## Module 0

### Managing Participatory Development Processes

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<th>Objectives</th>
<th>By the end of the module participants will</th>
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<td>1. Be familiar with the aspects of developmental projects</td>
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<td>2. Be familiar with concepts relating to projects and project management</td>
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<td>3. Be familiar with the concepts of the logical framework approach [LFA]</td>
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<td>4. Understand the approach for the first five modules dealing with focus areas</td>
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| Learning Time | Approx 3 hours |

| Content | Unit 1 Development and Change  
|         | Unit 2: The Logical Framework Approach – A Tool for Change  
|         | Unit 3: The LFA and working with focus areas  
|         | Unit 4: Design, Monitor, Evaluate Change  
|         | Unit 5: Projects  
|         | Unit 6: Project Cycles and Decision Points  
|         | Unit 7: Project Management is Process Management  
|         | Unit 8: Tailoring the use of the LFA  
|         | Unit 9: Results, Process and Participation  
|         | Unit 10: Step-by-Step Approach to PCM |

| Methods | Short inputs by the facilitator, group work, discussion |
### Introductory text

Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) entails the management of resources, involves sustainable development and changes in the way things were done in the past. It requires that there is a focus on processes that involve social, human, cultural or institutional dimensions. Thus in dealing with these types of issues it is not possible to induce change in a strictly controlled environment as is the case in the sphere of natural sciences.

Human beings and human interactions are involved in the processes we are dealing with. Whether we construct a water supply system or develop our local community, there are multiple social dimensions that must be addressed.

Managing development processes is notoriously difficult, whether it is a small process for a limited group of people, or a process on societal level.

Often, there has been a tendency to try to ignore the difficulties by acting as if natural science paradigms were suitable, as if we could control the context and create "social laboratories". In such approaches, the uncertainties, complexities and conflicts of the messy social world have been accepted as troublesome externalities. They have not been dealt with properly.

The challenge is to learn how to deal with the ever changing complexities of human interaction: uncertainties, subjective perceptions and values, flexibility and openness, and communication.

### Dealing with Uncertainty

We will never have all the information. We will never know fully what new factors will emerge tomorrow influencing the outcome of our actions.

We cannot be sure that we fully understand the relations between and the importance of different factors. Contrary to the laboratory, where cause-effect relationships are sought isolated and proved, there is no simple linearity when dealing with social change.

### Subjective Perceptions and Values

Even within the smallest group, reality is perceived differently by individuals. And individuals change perceptions. Our perceptions are influenced, by among other things, the values and beliefs we hold.

Uncertainty with regard to values and beliefs of others often prevail. Our ideas of meaningfulness, purpose and goals are based on subjectivity. We can - to a certain degree - make the basis for our perceptions visible, and discuss them. But they will never become objective. Conflicts - based on different values and interests - will not disappear.
Flexibility and Openness

When launching a satellite, flexibility and openness are not necessarily an advantage if the endeavour is to succeed. There are natural laws that must be followed. However, when social aspects are more dominant, flexibility and openness are crucial to success. This means less predictability about outcomes, frequent changes of plans, greater awareness of our own limitations when acting in a changing context. It may ultimately lead to lowering our ambitions: instead of aiming at solving or eliminating a problem, we may be satisfied with transforming the problem to something less harmful, more tolerable etc.

Communication

Within the natural science paradigm, the focus is on analysis in order to get the correct answer. And, generally speaking, there is only one correct answer. Working with social development the "correct" answer in the analytical sense - if it could be found - might not be the acceptable answer to the people involved. The "acceptable" answer, on the other hand, may lead to undesirable results.

To manage development processes is to achieve the optimum balance between the "right" and the "acceptable". That is why communication is so crucial. It fosters the development of shared perceptions of reality. It clarifies where the disagreement lies in a conflict. Communication allows - during time - adaptation of objectives, strategies and actions.
The Logical Framework Approach –
A Tool for Change
Introductory text

This training programme will take its point of departure in the Logical Framework Approach (LFA). The LFA is a tool for managing development processes and is used by virtually all of the development agencies. LFA can be used simply to structure and create an overview of complex projects on a single sheet of paper. Or, as advocated in this manual, LFA can be used to foster commitment to transparent, structured, participatory and flexible development processes.

The Logical Framework Approach (LFA) was first introduced in the beginning of 1970'ies by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Today it is used by many major international development agencies. It is being increasingly used as a planning tool in a number of other fields in both developing and industrialised countries.

It has changed considerably since it was first conceived. 3 phases can be distinguished:

First Phase:

Initially, it was a tool for a standardized presentation of projects. The purpose of having such a tool was to ease the decision-making procedure for those approving the projects. LFA was descriptive in nature.

Second Phase:

In the 70'ies, LFA became a tool for improved design of projects. The purpose changed: Better initial design was expected to lead to more successful projects. LFA became analytical in nature.

Third Phase:

In the 80'ies and early 90'ies, LFA expanded to become a tool for improved design, implementation and management of projects. By including certain participative aspects, LFA was seen as a means to overcome both analytical and communicative shortcomings in the “normal” launching and implementation of projects by donor organisations. LFA maintained the analytical focus, but communication aspects entered. Simultaneously, LFA stiffened in many organisations to a prescriptive, formal requirement of using a certain vocabulary and certain presentation form. In practice, LFA has sometime become an instrument for narrowing perceptions, closing options and legitimising choices already made.

The intention of this training programme is to get beyond formalism and present LFA as a general, flexible tool for both analysis of and communication about change processes.
Experience has demonstrated that LFA can open perceptions, options and choices when thoughtfully applied and adapted to local circumstances. This is not easy just as the management of social development is not easy. LFA is no wonder drug, which can substitute for experience, insight and reflection. But it can establish a framework for sharing experience, insight, reflection, choices - and getting to action.

Applied properly, LFA can serve to achieve:

**Commitment**

Successful development depends not only on the commitment of the direct actors, but also of persons, groups and institutions with interests in the outcome of the development process.

**Transparency**

Both for those directly involved and those interested in the process, transparency serves to reduce fear, keep track of the process and to deal with real conflicts instead of apparent conflicts.

**Structure**

LFA offers structure to the design of a development process, as well as to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the process.

**Participation**

Participation can, if managed properly, create and maintain commitment, decrease resistance to change, build alliances and stimulate initiative, energy and creativity.

**Flexibility**

Flexibility is a means of adapting to the changing context that always surrounds development processes. The LFA establishes a framework that can easily be revised to cope with new opportunities and threats.

LFA is not sufficient to achieve this alone. But it can function as a "master tool" for analysis of and dialogue about development issues.

The aim of the Logical Framework Approach is opening and sharing:

- Perceptions
- Options
- Choices
As we concluded in the previous Unit, the aim of the Logical Framework Approach is opening and sharing:

- Perceptions
- Options
- Choices

This is done by working through Focus Areas, where reflection and dialogue is concentrated on one of the following five issues:

Switching between the Focus Areas allows a process of:

- creating a shared perception of the changing context we work in;
- creating a shared perception of the problems or barriers we wish to overcome;
- creating commitment to clear objectives
- choosing transparently between alternative options
- designing courses of action

Focus on The Context

We will depart from and act in a context; it will change over time; it will influence us and we can influence it. Relevant contextual factors are among others:
Focus on Problems

The problem focus zooms attention in on the situation that we want to address; or the issues that prevent us from achieving a desired situation. When working with problems we can:

- Identify problems and "problem-owners"
- Structure problems and relations between them
- Develop a shared perception of problems
- Develop options for which problems to concentrate on

Focus on Objectives

The objective focus is future-oriented, clarifying our vision of a desired future situation. When we focus on objectives, we can:

- Identify objectives and "objective-owners"
- Structure objectives and relations between them
- Develop options for what objectives to pursue.

Focus on Choice

The choice focus concentrates on comparing and choosing, where the first three focus areas concentrate on developing options. When working in the choice focus we bring in elements from the other focus areas to:

- Stakeholders
- Policy concerns that the participants must relate to
- Values and principles in the group, community or society
- Uncertainties and risks

Working in the Context Focus serves to set the frame for the project and the options available to us.
## Focus on Action

The action focus puts wheels under the strategy chosen and selects concrete, specific operations that can be monitored in relation to the context we are acting in. When focusing on action we:

- Specify objectives chosen, results, activities and resources needed
- Identify critical assumptions about the context
- Check that the project is logically consistent
- Establish indicators that allows monitoring of project progress and impact

Working with LFA focus areas is a reiterative process of shifting the focus: we go back and forth through the focus areas, until we are confident that the pertinent decisions to move on can be taken.

Modules 1 – 5 will deal with each of the five focus areas in detail.

- Estimate the resources that are available
- Create an overview of options
- Assess options
- Make a choice
As the name implies, the LFA is an attempt to structure the change process in a logical way. This logic is not a formal or mathematical logic, which is true or false. Rather, the LFA applies a hypothetical means-to-end logic that allows meaningful debate on the consistency of proposed actions. Moreover, it establishes a framework where progress and impact can be monitored and evaluated.

The means-end logic is as follows: Inputs or resources are means to perform certain activities, which - under certain assumptions - will produce specific outputs. These outputs are means to achieve certain objectives, which again may serve to achieve wider objectives.

However well the project is formulated, this kind of logic does represent a hypothesis and a simplified model of predicting future outcomes. The logic will never release us from dealing with the complexities and conflicts of real life. But it facilitates a structured debate of perceptions, options, choices and actions, thereby fostering transparency and allowing participation.

In the following modules, two cases will be used for reference: a Water Supply Case and the Pollution of Lake Nathla - a more complex case.

Pollution of Lake Nathla

Lake Nathla is a lake of national importance. A great deal of fishing was done on the lake, but it has declined recently because fishing stocks have diminished. In the watershed surrounding the lake there are extensive and important agricultural and forestry activities. These cause both erosion and the drain off of pesticides and nitrates into the lake. Moreover, industrial and domestic sewage is dumped untreated in the lake. Tourist activities around the lake are considerable, but are decreasing after newspaper articles about the risks associated with bathing in the lake.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery, the Ministry of the Environment, and the Municipality of Nathla are the most important public authorities. They are characterized by having little administrative capacity, a poor and inconsistent legal basis for actions, few funds and conflicting interests.

A growing non-governmental, pro-environmental organisation has succeeded in attracting international attention to the degradation of the lake. This has resulted in offers to the government from a major international donor to fund a project to reduce the pollution of the lake.
A project can be defined as:

> A set of planned undertakings designed to achieve a certain specific objective with given resources and within a specified period of time.

This definition puts emphasis on:

**The objective.** Projects or development processes have, implicitly or explicitly, one or several aims, objectives or goals.

**The resources.** Resources - whether human, technical or financial - are limited (though they may change during the project cycle and as a result of the project itself).

**The time frame.** A project starts and ends - it is not an ongoing activity as for example maintaining water pumps or collecting solid waste.

However, building a water supply system or introducing composting to reduce the amount of solid waste are projects in the sense described above. An effort to reduce pollution in a lake can consist of several projects, for example - building a sewage treatment plant, inducing changes in agricultural and forestry practices, establishing monitoring systems, developing standards for industrial waste, or developing legal means and administrative capacity to reinforce them - etc. There may be several government or non-governmental projects which all are intended to contribute to the reduction of the pollution.

Such an array of projects or project components within an overall strategy, is sometimes clustered in what is called a programme. An environmental action programme could, consist of various sub-programmes or components, each having various specific projects. The term programme is sometimes used for describing what others would call a project, and projects can sometimes consist of various components each being a project. Confusing as the terms may be, they all describe planned development or change processes, characterized by the features described in other Units of this Module.
### Module 0 Unit 0.6

**Project Cycles and Decision Points**

**Introductory text**

A project - big or small - may be born as a vague idea. It develops to a sketch, a first proposal; it is debated, analysed and further detailed. This may be a totally informal process, not even written down, or a very structured "pre-investment" exercise. It is - if so decided - followed by implementation, and during that phase both objectives, resources and time span may change or be changed various times. At the end, some kind of reflection about the project and its impact is often done.

The terms used for describing the stages in this project cycle vary considerably. In international development cooperation, each funding agency may have their "own" version of the project cycle. An investment bank may use other concepts.

Behind the different terms is the same logic: each stage ends because someone has taken a decision. For example, when a project has passed through an identification phase (an early phase), the decision options are in principle three:

- **Move on to further detailing and analysis, possibly with some modifications already decided upon.**

- **Reject further development of the project and abandon it.**

Requests a comprehensive revision without totally abandoning the project, thus repeating the same stage in the project cycle one more time.

The emphasis on decision-points is crucial because it means that managing a development process - a project - is preparing the best possible ground for decision-making. LFA is, therefore, a decision support tool.

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**My notes**

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### Introductory text

Projects are often conceived to be starting only once they have been prepared, and funding, if necessary, is available. Often, the preparatory phases are handled without involving those affected by or interested in the project: the construction of a water supply scheme may be decided and initiated by a national water authority without involving the population and institutions in the area, who will have to pay for and maintain the system.

In international development cooperation, projects are often identified and prepared in a very short period of time, and the formulation process may primarily be in the hands of international consultants or staff from the donor agency. A water supply project may, for example, be formulated in just three weeks time. Perhaps only one or two weeks are spent in the project area. Afterwards, the project is negotiated, changed and dealt with in lengthy internal negotiations between the government and the funding organisation.

Perhaps the project starts two years later. Suddenly a number of experts arrive in the community; and pipes, pumps, vehicles etc. appear. Maybe the interested parties in the area have forgotten everything about the project, or maybe they were not even informed that the project would start.

Circumstances like that will heavily influence the outcome and impact of a project. Whether project implementation starts in a atmosphere of positive expectations or reserved scepticism is largely determined by the way the preparation process is managed.

Project management is essentially about managing the change process. Therefore, project management must be considered as starting at the very beginning of the process. LFA is a tool for managing the entire process, and must be carefully tailored to the stage of the project cycle we are working in.
Tailoring the Use of LFA

Introductory text

There are three main parameters to decide upon when designing how to use LFA in concentrated periods of planning, review or evaluation of a project. They are interrelated, and depend on the decisions that have to be taken and the desired direction of future project work. They are:

- Which results are necessary for the decisions to be taken?
- What process is necessary to produce these results?
- Who should participate?

Sometimes there is a request for simple rules of thumb in order to tailor the use of LFA to a given situation. There are no simple rules for this. Some international donors using LFA have advocated workshops of a certain "typical" length when designing a project, depending on the complexity and the stage of the project cycle we are in. Obviously, the more complex and closer we are to major decision points and resource commitments, the more extensive the LFA-process must be.

In lieu of hard and fast rules, this training advocates a careful process of reflection about results, process and the level of participation desired. Projects and project stages are so different, that general rules might easily lead to distorted results. Reflection on the design and use of LFA can, of course, be done by an individual or by involving potential participants and important stakeholders.
## Results, Process and Participation

### Introductory text

1. **The Results**

   The result of a project planning or review exercise is normally some kind of written material. But whether intended or not, the result of a working exercise will also be perceptions and feelings of the participants. When deciding on the desired results of a LFA exercise, two questions should be answered:

   - **What kind of overview** should be the result of the LFA exercise for decision-makers and stakeholders?

     This will determine the level of details and specificity to be included in presentation material (reports etc.). Different participants, stakeholders or decision-makers may need different amounts of information. The level of specificity will depend on the stage in the project cycle. It should also be considered if material produced during an LFA event (papers, flip-charts, etc.) are to be used in later stages for review, further detailing etc.

   - **What perceptions and feelings** should prevail with the participants at the end of the exercise? Who should feel committed, who should take ownership of future actions?

     Even if the participants at the workshop are not taking the final decision on whether to move on or commit resources, their perceptions and feelings will be important for how they will contribute as the project moves through the following stages.

2. **The Process**

   Once the desired results are defined, a process must be decided on that leads to these results. Major options - not exclusive - and design parameters are:

   - **To use LFA individually**, mainly concentrating on presenting an adequate overview to others. Obviously, individual use will not foster participation in the same way as working in groups, but it can be very useful and necessary in some stages as a complementary or summary exercise. For some very technically oriented projects (certain construction projects) LFA may only be used for descriptive purposes, since other well established project management tools will be used during implementation.

   - **To use LFA for group processes**, typically in workshops, where LFA techniques can lead to shared perceptions of the focus areas of the project.

     Workshops sessions should be chosen with as much care and attention as individual sessions.
Workshops may easily turn into apparent participation, where strong participants or interests dominate the arena, or where the desire to reach consensus may hide real conflicts. If mediation between interests is necessary, a workshop may not be the best setting for a constructive negotiation. Large workshops may also exclude room for individual reflection, if not managed properly.

Running separate small workshops for different stakeholders or interested parties may give better results than trying to convene everyone in one event where both the number of participants and the different backgrounds and interests may ruin the workshop process.

- The **length and intensity** of a LFA-process must be decided not only in relation to the very next decision-point in the project cycle, but also in relation to the longer term decision-points that will arise. A combination of individual work, interviews, meetings and dialogue among the parties and short workshops repeated appropriately during all preparatory phases could be better than one lengthy 6-12 day workshop early in the project cycle, which is not followed up by anything before project implementation.

LFA permits different modes of work, as a general tool for structuring our thinking and communication about change. There is no rule defining the correct mix of different working modes except that, normally, a carefully managed mixture of modes is necessary if participation is to serve as a means to achieve commitment to a change process. That is, neither exclusively working individually nor exclusively using workshops will be the best choice.

3. **The Participants**

Who should participate in the LFA-process? That, again, depends on the project and the stage of the project cycle. Relevant considerations are:

- Who are important in this stage for project success - as direct participants, as target group representatives, as information providers, as powerful stakeholders?

- Should they participate directly - and if not, should they contribute indirectly, and how should they be informed afterwards?

- No participation may be as destructive to a project as too much participation that broadens the scope of participation beyond practical and reasonable levels. Participation can easily create expectations, which if frustrated can create resistance in later stages of the project cycle. It can also lead to decisions based on apparent consensus where none of the participants are prepared to commit themselves actively to the decisions reached.
In the very early stages of the project cycle, the choice of participants has a tremendous effect on which problems, objectives and strategies that will be given priority. A group of medical doctors and nutrition specialists that were requested to formulate a project to address a high infant mortality rate would most likely reach another conclusion than a group of water supply engineers given the same task. The outcome would most likely also differ if the target group were represented.

The choice of participants will implicitly reflect decisions on the means and ends of a project. The narrower the professional, social and institutional composition of the participants, the lower the likelihood that the outcome will be based on a broad vision of possible alternative objectives and strategies.
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<td><strong>Overview</strong></td>
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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from TeamUP Resource Manual, TeamUP Technologies Washington USA