



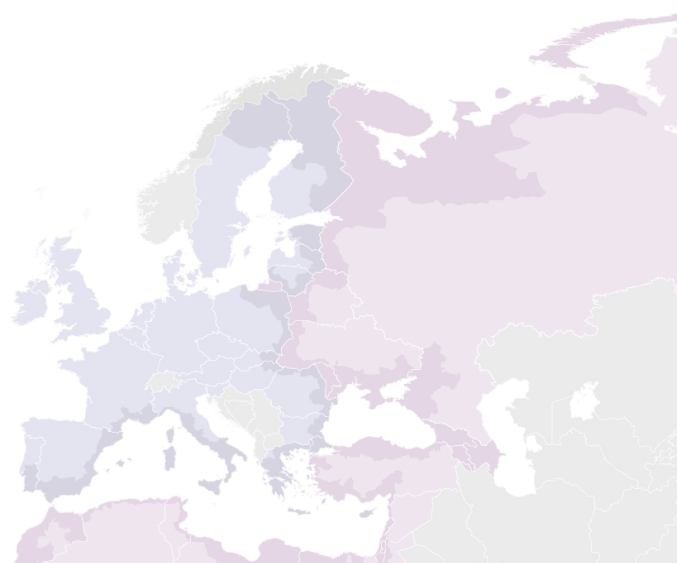
TESIM

Technical support to the implementation and management of ENI CBC programmes

Assumptions

Supporting document to the Video tutorial on Project Development, step 6

	Results chain	Indicators	Sources of verification	Assumptions
Overall objective: Impact				
Specific objective(s): Outcome(s)				
Outputs				
Activities		Means: Costs:		



1. What are the assumptions and why are they needed?

Even if you have developed a sound project logic, taking into account the needs of your target groups and planned involvement of the main stakeholders, still during project implementation there can be external factors, which might largely influence the success of your project. Thus it is very important to be aware of these factors and to monitor them.

This is where the review of **assumptions** (i.e. beliefs that you assume to be true when you will be implementing your project) comes in. This exercise will highlight the circumstances that are needed for successful cause-and-effect relations between the different levels of your project intervention logic. This review may as well result into reconsidering or adjusting the project intervention logic in order to gain more control over these external factors.

The formula is as follows:



2. How to define assumptions?

The first external factors to consider are those elements from the objective tree that were left aside during the strategy analysis and intervention logic definition. As these elements are still linked to the problem you want to address, they should be reviewed and relevant assumptions integrated in relation to your project intervention logic. For instance, if you aim to reduce the overall pollution levels by reducing one pollution source, this logic only works if you assume that all the other sources of pollution are stable during project implementation.

After that you need to think whether there are other important external factors/conditions that can affect the implementation of your project. Think

of the events, situations, conditions or decisions that are **important for your project success**, and then analyze whether these factors will materialize, and whether they might change or not.

An important feature of the assumptions is that they are largely or completely **out of the sphere of control of the project**. For example, delays in the procurement process or willingness of the project partners to participate in the project activities cannot be project implementation assumptions, as they can be addressed and solved by proper planning and time management of the project. At the same time elections foreseen on the local or regional government can bring unexpected changes to the environment in which your project is being implemented, and they are completely out of scope of the project influence.

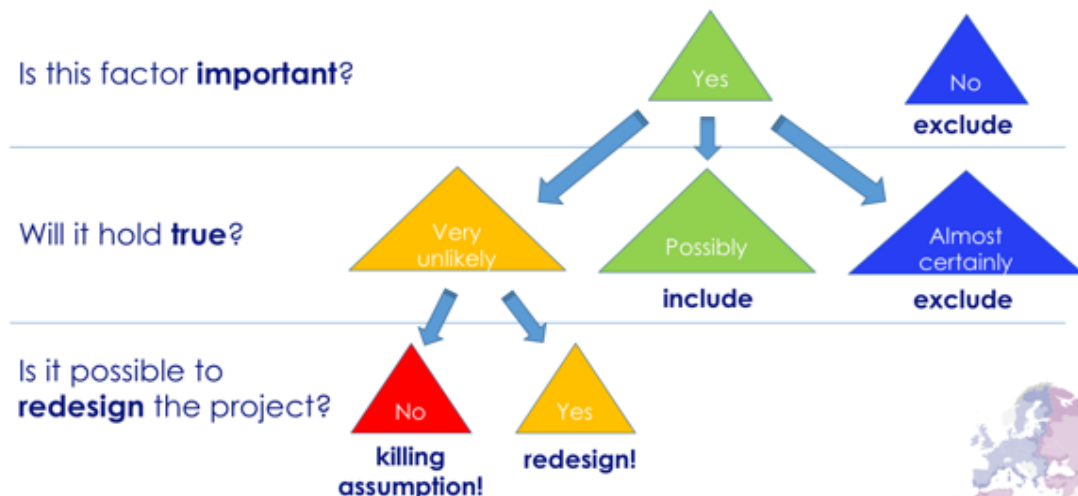
If it is likely, but not sure that, for example, the interest of your target group to participate in the project activities or to use the services delivered to them by the project will remain the same throughout the project implementation, it needs to be integrated into the project assumptions and monitored during the project implementation. This will allow you to quickly react to the changes (e.g. by adjusting some activities), if some of the defined assumptions do not hold true. Including these conditions as assumptions and monitoring them during the project implementation will give you more control on the effect of these external factors on the project results.

For the definition of assumptions, ask the following questions (starting from the bottom of the intervention logic):

- *If project activities are completed, what assumptions must hold true to deliver the outputs?*
- *If project outputs are achieved, what assumptions must hold true to achieve the results?*
- *If the project results are achieved, what assumptions must hold true to achieve the overall objective?*

You make assumptions based on your knowledge, experience or the information available on hand. But do not also try to define as many assumptions as possible, please remember that the assumptions you integrate must be realistic and important for your project success.

You can use the following scheme to define if the external factors reviewed are to be included as assumptions, asking three questions:



If an external factor is very important for the project success, for example, a piece of legislation that is not in place, and it is unlikely to be in place (thus answer to the 2nd question in the scheme is “very unlikely”), you should redesign your project if this is possible, or entirely give it up.

Or another example - there is no point developing an integrated cross-border tourism route to attract foreign tourists if there is only a local border crossing point around, not an international one (so foreign tourists won't be able to cross the border) – again, this is a killing assumption for the project if there is no possibility to redesign it. External factors essential to your project success must be duly considered and monitored!

3. Video illustration

Below you will find the assumptions defined in the example used in the video tutorial.

INTERVENTION LOGIC		ASSUMPTIONS
IMPACT/ OVERALL OBJECTIVE	Maintained biodiversity and species populations in the water bodies of the Rivala & Alavir regions	
RESULTS/ SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE/ OUTCOMES	Oc: Reduced amount of land-derived nutrients reaching the Rivala & Alavir water bodies in run-off	Sewage and wastewater discharge levels do not increase on both sides of the border
	iOc 1: Reduced amount of excess use of fertilizer by farmers in the Rivala & Alavir border regions	Natural eutrophication does not increase
	iOc 2: Larger proportion of nutrients in run-off intercepted by vegetation on lake and river shores in Rivala & Alavir regions	
	iOc 3: Higher awareness among farmers, property owners, municipal and regional officials, and other stakeholders of causes, effects, and prevention of eutrophication and harmful algal bloom phenomena	
	iOc 4: Enhanced capacity of authorities and NGOs for regular cross-border monitoring of oxygen, phosphorus and nitrogen levels in Rivala & Alavir key water bodies	
	No major environmental damage from incidents	
OUTPUTS	Op 1.1 Equipment for nitrogen and phosphorus soil testing available for use by farmers in 25 locations in Rivala & Alavir regions	Farmers consider economies achieved sufficient
	Op 1.2 Farmers trained on fertilizer use and soil testing equipment	Farmers willing to use skills in practice
	Op 2.1 Shores of rivers and lakes at selected places buffered with plants	Planted vegetation will take root and grow Property owners take care of vegetation
	Op 3.1 Awareness raising campaigns delivered for each target group in Alavir & Rivala regions on causes, effects and prevention of eutrophication and harmful algal bloom phenomena	Sufficient interest in events and info sources

	Op 3.2 Project website created in 2 languages on eutrophication, harmful algal bloom and their prevention	
	Op 4.1 Water analysis equipment available for cross-border monitoring	Trained staff and officials stay within the sector
	Op 4.2 Shore water samples analysed for oxygen, phosphorus and nitrogen levels in both regions	
	Op 4.3 Selected environmental NGOs and officials trained in relevant measurements and procedures for cross-border data exchange	
	Op 5.1 Effective project management procedures in place	
ACTIVITIES	A 1.1.1 Purchase soil nitrogen and phosphorus testing equipment	Sufficient interest among farmers to share equipment
	A 1.1.2 Set up scheme for rotating testing equipment among farmers	
	A 1.2.1 Study and demonstrate economic and environmental gain of accurate use of fertilizer	Sufficient interest among farmers in testing
	A 1.2.2 Inform farmers and train them on testing equipment	
	A 2.1.1 Organise information events for waterside property owners	Sufficient interest of property owners (public and private) in cleaner water
	A 2.1.2 Select and instruct property owners	
	A 2.1.3 Put in place riparian buffer plants at selected properties and municipal areas	
	A 3.1.1 Develop information and communication material on eutrophication and algal bloom phenomena for each target group: farmers, property owners, municipal and regional officials, other stakeholders	
	A 3.1.2 Survey target groups' level of awareness on eutrophication and harmful algal bloom	
A 3.1.3 Organise information events with each target group		

	A 3.1.4 Organise annual "Happy Water" event	Target groups will visit and contribute to the event
	A 3.1.5 Develop active media campaign: newspaper articles and radio show in 2 languages on "water stories"	
	A 3.2.1 Create a website in 2 languages with data, tips and hints on eutrophication, harmful algal bloom and their prevention	
	A 4.1.1 Purchase measurement equipment for water analysis	Sufficient interest in performing measurements and sharing data cross-border among environmental NGOs and officials
	A 4.2.1 Take and analyse water samples in various parts of the shores	
	A 4.3.1 Draft procedures and templates for regular cross-border exchange of data and measurements	
	A 4.3.2 Select and train environmental NGOs and officials in measurements and procedures	
	A 5.1.1 Organise steering and progress meetings of project partners	
	A 5.1.2 Monitor project progress	
	A 5.1.3 Draft project reports	