

Lagaan: A Project Management Case Study of the Making of the Film

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INTRODUCTION

- 15th of June, 2001 saw history being made on the big screen.
- One of India's biggest movie hits ever, Lagaan was released worldwide and it was an instant success.
- Almost 3 years in the making, Lagaan was built on an astronomical budget of Rs. 250 million (almost US \$ 5 million) (*BoxOfficeIndia.com*). It was not only a domestic success (domestic revenue: Rs. 389 million or US \$ 7.78 million), but also won international acclaim and earned US \$ 2.5 million at the international box-office.

SYNOPSIS

- Lagaan depicts the story of the villagers of Champaner in 1893, India who were faced with increasing land tax (Lagaan) by the British rulers.
- The British army captain challenges the villagers to a cricket match and at stake was tax exemption. But if the villagers lose the game, the tax would be raised further.
- The villagers led by Bhuvan, accepted the challenge and courageously came face to face with the British army in the climactic cricket match.

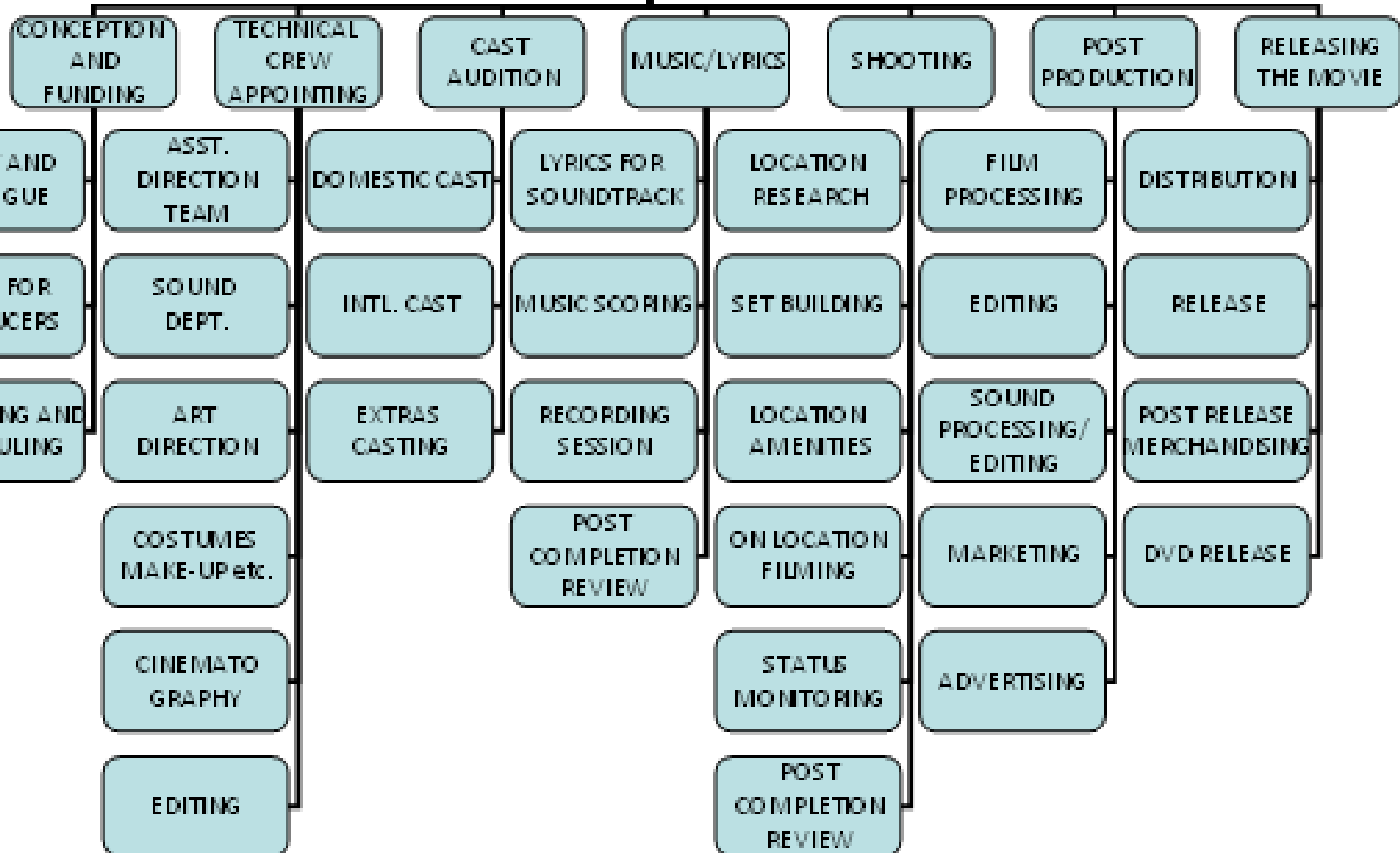
PROJECT SCOPE

- “Project scope management is primarily concerned with defining and controlling what is and is not included in the project.”
- From the writer and director-Ashutosh Gowariker’s perspective, this project began with the initial idea inception stage which led to the full scripted storyline of the idea. This script was then pitched in front of Producers who would be willing to finance this project.
- The definition of the scope of such a huge project is very important as it clearly maps out what key activities should be carried out for the planning, arranging, controlling and implementing of the project successfully.

WORK BREAKDOWN STRUCTURE

Based upon the scope definition, the Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) of the project is prepared, which enlists the activities required to complete the project successfully. WBS is just a list of activities and is not chronologically ordered as in the case of Project Network Diagram.

LAGAAN: Making the Film



a) Lagaan involved cast members from India as well British actors/actresses and hence the audition process has been divided into Domestic and International.

b) The Exec. Producer and Asst. Direction Team supervise over the status monitoring and Resource Management of the shooting.

c) Lagaan was shot in a single slot of 6 months in a remote village called Bhuj in the west coast of India. Location Amenities have been specifically mentioned as secured and comfortable accommodation for the 300 cast and crew members, was very crucial.

d) Special mention of extras audition has been done. Lagaan's climactic cricket match involves 10,000 villagers.

STAKEHOLDERS ANALYSIS

Project stakeholders are individuals and organizations that are actively involved in the project, or whose interests may be affected as a result of project execution or project completion. It is crucial to understand and identify the stakeholders and determine their expectations and requirements so as to ensure a successful project.

STAKEHOLDERS ANALYSIS CONTI....

The stakeholders in this particular project can be:-

- Director / Writer
- Producer(s)
- Cast/Crew
- Local Population
- Law and Order

Success/Failure for each Stakeholder

	SUCCESS	FAILURE
DIRECTOR/WRITER	Green Signal for Initiation	Project Rejected
	On Schedule Shooting and Completion	Project Delay
	Desired Success of Film	Film Not Well Received
PRODUCER(S)	Proper channelling of Funds	Financing Problems
	On Schedule Shooting and Completion	Project delay
	Desired Success and Expected Profit	Film Not Doing Good Business
CAST/CREW	On Schedule Shooting and Completion	Film Delayed
	Expected Contractual Pay-off	Problematic Pay-Off
	Desired Success of Film	Film Not Well Received
LOCAL POPULATION	No Disruption to Local Environment	Local Environment Disrupted
	Local Employment Opportunities	N/A
LAW AND ORDER	No Flora and Fauna Getting adversely affected	Flora and Fauna Hampered
	Labour Laws being Followed	Labour Laws Disobeyed

RISK ANALYSIS

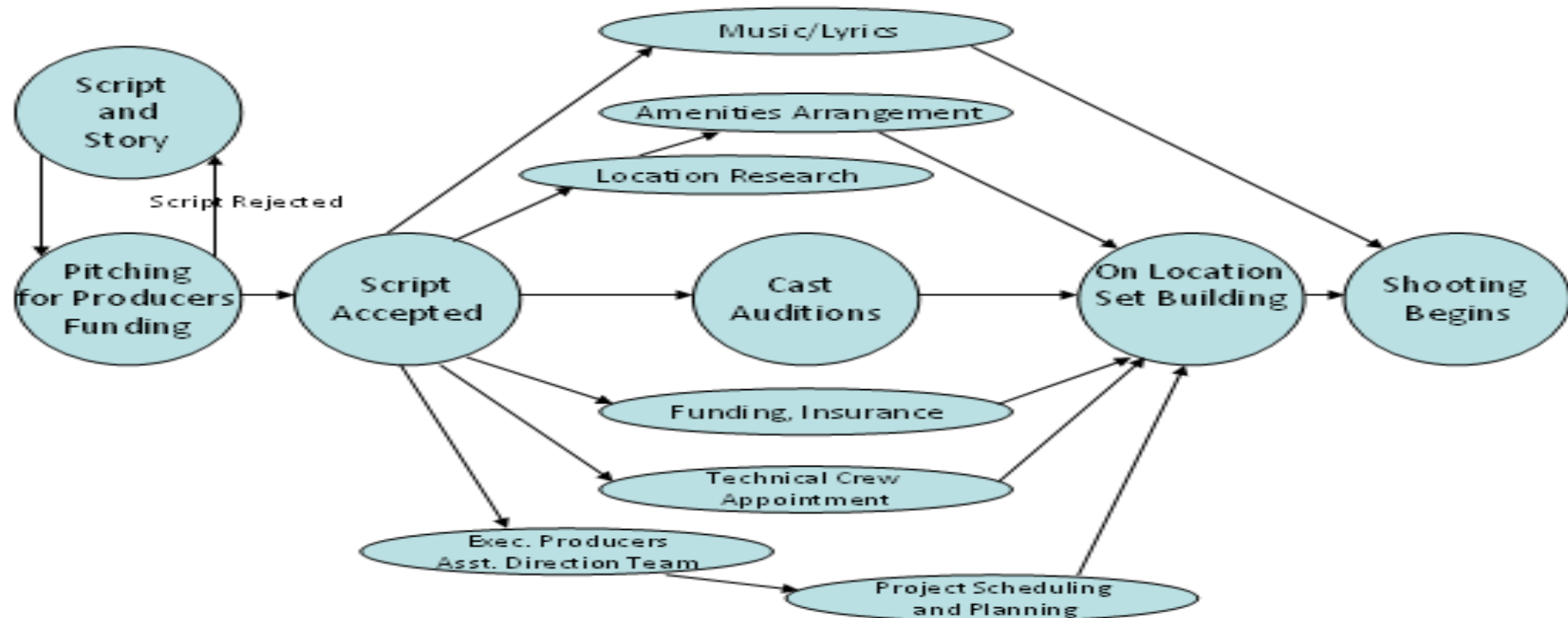
- Risk can be defined as “Uncertainty inherent in plans and the possibility of something happening that can affect the prospects of achieving business or project goals”
- The two main risks that needed to be dealt with were also directly related to two biggest constraints –Time and Money. Both can be classified as the main risks –i.e. over-budget and project-delay.

Major Risks Contributing Factors

- Uncertainty
- Environment
- Accommodation
- Health
- Technical
- Controlling Resources

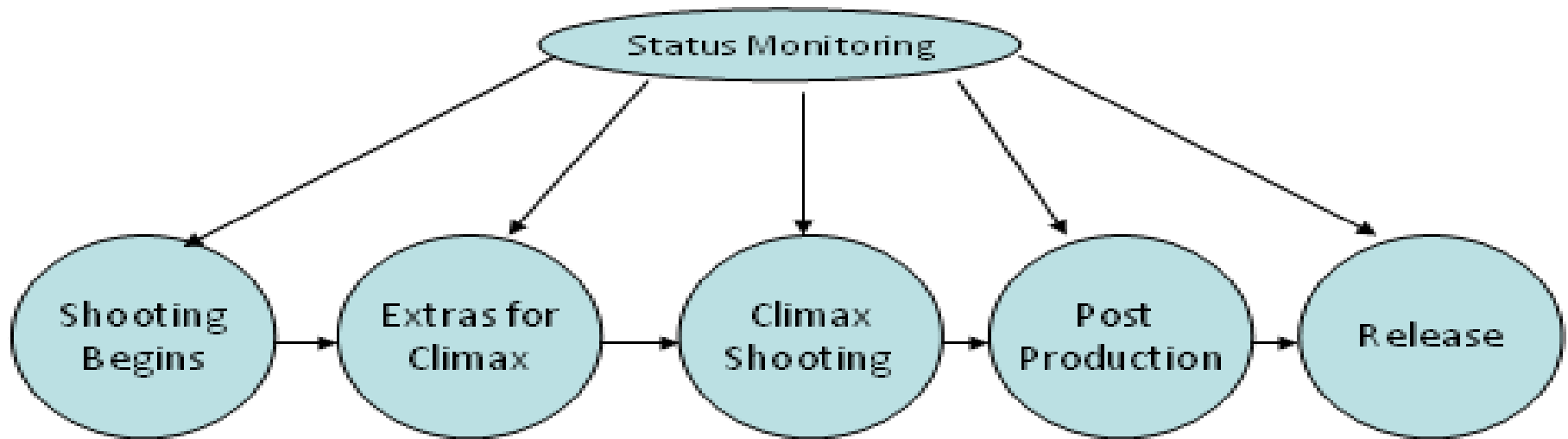
PROJECT NETWORK AND CRITICAL PATH

The first part is the Pre-Production Project, which ends with the Beginning of the Shoot.



PROJECT NETWORK AND CRITICAL PATH CONTI...

The second part is the Shooting and Post-Production which ends with the final element of the project, the Release of the movie.



CRITICAL ACTIVITIES

- The critical activities are the ones which contribute the highest to the risk factor of the entire project.
- These activities typically involve high time and resource and rely a lot on other uncertain factors like weather conditions, irreplaceable resources (like the Technical crew, leading members of cast etc.).
- Further, these could also be such activities which are mandatory to be completed for any other activity else to begin.

Most Critical Activities:

- Appointment of the correct Cast and Crew members
- Location Amenities and Set Design
- Shooting

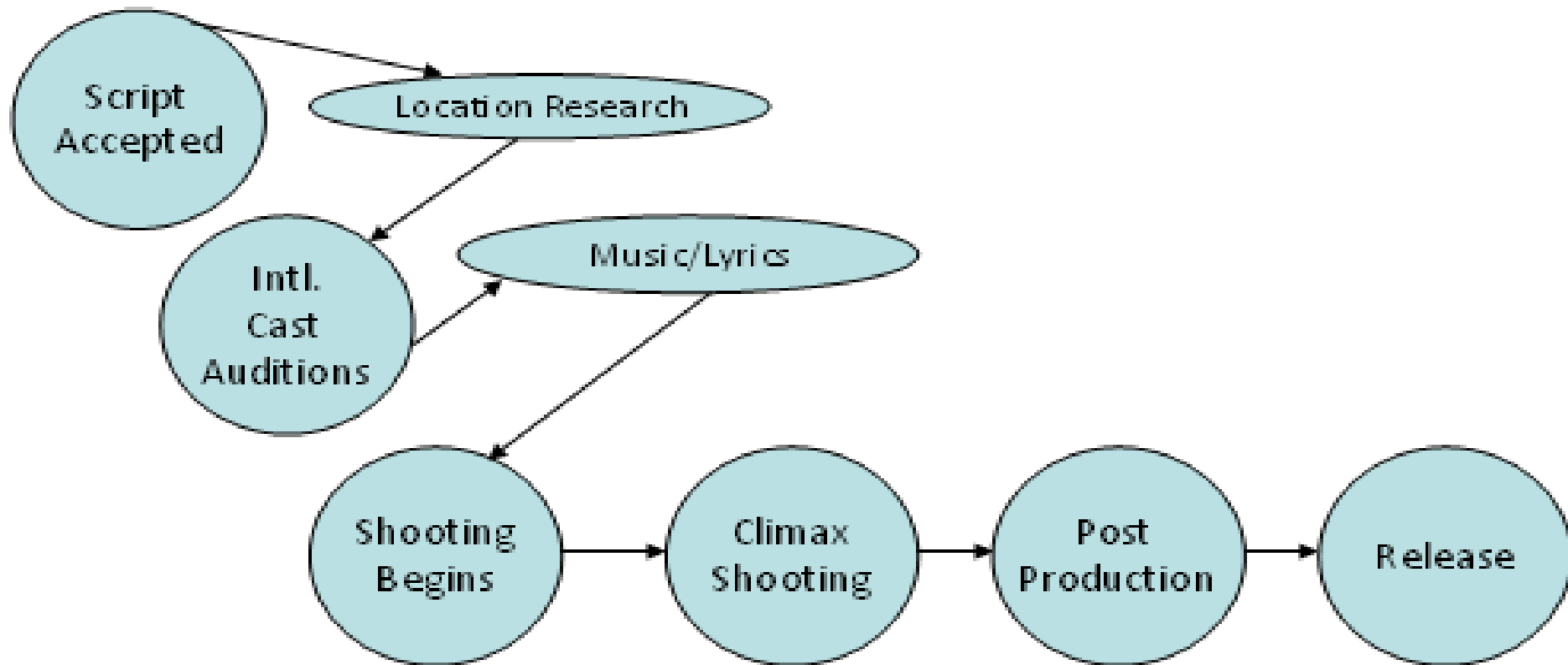
TIMESCALE DISTRIBUTION OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY	Sep 99	Mar 99	Apr 99	May 99	Jun 99	Jul 99	Aug 99	Sep 99	Oct 99	Dec 99	Jan 00	Jun 00	Jul 00	Dec 00	Jan 01	Jun 01
RESEARCH FOR LOCATION																
TECHNICAL CREW APPOINTED																
DOMESTIC CAST AUDITION																
INTL CAST AUDITION																
LOCATION AMENITIES AND SET DESIGN																
MUSIC/LYRICS																
SHOOTING BEGINS																
POST PRODUCTION																
PUBLICITY AND RELEASE																

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CRITICAL PATH

- The longest path of planned activities to the end of the project, and the earliest and latest that each activity can start and finish without making the project longer



THE PROJECT RESULT

- a) In Jan 2001, a catastrophic earthquake hit the village of Bhuj, six months after the shooting completed, and claiming 13,000 lives. Much before its worldwide release, the filmmakers screened it exclusively to the villagers of Bhuj.
- b) Although Lagaan was delayed and over-budget, it did very well at the box office, and was highly appreciated in many film festivals worldwide. It was nominated for Best Foreign Film Category at the Academy Awards in 2002.
- c) It won awards at Locarno, Portland, Leeds and Bergen International Film Festival. It also features at no.14 in the “50 films to See before You Die” list compiled by BBC and Channel 4.
- d) Post release, Lagaan has spawned a huge number of merchandising items ranging from comics to toys. The DVD of Lagaan remains as the highest selling DVD in India.

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