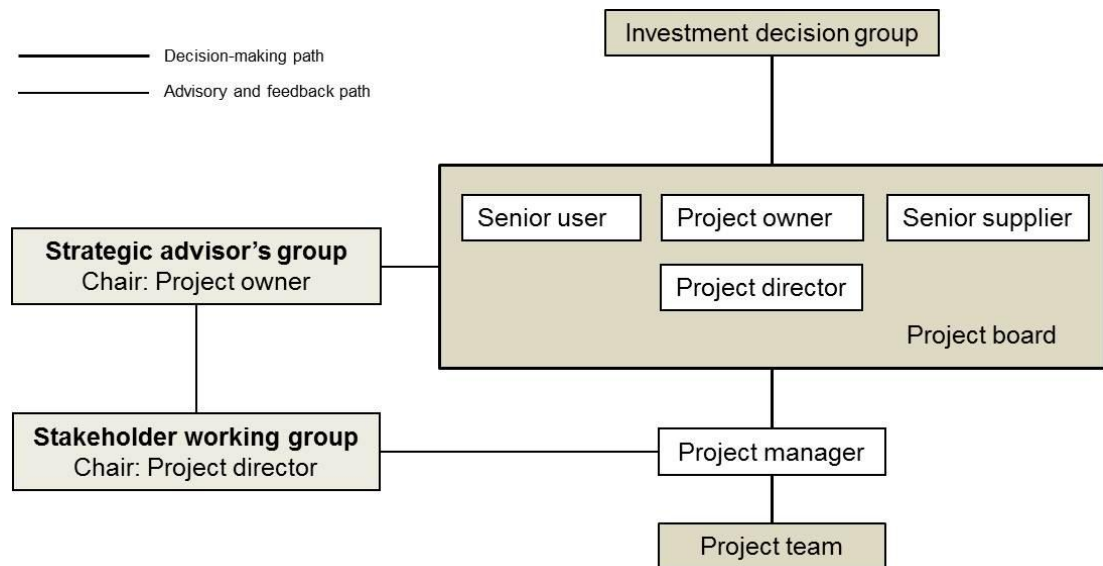
Figure 7. The project governance model (Garland 2009, 52)

One should begin to examine the model from the Project board box. There are four different stakeholders in it: the project owner, senior user, senior supplier and project director. The project owner is accountable for the success of the project and holds operational responsibility for delivering the project goals. The senior user ensures that the end user's needs are addressed, whereas the senior supplier delivers the project assets and products. The project director is the one behind the wheel and running the project with his/her project delivery experience, on behalf of the project owner. Together these four parties form the project board, which is responsible for the key project decisions, approves the key project documentation and establishment and structuring of the project (within the quality standards, budget, and scope). (Garland 2009, 38, 41-43, 45.)

The investment decision group is the highest level of the project decision-making path as it is the party approving the funding of the project, since often the board is not empowered to do so. The project team is accountable for executing smaller tasks and reporting them to the project manager, whereas the project manager has the technical knowledge of the planning and running a project as well as the ability to communicate and report with the project board and other stakeholders (Wysocki 2004, 4). In addition to these general parties there can be found also strategic advisor's and stakeholder working groups. The previous one includes people who operate on strategic level of an organisation and who may have significant influence on the project, either

positive or negative. The people are not part of the project board, but they can provide feedback on the project to the project board. The stakeholder working group consists of people who operate at a more detailed level within the project environment. When compared to the strategic advisor's group, these people are with more of technical involvement than strategic. (Garland 2009, 46, 49-50.)

The project process model for Future Learning Lapland is introduced in subchapter 5.3 and it is a modified model from the presented one. For example the project board, stakeholder working group and investor are renamed into administrative, stakeholders and financier. This is to simplify the model and to use the terminology introduced already in the project planning theory. The strategic advisor's group, also known as the steering group, is excluded as it is seen more important during the project implementation phase (Regional Council of Lapland 2012, 20). The process model for Future Learning Lapland as well as the new proposed model for the commissioner has an additional party: the project coordinator. He/she is the person in charge of the planning process and thus can be considered to act like the project manager of the planning process, since the person in charge has to have knowledge on the project planning and application process. Nevertheless, this person cannot provide the content information of the project plan, hence there needs to be a project team. The project coordinator is part of the team, mainly guiding the team members in their own individual tasks and responsibilities and together they can achieve the common goal: developing a good project plan. The team members should consist of people with the sectorial background of the content of the project plan. But for any team to operate successfully it needs to have good leadership and thus the project coordinator should bear this quality. (Forsberg – Mooz – Cotterman 2000, 149-150.)

Rovaniemi University of Applied Sciences has developed a certain kind of process guidelines, for example when creating a new curriculum. It has pointed out the key people involved and their responsibilities and the main ones included are: the process owner, development team, process manager and sectorial people responsible. The process owner is the one who is

responsible for the development of the processes and ensures needed resources for the actual process work and the development team will evaluate process functionality. The process manager is the communication link between the process owner, development team and sectorial people. He/she makes sure that the process description is valid and includes required links and appendices. The sectorial people standardise the methods in different sectors according to the new process descriptions. (Rovaniemi University of Applied Sciences 2011a, 1.) When compared the model from Figure 7, the process guidelines of Rovaniemi University of Applied Sciences are quite similar, with the same kind of parties involved and their responsibilities.

**4 DATA ACQUISITION FOR A PROJECT PLAN**
**4.1 Research approach**

Often the project coordinator is not an expert in the field he or she plans the project for, but rather knows the methods for producing a good project plan. Hence the person has to use several research methods to attain all the information needed for the plan. Before deciding any concrete methods for the research, it is good to understand what kind of research approach the study is considered to have as it will give a more overall objective to the study. Ojasalo, Moilanen and Ritalahti presents in their book the total of four different approaches for studies: case study, action research, constructive research and production of innovations (Ojasalo – Moilanen – Ritalahti 2009, 36).

The case study is a popular research approach and it aims at producing profound information of some specific case, for example a certain situation in an organisation. As it is concentrated on a specific case, it focuses on attaining as much information on narrow subject as possible, rather than just some from a big group. The case study is not necessarily always focusing on one case, but when planning the research, it is important to understand the study target as a whole. (Ojasalo et al. 2009, 52-53.)

The action research is about producing research information and bringing practical change to the studied problem, which can be technical, social, ethical or professional. It can be about developing for example activities of people or organisation and the aim is not to just analyse the current situation but to change it. As it is about changing the current situation, the problem based activity research is efficiently balancing with practice and theory and their mutual interaction. (Ojasalo et al. 2009, 58, 60.)

As action research, the constructive research is also about bringing a change rather than just to study a situation. However, it differs from the action research as the change falls upon a tangible subject whereas the action research focuses more on changing the behavioural models of people of an

organisation. After the research there should be a new, concrete and theoretically justified output for example a process model, manual or a plan. (Ojasalo et al. 2009, 38, 65.)

The production of innovations is closely related to the constructive research as it is about bringing an output. The difference between these two research approaches lies in the fact that the production of innovations is producing a new and innovative output. Innovation is defined as something new, whether it is a new product, service or process and the only idea of it is to produce benefit (for example financially). (Ojasalo et al. 2009, 39, 72.)

A project is a development work and producing the project plan can be an individual research with different approach and aim as the actual project has. As constructive research is about producing a concrete output, such as a plan, it can be thought as the approach for developing a project plan. The current situation is analysed and stakeholders are consulted as well as different theories to which base the project, are studied.

## 4.2 Research methods

As the research approach and objectives are understood, the actual research and its methods are considered and chosen. It is possible and advisable to use different research methods and in that way ensure the quality and validity of the research. The research methods can be divided traditionally into two categories: qualitative and quantitative. (Ojasalo et al. 2009, 93.) The qualitative research is used when studying a particular subject in depth. The common way to collect data is by interviewing people as it allows interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee and therefore more profound information is gathered. The quantitative research is about numbers and common way to collect data is by conducting a survey. (Myers 2009, 8.) For example the customer satisfactory survey is usually done by using questionnaires that are easy to fill in, as the questionnaire mainly contains levels (numbers) of satisfaction towards a certain aspect. It is good to understand the differences in the qualitative and quantitative researches, as the grounds on beginning a research are well understood, before starting the

research process. However, in a development work, such as a project, the division between the qualitative and quantitative research fades out due to the fact that the actual methods used to conduct a research are mainly tools in finding the best development outcome. (Ojasalo et al. 2009, 94.) The following sections introduces practical research methods when creating a project plan.

4.2.1 Interviewing

Interviewing is one the most important technique used in a qualitative research because it enables to gather rich data from different people and conditions. It is highly recommended to record the interviews since it will be easier to transcribe it later on, especially in situations when some words or phrases used are very important (Ojasalo et al. 2009, 96). Even though there are many types of interviews, they can follow the structure of three basic types of interviews: structured, semi-structured and unstructured. The structured interviews are conducted by using pre-formulated questions and the order of the questions is often fixed in sequence. In addition to this, there usually is a time limit to conduct the interview. The semi-structured interviews include some pre-formulated questions and they are not fixed in order. Being the more loose type of interview it allows to present spontaneous questions. However the unstructured interviews are the most free types of the all the three interviews as there are only few – if any – pre-formulated questions. As there is no time limit, the interviewees are freer to express what they want to say. (Myers 2009, 121-124.)

The interviews can be either individual or group interviews. The individual interviews can be face-to-face or conducted via phone, whereas the group interviews have to be conducted by face-to-face. The focus group interviews are structured interviews in a way that it might be focused on for example a certain type of group of people. As there are multiple people handing out their ideas and thoughts, the interviewer receives collective views on the subject studied. However, as the group usually contains 6-12 people (Ojasalo et al. 2009, 100), it is essential that the interviewer is on top of the interaction of the group, directing it and giving floors. (Myers 2009, 125.)

### 4.2.2 Survey

A survey provides broad research data from a great number of groups of people. The data received is often numeric and therefore it is easy to handle and create statistics. Data conducted from a survey is said to be shallow as it is wide and not in-depth. However, it makes it possible to study big number of people for example the population of a country and when the survey is answered by large number of the population, some type of generalisation can be made. (Ojasalo et al. 2009, 108.)

The survey is possible to conduct by sending questionnaires via mail or place them on the internet, or it is possible to do via phone or face-to-face. The sent out questionnaires or the ones placed on the internet can reach a greater audience, but surveys done face-to-face can hand out more information, due to its nature of interaction. If the questionnaire contains sensitive topics, people tend to resist on answering. The questionnaire should be designed so that it will take maximum of fifteen to twenty minutes to answer. Designing the questions as simple, easy and exact as possible will help later on in the analysis stage. A careful consideration should be made on whether to include open questions to the questionnaire or not. As the questionnaire mostly contains questions with given options, an open question would give more information, however they often tend to be left non-responded. Data from previous research will also help with designing the questionnaire. (Ojasalo et al. 2009, 108-109, 116-117.)

### 4.3.2 Document analysis

Collecting data from documents is a practical method when conducting a research. There are different types of documents, for example: personal, such as letters or diaries; private, such as a private organisation producing meeting minutes for internal usage; and public ones, such as annual reports published in public. There are also historical documents; photographs, films and videotapes; electronic documents and the internet. Nowadays the majority of the documents can be found in a digital form, for example emails,

and the amount of documents provided in hard copies is diminishing. The internet is full of different kinds of data and it is commonly used in the data collection and research, as it is freely available. Nevertheless, the internet is available to anyone and anyone can insert data in there and thus it raises the question of the reliability and validity of the data. (Myers 2009, 154-157.) Once the needed data is collected it will be processed and that is based on logical thinking and interpretation. To do this Ojasalo et al. advises to 'decentralise, conceptualise and put the material together in another way, creating a logical wholeness'. (Ojasalo et al. 2009, 122.)

The document analysis is often used, as the data is relatively cheap and quick to access (excluding some documents, for example the personal and private documents), especially when compared to interviewing. However, it is seen as invaluable for providing important details for the research. Depending on the research objective it is advisable to use interviews or surveys to gain the main data of the research and use the document analysis for an additional data. (Myers 2009, 161.)

4.2.4 Cooperative idea incubators

To come up new solutions for the development work, the cooperative idea incubators uses creative ways of thinking and approaching a problem, new ideas, point of views and decisions. There are various types of creative methods for generating ideas and all of them have a prerequisite for a positive and open atmosphere to work in. The participants should not be afraid of saying out load unusual ideas, because sometimes they can be the best ideas discovered. When generating ideas it is often better to come up with big amount of ideas, as that way there will most likely be more, good quality ideas as well. (Ojasalo et al. 2009, 143.) According to Ojasalo et al. the creative problem-solving process follows six steps: noticing the problems or possibilities for improvements, identifying the facts and perspectives, visualising and setting the objectives, generating the ideas and approaches, evaluating the ideas and selecting a solution, approval and execution (Ojasalo et al. 2009, 144.) There are different types of methods for creative problem-solving, but this thesis will present three of them – Brainstorming,

8x8 method, Six thinking hats – as they are popular and therefore used also when planning projects.

The brainstorming often includes six to twelve people and the process will have a leader guiding it. The process can be divided into four different phases. First the objectives for the brainstorming are set and outlined. The next step is warming up the group and releasing unnecessary prejudices and restrictive factors. When the group is ready and open-minded, the actual idea generating can begin. At first there is free creation without reasoning the ideas. The ideas are collected and placed on a board and during this time the ideas that came up can be combined together, developed and bring new ideas into to the collection. Once the board contains various ideas, the last phase starts and the ideas are critically examined and the most feasible idea(s) selected. There are several variations of the standard brainstorming for example: The members of the group write individually as many ideas on pieces of papers as possible, the ideas will be then placed separately from each other on a board or wall. Once no one can come up with anymore ideas, the members of the group explore the ideas on the wall and begin to develop them and possibly place some new ideas on the wall also. (Ojasalo et al. 146.)

8x8 method is similar to a mind map, but more disciplined. The idea is to first write the core problem on a piece of paper and then place eight papers to surround the core problem. Into these eight papers should be written perspectives and ideas that come in mind from the core problem. Once it is done the risen eight perspectives become own individual starting points and a new set of eight pieces of papers will be placed to surround the new starting points. (Ojasalo et al. 2009, 147.)

The six thinking hats method is a combination of generating ideas and analysing. The idea is to explore the problem from different perspectives by using a specific coloured hat (it does not necessarily have to be a hat) that show which perspective the member of the group is currently using. Instead of exploring individually one hat at a time, it is possible to do it as group as well. The themes or perspectives are: white and it highlights what is already

known and unknown; red analyses matters such as what the problem or decision feels like; black highlights criticality and bringing up possible risks and problems that are linked to the idea; yellow is all about optimism and pointing out benefits and advantages of the idea; green highlights creativity and bringing up new and unmentioned perspectives; blue shows who is in control of the discussion and making sure it goes smoothly and in time. (Ojasalo et al. 149-150.)

4.2.5 Observation

The research methods used for Future Learning Lapland were interviewing, document analysis and cooperative idea incubators; from the latter part brainstorming was used. In addition to these methods, observation was used for collecting content for the Future Learning Lapland project plan as well as creating the basis of the research of this thesis. Observation can be done by observing the study subject outside of the situation or by taking part and observing the situation from inside, thus it can be called participant observation. The method differs from the interviews in many aspects. The interviews are often planned beforehand, set up for a fixed time (for example two hours) and they are formal. Whereas conversation and observing of the study subject can happen at any time, anywhere and it is not planned in advance. Conducting the observation does not necessarily have a fixed time and it tends to take an extended period of time. Also the observation method allows hearing the unofficial story, whereas in the interviewing, the interviewers know what you expect them to answer. (Myers 2009, 138-139.)

Advantages of the observation lie in rigorous understanding of the study subject's attitudes, beliefs, values and practices. Nevertheless, it allows studying only a small group. Also the amount of observation made sets the validity for the research, meaning the more you study, the more thorough information you will achieve. In the theory it was suggested for the observation to take twelve months, but for example in business and management the study period tends to be shorter and for the project planning period of Future Learning Lapland the study was three and a half months. The observation is considered to include three main phases: planning,

collecting and analysing. Before actually heading to the field it is important to plan the study and set the goals as well as determine the needed resources and tools. During the field work time data is collected and notes and observations on information taken. The last phase is to analyse the field-collected material. (Myers 2009, 141, 144, 149-150.)

## 4.3 Communication methods

There are different ways in classifying methods for communication and the most common way is by dividing it into two groups: verbal and non-verbal communication. Verbal communication can be either written or oral whereas non-verbal communication (also known as body language) is unplanned and it can have a stronger impact than verbal communication. The verbal communication can be divided into oral and written communication. The way to choose the method for communication depends on various things, for example: urgency of the message, time available and geographical distance. Non-verbal communication is difficult to study even though it is the most basic form of communication. (Gopal 2009, 45, 50-51.) This thesis studies the difficulties in collecting information and even though the empirical part has included oral communication, the body language was not studied or taken into the record.

4.3.1 Oral communication

The oral communication is time-saving as the sender is possible to ask or provide information and if any questions, the receiver is able to ask them or give feedback immediately. As the feedback and possible questions can be asked right away, it can also save money when one matter is possible to go through at that one time. However, the oral communication has its downsides. As it depends with the distance and available mechanical devices, the conversation cannot be stored for a long time and there might be misunderstandings. (Gopal 2009, 46.)

There are several types of oral communication: face-to-face, telephone/mobile phone, interviews, group discussions and meetings. In

face-to-face the communication flows in both directions and immediate feedback is possible. It is about 'exchanging information, thoughts and feelings when the participants are in the same physical space' (Pathi 2008, 88). Body language plays a big role as the other person is in close distance away and non-verbal signals are possible to notice as the communication proceeds. As it is called face-to-face the effect of it reduces into minimal, when trying to address many people at the same time for example in large gatherings. (Gopal 2009, 47.)

Phones are one of the commonest and fastest ways for contacting people. Especially nowadays as mobile phones are very common, it is possible to contact anyone, anywhere and almost at any time. The features provided for a mobile phone varies a lot, but the most common ones are: the ability to receive and send emails, access to the internet, voice mail and calendar. In addition to this it is possible to get conferencing capabilities. (Pathi 2008, 89.)

Like introduced previously in section 4.2.1, interviewing is also a method of communicating and attaining data that is not available in written sources. It is one of the most formal ways of communication as it is prearranged and both parties should be prepared for it in advance. It can be carried out face-to-face or via phone, however the body language and expressions plays a big role when conducting an interview by face-to-face. (Pathi 2008, 89-90, 92.) Interviewing gives the possibility for both sides to assess the other party and therefore providing more information (Gopal 2009, 48).

Meetings are also common way for communicating, especially in business life. If a meeting is formal, an agenda is sent out beforehand and the meeting notes, also known as the minutes, are taken and provided to the participants after the meeting. (Gopal 2009, 48.) Meetings have their advantages, as there is vast amount of knowledge and information being shared among number of people. However, organising a meeting is time-consuming as people often tend to run from a meeting to another and being busy at other times. In order for a meeting to succeed, it is important for the participants to prepare themselves with the agenda and topics as there is in most cases set a fixed time, therefore possible small talk should be left after the meeting.

(Pathi 2008, 97.) Group discussion is quite similar to a meeting, but it is not as formal. The participants agree on the topic to be discussed and each of them takes part on the discussion and produces ideas and thoughts. The group discussion is a good method for understanding situations, discovering new possibilities and/or solving problems, as there are number of people participating and thus producing a multiple point of views. (Pathi 2008, 94.)

Conferencing is gathering people for a meeting and discussion. Before the modern technology it was restricted to everyone to meet in the same place or conducting the meeting via phone. Due to long distances, time and money available, it is not possible to meet regularly with everyone in one space. Therefore teleconferencing – multiple people communicating at the same time via phone – is considered to be productive, quite inexpensive and time-saving option. However it creates some difficulties when not having a visible contact of the people one is communicating with. Luckily the modern technology has provided a solution to this problem: video conferencing. It is almost like meeting people in the same space, as it is possible to look at the person, who is speaking as well as to study the reactions while they are listening to other people, hence making the communication more meaningful. The equipment needed can be expensive though, as there need to be for example monitor, camera, microphone, speaker. (Gopal 2009, 65-66.)

Individual interviews and meetings were chosen as methods of communication with partners in the case of Future Learning Lapland, because it is easier for one person, the project coordinator, to travel and meet the partners, rather than the partners traveling and meeting together. As the project planning process advanced, video conferencing was also chosen to be used, as it allowed all the project planning participants to work together and discuss the project plan. Phones were used on daily basis, mainly to discuss and address important matters of the time being.

4.3.2 Written communication

The written communication embodies everything that is written down on a paper or an electronic format. It is precise and accurate and possible to store

as a permanent record. Also the same document is possible to be sent to a number of places, therefore reaching more people than oral communication. However, it is time consuming to formulate proper and professional documents, it takes longer time to receive any feedback and, depending on a situation, it may also be expensive (for example if it is necessary to use courier services). Types of written documents can be letters, memos, notices and reports. (Gopal 2009, 49-50.)

There are multiple appliances for working with written documents. Fax machine revolutionised the business world, as it was possible to transmit copies or printed documents via telephone lines. Before that the original mail was a commonly used method to send out documents. Nevertheless, the disadvantage of the fax machine is that it is not possible to send original documents for example contracts. (Gopal 2009, 57-58, 69.) In today's business and personal life the electronic mail or e-mail has become the most common form of communication and it has almost replaced the fax machine. As the computers and the internet are common in business and personal life, numerous people have e-mail accounts and it may be their commonest method (besides phone) for contacting people. With e-mail it is possible to send messages to number of people at the same time and the receiver can read it when he or she has time for it; for example when compared to contacting a person via phone, the receiver is expected to jump into the conversation as the call arrives. With email it is also possible to send out attachments of documents or copies without paper disposal, therefore being more ecological and outrunning the paper consuming fax machine. The e-mail has, however, some disadvantages for example it is not possible to send out original documents. Also as it is popularly used, in business life people tend to receive countless of e-mails within one day, making it impossible to reply to everyone immediately or even having the time to read messages thoroughly and missing some information of long e-mails. (Gopal 2009, 63-64.)

Mail is practically the only way to get original documents delivered. However, delays are common and more over even if the mail is on time; it is still not fast enough. Luckily there are plenty of private companies providing courier

services, giving fast means for transporting documents (especially abroad) and as the documents are picked up and delivered in person, it gives the safe factor that documents will not get lost. Nevertheless, the courier service is still today quite expensive and even though it is often used, the regular mail plays a big role in the modern business communication. (Gopal 2009, 70, 72.)

Email is very common in modern day business life and by this reason it was also used in the project planning of Future Learning Lapland. In everyday use, the email enabled to send the project documents to the stakeholders at the same time. As the project partners were situated in the same region, with maximum of 120 kilometres of distance in between, the original mail was not used. This was due to the fact that it was not fast enough, but also as a result that the project partners worked together in other projects as well, and as it happened, they had a meeting with another topic, and thus were able to bring some required organisational documents along with them.

# 5 FUTURE LEARNING LAPLAND PROJECT PLANNING

## 5.1 Planning Process

As explained briefly at the beginning of this thesis Future Learning Lapland is a shared project of the higher education institutions of Lapland. The project was designed in order for the institutions to take part in the national education export project called Future Learning Finland. Before the project planning it was thought to be best if all the higher education institutions of Lapland would take part into the national parent project, Future Learning Finland, as one organisation: Lapland University Consortium. However, as the nature of the parent project is that at least four of the national educational actors would create together an educational product or service to be exported, it was seen as a benefit for all the three institutions to take part as independent organisations and thus giving the biggest possibility to develop and export Lappish knowhow. Nevertheless, for this thesis the content of the Future Learning Lapland project plan is not important, as the research is based on the observations made on the methods and tools used for data acquisition. Also the text includes references of meetings, yet the actual meeting minutes are not included into the appendices by the reason mentioned before.

From the theory part of the project planning it is visible that the project planning takes time as there are plenty of things to be planned. Taking into consideration different stakeholders' ideas can be challenging but important for the success and continuance of the project. The project planning of Future Learning Lapland differed slightly from the guidelines of the European Commission. The project was discussed generally throughout January to May 2011; however the first meeting together with the stakeholders took place in the middle of June 2011. It was a workshop where the project goals were given in advance and the participants were assigned to brainstorm and answer questions that were connected with the goals. After the workshop the ideas that rose during the brainstorming were recorded and based on them the terms of reference was written and later on also the analyses of problems, objectives and strategies. (Kemi-Tornio University of Applied Sciences – Rovaniemi University of Applied Sciences – University of Lapland

2011a.) When looking back in the theory part of the project planning, the project goals are set during the logical framework phase, after the analyses are made. Hence the pattern of the project planning was reversed in the case of Future Learning Lapland by building the objective tree from the given goals, proceeding then to the problem tree and setting the strategy. After these were done it was possible to begin on building the logical framework and proceeding with the progression of the project planning.

## 5.2 Data acquisition methods used

In the theory part there were a variety of methods introduced, yet only some of them were used and few of them was found useful. The most commonly used method was the email and it was used for getting information from people as well as providing them information and keeping them on track on the planning process. There was only one receiver list and it contained a lot of people and some of them were included mainly to keep them on track as they were not active participants of the project planning. During the empirical part of this thesis it became obvious in the early stage that the email is not the best method when contacting people. Even though it gives the possibility to address many people at the same time and therefore making it more time-efficient, it was evident that some, if not most of the people, receive approximately one hundred email within a day and would not have time to read nor to comment to all of them.

The email had its other disadvantages also. Firstly some people did not receive the emails sent out due to issues with the organisation's firewall that, for some reason, would not let the emails be delivered. The sent out documents were not read, thus not commented on either. The receivers were promised to receive certain documents at certain time, yet as they did not receive them, they did not inform the project coordinator either. Hence the email made a gap to the communication. The second problem faced was that some people had problems in opening the documents from the email. Majority of the documents sent out were Word files and due to the difference in Microsoft Office versions in different organisations, the documents were saved and sent out as Word 97-2003 type of files. However, for some it was

still impossible to open the files let alone to comment on them. The solution for this was the Google Docs as it enables people around the world to either read and/or work with the documents as they were possible to place online (Google 2012).

The mobile phone was used almost on daily basis, mainly to communicate urgent matters and verify meeting times. The contact persons from each institution were decided in the early stage of the planning process and thus they were the channel for attaining urgent information from the institutions. Phone as a tool for communicating is fast and especially nowadays as people have mobile phones; they can be reached almost anywhere. However not everything was possible to be discussed via phone since people might not have been in their office and thus were not able to answer questions regarding for example the planning documents. Due to this, as well as to the fact that every person could not be reached via phone at the same time, the phone was not an efficient or used tool in attaining majority of the information for the project plan.

As stated in the previous subchapter, the project planning process begun with the workshop and brainstorming session. It was found very useful and efficient method as all the ideas and information were addressed individually and directly to all participants rather than through the project coordinator and thus preventing of losing information during the process. However getting the required number of people into one place is challenging and, at times, need to be planned months before hand. The first workshop remained the only meeting for the Future Learning Lapland project planning where the participants were all at the same place and this was the outcome of couple of issues. Firstly many people realises that July is the time when majority of offices in Finland, both in the private and public sector, are lacking number of employees as it is the most popular time for an annual leave. As the planning for Future Learning Lapland begun in the middle of June, it was expected to be quiet amongst the participants until the beginning of August, during which time the terms of reference and analyses were supposed to be ready and forwarded to the stakeholders. It was planned that in the beginning of August another meeting would take place with all the participants. But as the

planning did not go as scheduled, the meeting was first postponed and later on realised as impossible to carry out mainly due to lack of time. Since it was not possible to meet with everyone in the same place, other possibilities for communicating were taken in place.

The individual meetings in all three institutions took place in the end of August and the beginning of September. The project plan documents, mainly logical framework, were discussed during these meetings. The project coordinator visited each of the institutes and interviewed the participants as well as explained what was already planned and how the rest of the project planning proceeds. (Kemi-Tornio University of Applied Sciences 2011, Lapland Institute for Tourism Research and Education 2011, Rovaniemi University of Applied Sciences 2011b, University of Lapland 2011.) In addition to the already introduced project partners, an interview and a meeting was conducted with the Lapland Institute for Tourism Research and Education, due to the leading partner's outlining of the project content.

The meetings were chosen due to the fact that it is faster and time wise for the project coordinator to travel and meet partners, rather than the partners traveling and meeting together. During these meetings it was possible to attain specific ideas, content of the project plan and institutional preferences towards the project. The meetings did not have fixed agendas and the interviews were unstructured, meaning that there were hardly any pre-formulated questions. The reasons for both of these was that the planning process at that time was still quite messy and as the people did barely comment on the documents sent via email, the content of the plan was mainly produced by the idea that it was going on the right track and yet knowing that there is supplementary information missing, nevertheless difficult in defining what would still be needed. The meetings were useful as it was possible to hear out participants from the different institutions. However communicating, gathering and combining all the attained information laid on one person, therefore possible misunderstandings happened and even though the meeting minutes were taken, some information might not have been recorded.

As not everyone had the time to travel into the meetings and the individual meetings were not useful enough, it was decided to try out video conferencing. The participants from the University of Lapland and Rovaniemi University Applied Sciences gathered together in same location in Rovaniemi and vice versa the participants in Kemi-Tornio University of Applied Sciences gathered people from Kemi and Tornio into one location. (Kemi-Tornio University of Applied Sciences et al. 2011b, 2011c.) As the meetings were planned beforehand, all the technical issues (connection, monitors, and microphone) were taken care of in advance and that way ensuring the smooth process of the video conference. The video conference was the best method for discussing the project plan as no one had to travel long distances and losing time in traveling. The video conferencing was used twice during the Future Learning Lapland planning process, at the end of the project planning. As it was seen very useful tool, it was considered to be used in other projects as well. However it is still a meeting and like any other meeting it needs to be planned before hand and deciding the right dates, therefore making sure that the required people are able to participate.

## 5.3 Process model

The project planning process of Future Learning Lapland project and the data acquisition methods were introduced in the previous subchapters. Figure 8 is a simplified model of the Figure 7 presented in the theory subchapter 3.3, with some modifications. Giving an overview look of the project planning process of Future Learning Lapland, the model is placed in the text. However due to the size of the model in the text, it may be difficult to read, therefore see Appendix 8 for a bigger sized model.

Figure 8 shows how the project planning of Future Learning Lapland proceeded and what kind of parties was involved. Simplification of Garland's project governance model was made when creating the model for Future Learning Lapland. As the Garland's model was for the overall project management process, couple of parties that he suggested, are left out of the model, giving the total of four different parties involved with the planning process: the stakeholders, project coordinator, administrative and financier.

The stakeholders refer to the Stakeholder working group of Garland's model. They are the people that were in any way involved in the actual project planning of Future Learning Lapland, meaning the people of the email receivers list as well as the ones who took part in the meetings. The administrative party involves the administrative people who outline the project and set regulations for it; thus the project board of the Garland's model. The financier outlines the funding instruments Call for proposals and what is expected from a project plan when applying for funding. Also as the Garland's model was about whole project life-cycle, a new party was added to the Future Learning Lapland model, the project coordinator, which is the party taking care of the project planning. The overview of the model shows that certain graphical symbols were used according to the Rovaniemi University of Applied Sciences guidelines, making it consistent with the other models used by the commissioner (Rovaniemi University of Applied Sciences 2011a, 7).
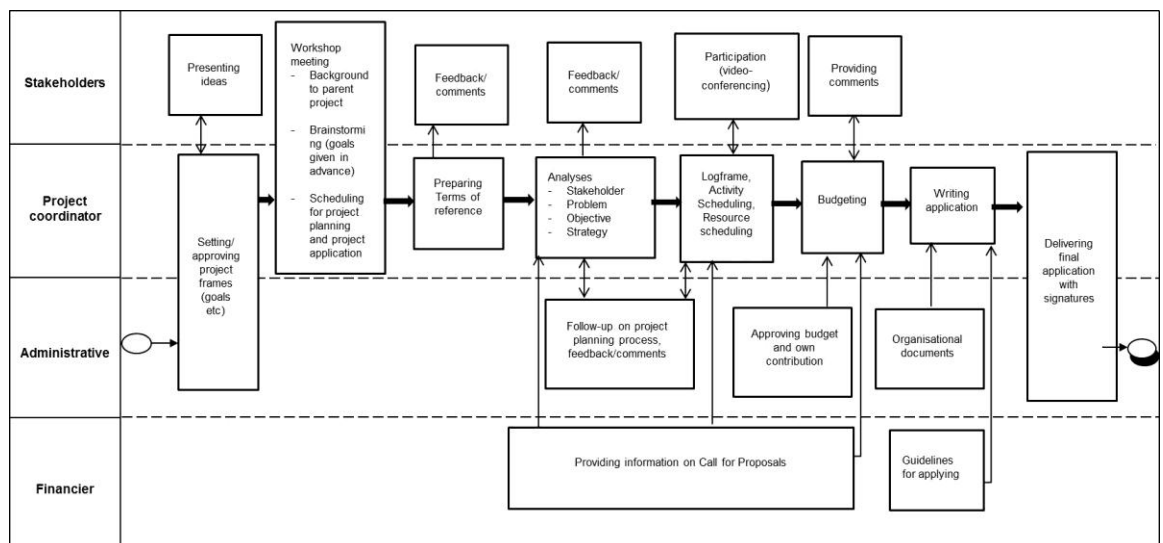


Figure 8. Future Learning Lapland project planning process model

As mentioned before, the project planning did not progress according to the guidelines of the European Commission. The goals were set out in the beginning and in order to move on to the logical framework, few steps needed to be taken backwards for to construct the terms of reference and to outline objectives, problems and strategy. After these, the planning could progress according to the order of European Commission. However, the actual planning process started by the approval of the administrative party

and it ended by the leading partner signing the application, therefore approving on delivering it for the financier.

In addition to the progress of the project planning phases, Figure 8 also shows how the communication happened. First of all it is visible in there that in the beginning a workshop took place and it involved both the stakeholders and the project coordinator. Each of the planning phase boxes has arrows upwards and downwards and they illustrate the communication between the parties. As every planning document was produced, the project coordinator sent them out to the stakeholders, therefore the arrows are pointing to the stakeholders. However the email was chosen to be the tool for delivering the documents and as mentioned before, hardly any receivers responded or gave comments or feedback on the documents; hence there is not an arrow pointing back from the stakeholders (for example the terms of reference and analyses phase).

For the next two phases (logical framework and budgeting) feedback was given from the stakeholders and the reason for this can be seen from the method of communication used: video conferencing. It allowed everyone to present their opinion and justify them. There are no middle people in a meeting like this, so all the information shared in there is available to everyone present and later on also in the meeting minutes (which should also be commented for to make sure that all the relevant and discussed information can be found from there).

Communication between the project coordinator and the administrative people is done in the beginning and the end of the process as well as during the project plan development. As mentioned already the administrative party needs to approve the core idea of the project and they might also set certain frames for the project. In addition to this, they also need to approve the budget, so it needs to be discussed with them while formulating it. At the end of the planning process they will have to sign the application before it can be delivered to the financier. The financier sets also the frames that the project must achieve in order to get any finance. The guidelines give information on the application process and what documents are compulsory to provide; for

example organisation and value added tax certificates from the lead partner are a must.

## 5.4 Areas of improvements

All the previous subchapters present what was done during the project planning of Future Learning Lapland and how the process went. The main area of improvement is in the communication between the parties of the project planning process. Of course it can be seen as a flaw as the actual planning was not progressive as it should be according to the guidelines. However during the planning process it was soon realised that the project planning often follows the same pattern as in the Future Learning Lapland project: First it is thought that a specific improvement is wanted and the goals/objectives are set. Then afterwards the problems are analysed, because once they are understood, it is easier to validate the purpose of the project.

The lack of communication, however, made it difficult to deliver the project plan. Many of the people involved in the planning process have plenty of experience of the project planning process. Of course it can be said that the project coordinator was not actively communicating with all the parties and used mainly the impersonal communication tool, email. However there were not seen any other options for delivering the planning documents to everyone than the email. Of course people are busy with their other work and have a tight schedule to begin with. The question is then: how to motivate and interest the people to take more active role in the planning process?
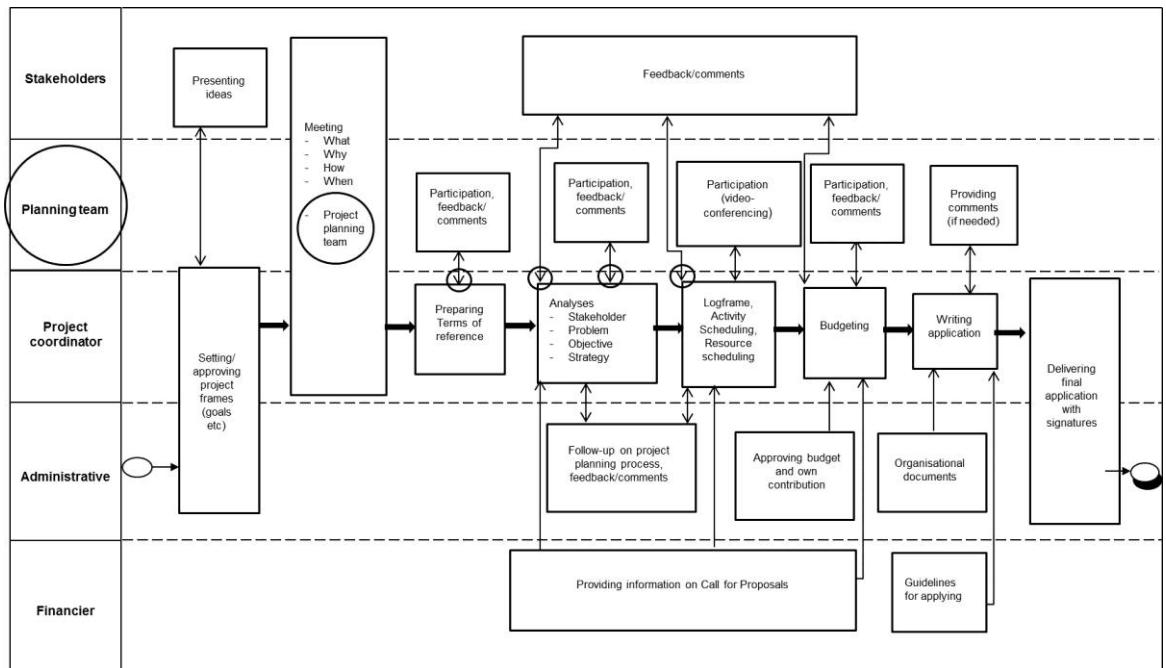
Figure 9. Improved project planning process model

Figure 9 shows what kinds of improvements are made to the model of Figure 8. However it can be difficult to read the model placed on the text, therefore see Appendix 9 for a bigger sized model. The first thing that is quite evident difference between this model and the model used in the case of Future Learning Lapland is that there is added one more party: the planning team. The project coordinator, stakeholders, administrative and financier parties are the same as they were in the previous model, but the newly added one, planning team, is created from the stakeholders. During the kick-off meeting it is suggested that instead of just appointing the contact persons from the each partner organisation, a planning team would also be constructed. The team members could consist for example of the people who are most likely going to be part of the project implementation phase and thus should be involved more on the planning process. The members would be the contact people for the partnering organisations and therefore making sure that the planning documents are read and understood.

The project coordinator is of course the one who is responsible for the planning process. But if the people involved in the planning process will not give any feedback, the whole process does not go far. With assigning tasks for the planning team, the team members are more involved in the planning

process and therefore commenting and giving feedback more often. Also as they are the contact people in their respective organisations, they can access more easily in certain data within the organisation. The key with this solution is not to burden the appointed team members with extra tasks, but give them more reason to make the communication to flow in both directions; as it is seen in Figure 9.

Of course the project coordinator should be more active in contacting people and attaining information from them. However as presented in the project governance theory in the subchapter 3.3, the usage of a team of people with specific sectorial knowledge is advisable. Since there is a project team during the implementation phase, it is reasonable to have one during the planning process as well. Ending up into this solution the author also reflected her experiences of the planning process of Future Learning Lapland into another project. The author of this thesis did her practical training of her specialisation studies, International Project Management, for the Arctic Centre of the University of Lapland. The project was considered to be more challenging to plan, as it was an international one and the certain guidelines given by the financier (Kolarctic ENPI CBC) were stricter. However the whole planning process seemed easier and the communication between partners was effortless. After careful consideration it was possible to come into the conclusion that the reason behind the successful planning (especially with the communication) was due to the fact that the project partners did their own share of the planning. They were constantly asking to help with the planning and with the project coordinator providing them examples on how to build certain kind of documents, for example budgeting, they were able and more than willing to do them. This became also the case of commenting and improving for example the logical framework; since they understood how to build it, they were able to comment on it. As the people were more involved with the actual project planning, the content of the project was easier to develop as almost all the information came from the partners and the project coordinator combined the ideas into right format.

**6 CONCLUSION**

Project planning is about the ability to combine data together and produce a good project plan. It requires effective communication between the parties involved, as they will outline the project within its scope, objectives, activities, budget and resources – to mention a few. A specified process model for the whole project planning process will help the people involved to understand what kind of documents or information is required for the plan and who will provide them.

This thesis analysed the planning process of Future Learning Lapland and by the observations made during the empirical part, the outline of this thesis concentrated on the difficulty in communicating during the project planning process. As the commissioner is active in its research and development and thus running or being involved in a number of projects, the planning process model provided in this thesis prevents the ineffective communication during the future planning processes. The project planning process model for Rovaniemi University of Applied Sciences introduces the responsibilities of each party involved. However it does not go too deep into the task division, as it can be made in the beginning of each project. Nevertheless the importance of creating the planning team will help during the planning process. This is important as people are more motivated and involved when they are assigned a specific task and provided the appropriate resources to execute it.

The project plan process model of Future Learning Lapland was ineffective and created confusions within the parties involved. The stakeholders expected that the project coordinator is able to build the project plan alone or at least to be able to collect the information from them and other places. It is important to understand that the project coordinator has the knowledge to build the project plan into right format and understanding the application process with the financier. However, the actual content of the project plan comes from the stakeholders. With the theory background it became visible that a separate planning team is needed during the planning process, as it includes people who have the content information. By handing out individual

tasks for the planning team, the project coordinator and administrative people are able to motivate them as the people know where their responsibilities towards the project planning lies in. When people are aware of what is expected from them, they can commit to the process, yet they should be assigned the tasks already in the beginning of the planning process.

Raising the awareness of what is needed for a project plan and how much work it contains, people involved should understand the importance of communication. The phone and email are seen as ineffective tools for communication, whereas the video conferencing creates possibilities for the stakeholders around the world to participate in the meeting. Also individual meetings with the partners can be effective and useful, if the distances between partners are not too long. However, the meetings need to be planned carefully in advance. Any loss information during these individual meetings is prevented by the fact that the partnering organisation's member of the planning team is present at the meeting and thus together with the project coordinator ensuring that the meeting minutes does not lack of information.

The cooperative idea incubators can of course be used throughout the project planning phase, but especially during the kick-off meeting it is important for the stakeholders to meet in one place and commonly it is a brainstorming session. However the workshops and brainstorming sessions might be difficult to execute more than twice during the planning phase with all the stakeholders present, therefore the video conferencing is the tool for continuing the discussion. The presented theories of project planning and research methods of this thesis as well as the Appendices are not only to supplement the overall thesis, but also to provide guidance in the future project planning of the commissioner.

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**APPENDICES**

Appendix 1

Example of a stakeholder analysis matrix (European Commission 2004, 63)

| Stakeholder and basic characteristics | Interests and how affected by the problem(s) | Capacity and motivation to bring about change | Possible actions to address stakeholder interests |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Fishing families:** c.20,000 families, low income earners, small scale family businesses, organised into informal cooperatives, women actively involved in fish processing and marketing | • Maintain and improve their means of livelihood<br>• Pollution is affecting volume and quality of catch<br>• Family health is suffering, particularly children and mothers | • Keen interest in pollution control measures<br>• Limited political influence given weak organizational structure | • Support capacity to organize and lobby<br>• Implement industry pollution control measures<br>• Identify/develop alternative income sources for women and men |
| **Industry X:** Large scale industrial operation, poorly regulated and no-unions, influential lobby group, poor environmental record | • Maintain/increase profits<br>• Some concern about public image<br>• Concern about costs if environmental regulations enforced | • Have financial and technical resources to employ new cleaner technologies<br>• Limited current motivation to change | • Raise their awareness of social and environmental impact<br>• Mobilise political pressure to influence industry behaviour<br>• Strengthen and enforce environmental laws |
| **Households:** c.150,000 households discharge waste and waste water into river, also source some drinking water and eat fish from the river | • Aware of industrial pollution and impact on water quality<br>• Want to dispose of own waste away from the household<br>• Want access to clean water | • Limited understanding of the health impact of their own waste/ waste water disposal<br>• Potential to lobby government bodies more effectively<br>• Appear willing to pay for improved waste management services | • Raise awareness of households as to implications of their own waste disposal practices<br>• Work with communities and local government on addressing water and sanitation issues |
| **Environmental protection agency:** Etc | etc | etc | etc |

Example of a problem tree (European Commission 2004, 68)



## Problem analysis – river pollution

High incidence of water borne diseases and illnesses, particularly among poor families and under 5s

Catch and income of fishing families in decline

Riverine ecosystem under serious threat, including declining fish stocks

River water quality is deteriorating

Most households and factories discharge wastewater directly into the river

High levels of solid waste dumped into river

Wastewater treated in plants does not meet environmental standards

40% of households and 20% of businesses not connected to sewerage network

Existing legal regulations are inadequate to prevent direct discharge of wastewater

Population not aware of the danger of waste dumping

Polluters are not controlled

Inadequate levels of capital investment and poor business planning within Local Government

Pollution has been a low political priority

No public information/education programs available

Environment Protection Agency ineffective and closely aligned with industry interests

Example of an objective tree (European Commission 2004, 70)

## Objective tree – river pollution

Wastewater treatment meets environmental standards

Improved business planning within Local Government is established, including cost recovery mechanisms

Incidence of water borne diseases and illnesses is reduced, particularly among poor families and under 5s

Increased % of households and businesses are connected to sewerage network

Increased capital investment

River water quality is improved

No. of households and factories discharging wastewater directly into the river is reduced

New legal regulations are established which are effective in preventing direct discharge of wastewater

Pollution management is given a higher political priority

Threat to the riverine ecosystem is reduced, and fish stocks are increased

Population more aware of the danger of waste dumping

Public information/education programs established

Catch and income of fishing families is stabilised or increased

The quantity of solid waste dumped into the river is reduced

Polluters are effectively controlled

Environment Protection Agency is effective and more responsive to a broad range of stakeholder interests

Example of strategy selection (European Commission 2004, 72)

Appendix 5

Example of key elements of a draft Logical Framework Matrix and General Sequence Completion (European Commission 2004, 73, 84)

| Project description | Indicators | Means of Verification | Assumptions |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Overall objective** To contribute to improved family health, particularly the under 5s, and to improve the general health of the riverine eco-system (1) | - Incidence of water borne diseases, skin infections and blood disorders caused by heavy metals, reduced by 50% by 2008, specifically among low-income families living along the river (8) | - Municipal hospital and clinic records, including maternal and child health records collected by mobile MCH teams. Results summarized in an Annual State of the Environment report by the EPA. (9) | |
| **Purpose** Improved quality of river water (2) | - Concentration of heavy metal compounds (Pb, Cd, Hg) and untreated sewerage: reduced by 25% (compared to levels in 2003) and meets established national health/pollution control standards by end of 2007 (10) | - Weekly water quality surveys, jointly conducted by the Environmental Protection Agency and the River Authority, and reported monthly to the Local Government Minister for Environment (Chair of Project Steering Committee) (11) | - The pubic awareness campaign conducted by the Local Government impacts positively on families sanitation and hygiene practices - Fishing cooperatives are effective in limiting their members exploitation of fish 'nursery' areas (7) |
| **Result 1** Volume of waste-water directly discharged into the river system by households and factories reduced (3) | - 70% of waste water produced by factories and 80% of waste water produced by households is treated in plants by 2006 (12) | - Annual sample survey of households and factories conducted by Municipalities between 2003 and 2006 (13) | - River flows maintained above X mega litres per second for at least 8 months of the year - Upstream water quality remains stable (6) |
| **Result 2** Waste-water treatment standards established and effectively enforced (4) | - Waste water from 4 existing treatment plants meets EPA quality standards (heavy metals and sewerage content) by 2005 | - EPA audits (using revised standards and improved audit methods), conducted quarterly and reported to Project Steering Committee | - EPA is successful in reducing solid waste disposal levels by factories from X to X tons per year (5) |
| **Activities 1** | | | |

Example of indicative Activity Schedule – prepared during the formulation stage (European Commission 2004, 88)

| Ref no | Results and Indicative Activities | Responsibility | Year 1 | | | | Year 2 | | | | Year 3 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| 1.1 | Reduced volume of waste water directly discharged into the river system | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | **Activities** | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.1.1 | Conduct baseline survey of households and business | Contractor to local Govt. | ▲ | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.1.2 | Complete engineering specifications for expanded sewerage network | Contractor to Local Civil Works | | ▲ | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.1.3 | Prepare tender documents, tender and select contractor | Dept. of Civil Works | | | | ▲ | | | | | | | | |
| 1.1.4 | Implement and monitor capital works | Contractor and Dept of Civil Works | | | | | | | | | | | | ▲ |
| 1.1.5 | Identify appropriate incentives for factories to use clean technologies | EPA and business | | | | | | | ▲ | | | | | |
| 1.1.6 | Design and implement incentive program | EPA and Local Govt. | | | | | | | | | | ▲ | | |
| 1.1.7 | Prepare and deliver public information and awareness campaign on waste-water disposal | Local Govt. | | | | | | | | | | | | ▲ |
| 1.1.8 | Etc | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Steps in the Preparation of a Resource Schedule (European Commission 2004, 91)

PROJECT: ESTABLISHMENT OF A PLANNING UNIT, MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

Process steps:
1. COPY ACTIVITIES FROM ACTIVITY SCHEDULE
2. SPECIFY INPUTS
3. PUT INPUTS INTO COST CATEGORIES
4. SPECIFY UNITS
5. SPECIFY QUANTITY
6. ESTIMATE UNIT COST
7. IDENTIFY FUNDING SOURCE
8. ALLOCATE COST CODES
9. SCHEDULE COSTS
10. CALCULATE TOTAL
11. ESTIMATE RECURRENT COSTS

| Ref | ACTIVITIES/INPUTS | Unit | Quantity 1st qtr | Quantity 2nd qtr | Quantity 3rd qtr | Quantity 4th qtr | Cost per unit | Funding source | Cost Codes Donor | Cost Codes Govt | Costs 1st qtr | Costs 2nd qtr | Costs 3rd qtr | Costs 4th qtr | Project Total | Annual Recurrent Costs |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1,1 | Establishing Planning unit | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | EQUIPMENT | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Computers | no. | 2 | 2 | | | 1 000 | | | 3,4 A/1.3 | 2 000 | 2 000 | - | - | 4 000 | |
| | Fax modem | no. | 1 | | | | 500 | | | 3,4 A/1.3 | 500 | - | - | - | 500 | |
| | Office furniture | lump | 1 | | | | 3 000 | | | 3,4 A/1.3 | 3 000 | - | - | - | 3 000 | |
| | SALARIES & ALLOWANCES (LOCAL) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Counterparts | mm | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 200 | | | 5,2 B/2.1 | 800 | 800 | 800 | 800 | 3 200 | 3 200 |
| | Office staff | mm | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 100 | | | 5,2 B/2.1 | 200 | 300 | 300 | 300 | 1 100 | 1 100 |
| | ETC. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Appendix 8

Future Learning Lapland project planning process model

Stakeholders

Project coordinator

Administrative

Financier

Presenting ideas

Workshop meeting
- Background to parent project
- Brainstorming (goals given in advance)
- Scheduling for project planning and project application

Setting/ approving project frames (goals etc)

Feedback/ comments

Preparing Terms of reference

Feedback/ comments

Analyses
- Stakeholder
- Problem
- Objective
- Strategy

Follow-up on project planning process, feedback/comments

Participation (video-conferencing)

Logframe, Activity Scheduling, Resource scheduling

Providing comments

Budgeting

Approving budget and own contribution

Providing information on Call for Proposals

Writing application

Organisational documents

Guidelines for applying

Delivering final application with signatures

Improved project planning process model