



Project Management for Development Organizations

Doing the Right Projects,
Doing the Projects Right

The Project Scope

Scope is the description of the boundaries of the project. It defines what the project will deliver and what it will not deliver. Scope is the view all stakeholders have from the project; it is a definition of the limits of the project.

One of the leading causes for project failures is poor management of the project scope, either because the project manager did not spend enough time defining the work, there was not an agreement on the scope by stakeholders, or there was a lack of scope management which leads to adding work not authorized or budgeted to the project, this is known as scope creep. Scope creep, or the uncontrolled changes in a project's scope, is the tendency of a project to include more tasks than originally specified, which often leads to higher than planned project costs and an extension of the initial complementation date.

The purpose of scope change management is to protect the viability of the approved Project Contract (or agreement) and the approved Project Logical Framework (Log-frame). In other words, the Project Contract

defines the overall scope of the project, and the Logframe defines the deliverables in detail.

Deliverables change during the life of the project, changes come usually from the beneficiaries who want additional deliverables, then the initial estimates for budget, and schedule may no longer be valid. If the donor agrees to include the new work into the project scope, the project manager has the right to expect that the current budget and deadline will be modified (usually increased) to reflect this additional work. This new estimated cost, effort and duration now become the approved target.

All changes to the project scope must be approved by management and the donor; this is one of the principal requirements for scope management.

The Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) is an important planning tool used to define a project in terms of its outputs while providing a method for breaking these deliverables into meaningful work units.

This is not to say the objective of scope management is to avoid any changes to the initial agreement, development projects, due to their nature are initiated mostly on general assumptions, so it is expected that as the project makes progress additional information leads to new insights that require the project to change its approach and its work.

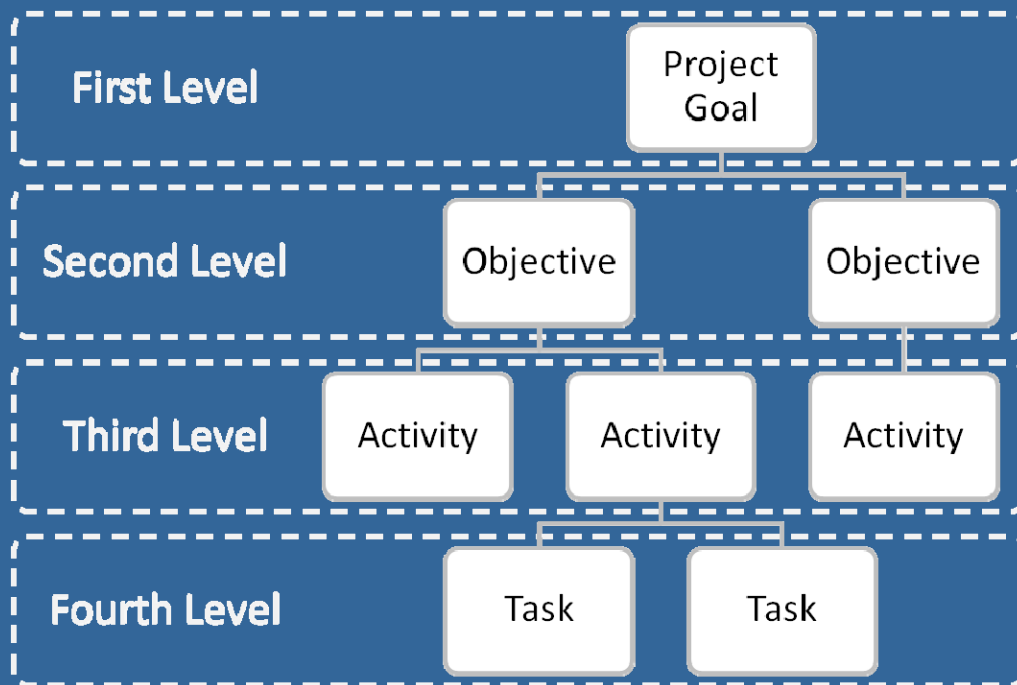
Defining the project scope is identifying all the work that the project will accomplish in order to achieve its final goal. The work includes the activities identified in the Logframe and the activities the project team has

identified that will be necessarily to support the project, these includes activities such as team capacity building, stakeholder management, meetings and project presentations and all significant activities that will consume project resources.

Project Work Breakdown Structure

The Project Work Breakdown Structure is an outcome oriented analysis of the work involved in the project and defines the total scope of the project. It is a foundation document in project management because it provides the basis for planning and managing the project schedule, budget and requests for changes. The WBS is developed in the form of an inverted tree structure, organized by objectives; it looks like an or-

organizational chart which helps the project team visualize the whole project and all its main components.



The Project Work Breakdown Structure (WBS)

The size and complexity of a project will determine the number of levels a WBS needs. For some projects additional levels may be included to represent intermediate objectives. Other projects may choose to structure the WBS by the geographical locations the project will work or group the objectives by the communities participating in the project.

With the WBS, the project manager will be able describe the outcomes of a project in a way that is clear to the project team, while at the same time capturing the order and sequence of the work necessary to produce those outputs. The WBS provides a means for carefully detailing the outputs of the project and facilitates the identification of specific the work elements, and groupings required to deliver each element. Additionally, once it is complete, the WBS becomes an essential building block and reference point for other project plan components.

Another component of the WBS is the numbering system used to track each element with an unique number useful for development of the project schedule. The WBS allows the project manager to clearly describe the hierarchical nature of the work to be performed and estab-

lishes a foundation for other elements of the project planning documents including the project's resource plan, budget, implementation plan, and project schedule.

The Project Manager should pay a great deal of attention to managing scope. Allowing unauthorized changes to the scope usually means added costs, greater risks and longer duration. Many projects fail due to poor scope management. Very often it is a large number of small scope changes that do the damage, rather than the big, obvious ones. The successful Project Manager knows that rigorous scope control is essential to deliver projects on time and on budget.

The purpose of scope management is to establish a process that will allow the incorporation of changes by ensuring the changes contribute to the ultimate goal of the project, changes are agreed by stakeholder and approved by management.

These series of articles focuses on concepts and practices related to development projects. It is our hope that the ideas and methodologies presented here prove useful to anyone who is engaged in managing projects in the broader development community, and helps bring sustainable benefits to the communities and beneficiaries who need it the most.

The Millennium Development Goals aim by 2015 to reverse the grinding poverty, hunger and disease affecting billions of people.

PM4DEV is committed to provide resources and develop knowledge and expertise to support development organizations in their efforts to achieve this ambitious goal.



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