



V Convenção Científica Internacional UCLV 2025



DIGIWATER

Building a strong proposal

Problems ➡ Project Idea ➡ Impact

Vrije Universiteit Brussel

Erasmus+

Equitable International Cooperation

Agenda

1. Objectives of the workshop
2. Understanding funding opportunities
- 3. Proposal writing**
4. Next steps



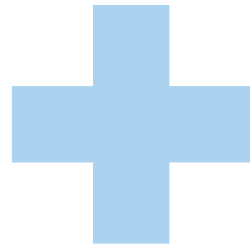
Objectives of this workshop



Prepare you for your application

- Erasmus+ CBHE
- VLIR-UOS

Conduct a
strong **needs**
analysis



Apply tools like
the **Problem**
Tree and
Logical
Framework
(Logframe)



Clearly be able
to **connect**
needs →
objectives →
activities →
results → impact

Setting the scene...

Understanding **Erasmus+ CBHE** and **VLIR-UOS**



An overview of Erasmus+ CBHE (Strand 2)

What is a CBHE project?

Project based on **partnerships** between organisations active in the field of higher education.

Activities and **outcomes** must be geared to benefit the eligible third countries not associated to the Programme

Objectives

Improve the quality of HE and its relevance for the labour market and society;

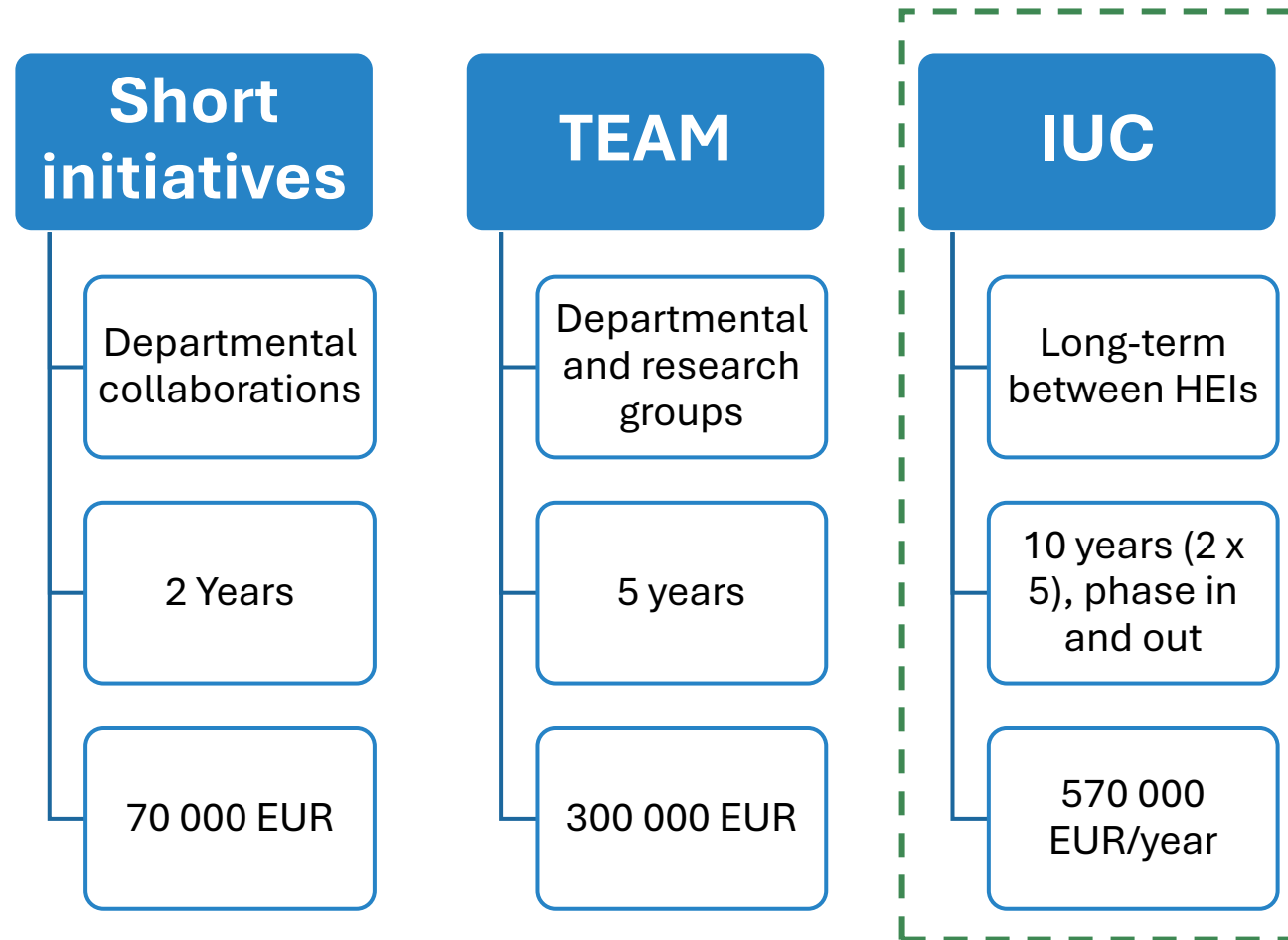
Regional context in LATAM:
Green Deal; Digital transformation; Governance, peace, security and human development; Sustainable growth and jobs

Expected Impact

Increased relevance, impact and visibility of HEIs investments in the partner countries;

Modernised HEIs through the transfer of their teaching and research results to the **community/country**.

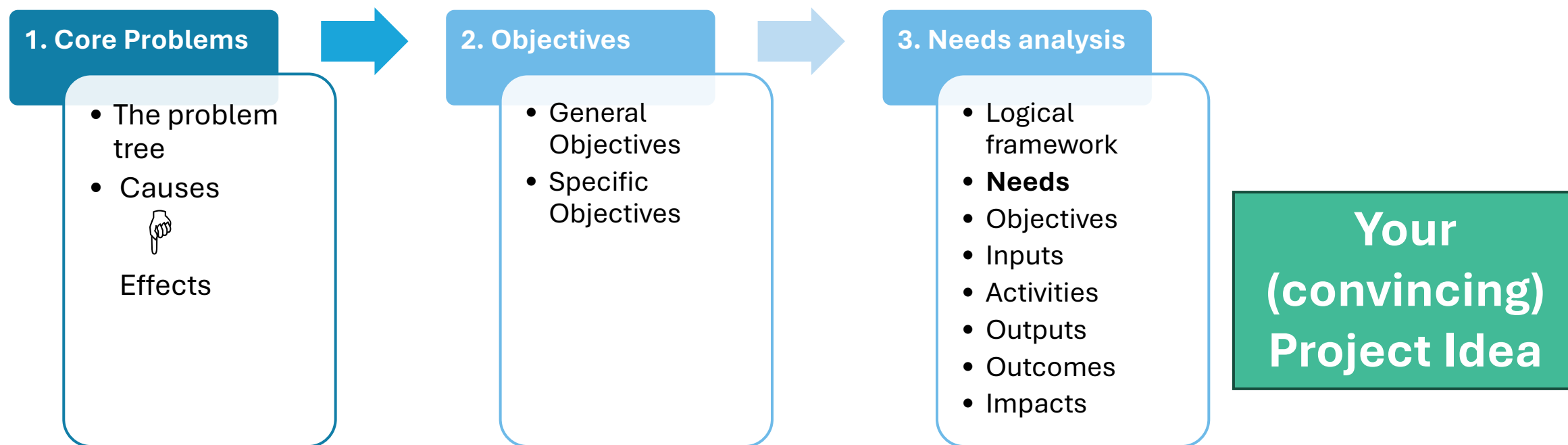
An overview of VLIR-UOS funding



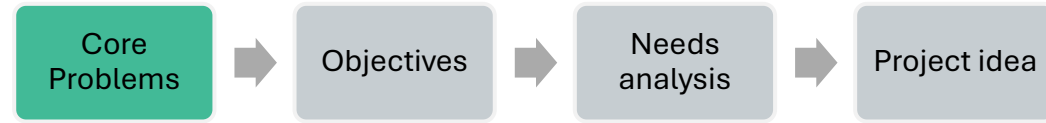
Your project proposal



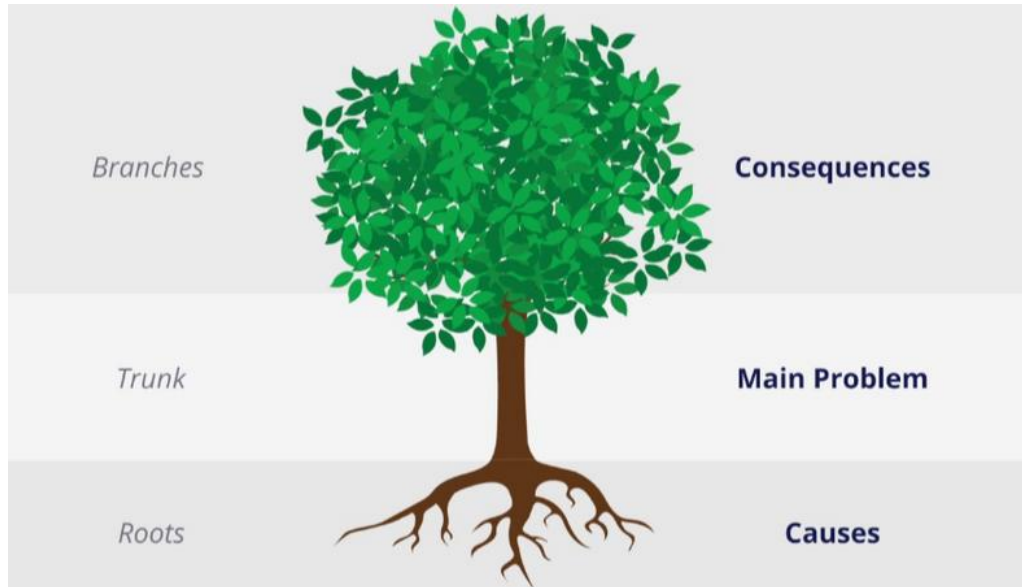
From problem to project idea



a sample ESR quote like “Needs analysis is insufficiently justified...” to highlight importance.



The Problem Tree



1. Causes

- Factors contributing to the main problem



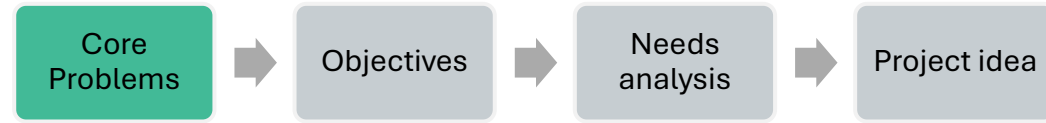
2. Main problem

- Central issue that the project aims to address.

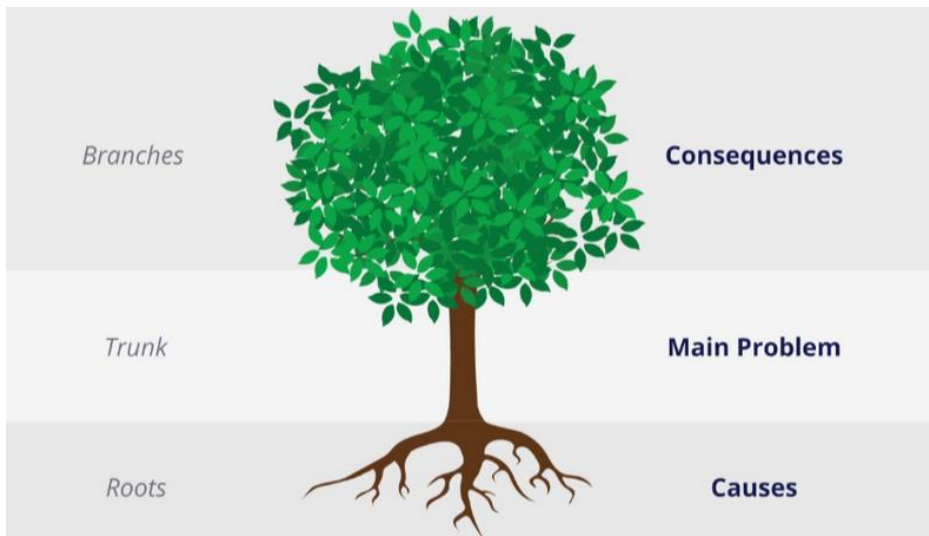


3. Consequences

- The effects or results of the main problem



The Problem Tree – DIGIWATER Example



1. Main problem

⚠ *Limitations in effectively managing the region's water resources and adapting to climate-related challenges*



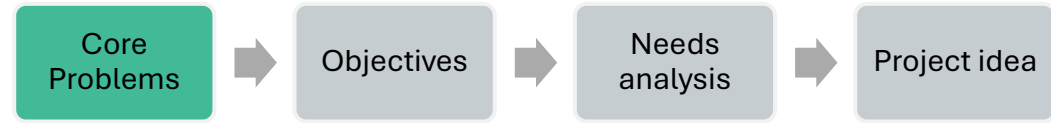
2. Causes

- Limited access to quality water education and training.
- Outdated and theory-heavy curricula lacking modern, digital, and climate-relevant content.
- Low research capacity and limited technological integration in higher education.
- Weak international collaboration and minimal industry linkages.

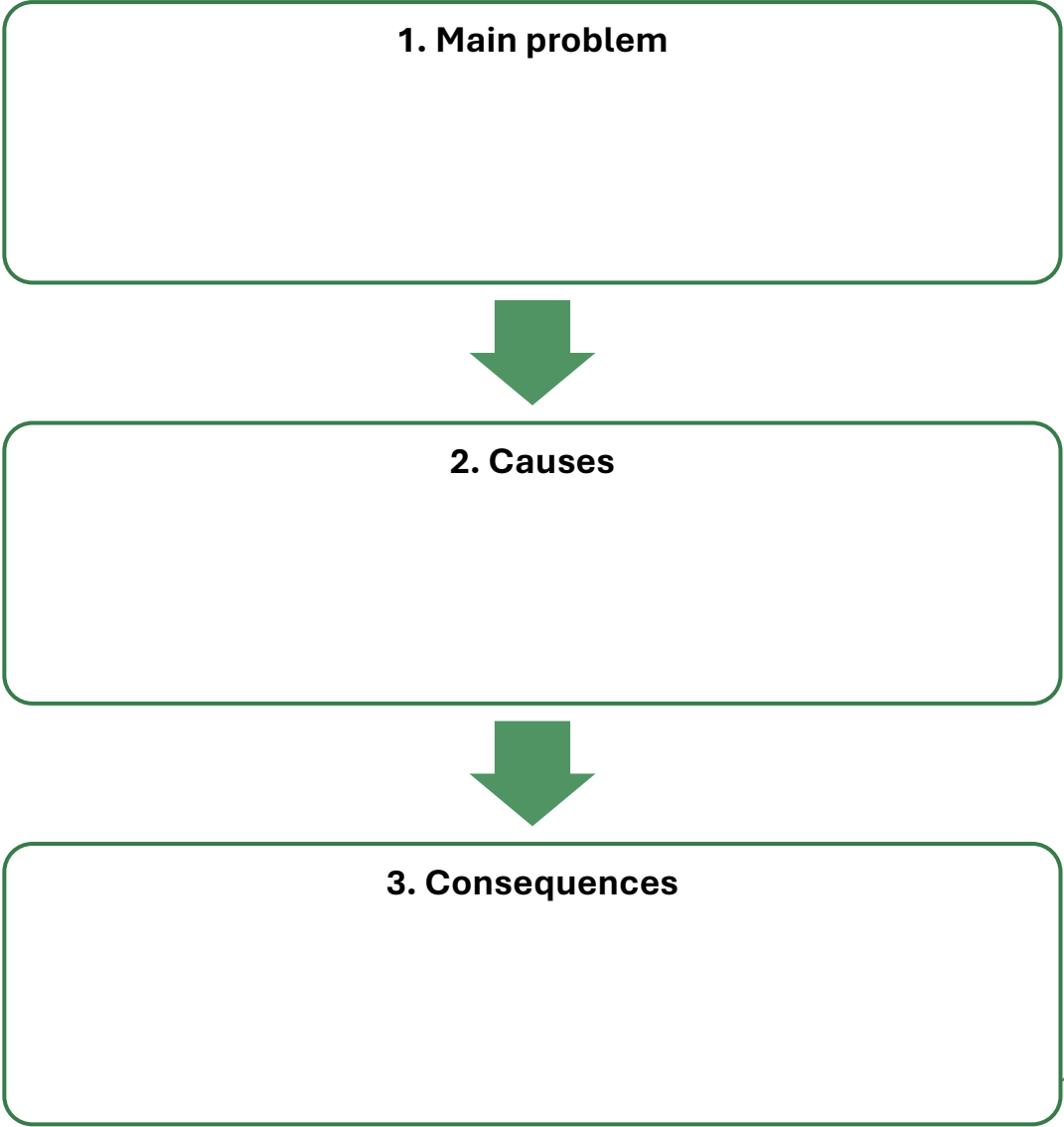
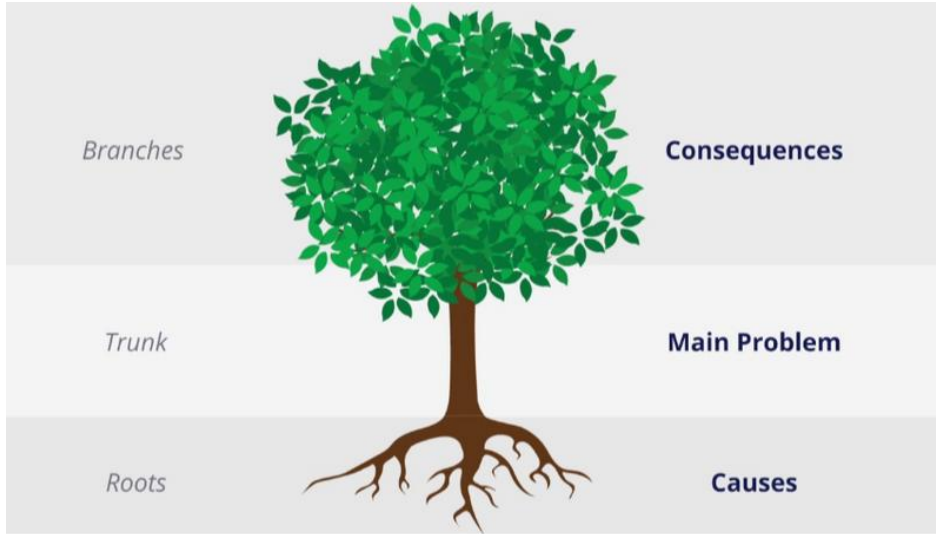


3. Consequences

- Inefficient and unsustainable water resource management.
- Poor climate change preparedness and increased vulnerability to water-related crises.
- Low employability and innovation in the water sector.

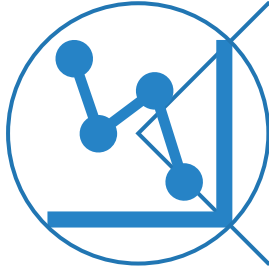


The Problem Tree – Your Example

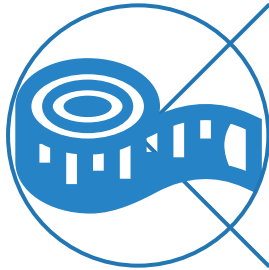




From Problem tree to Objectives



General: overarching objectives
Specific : sub-objectives to help reach the general objectives



SMART
Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timebound

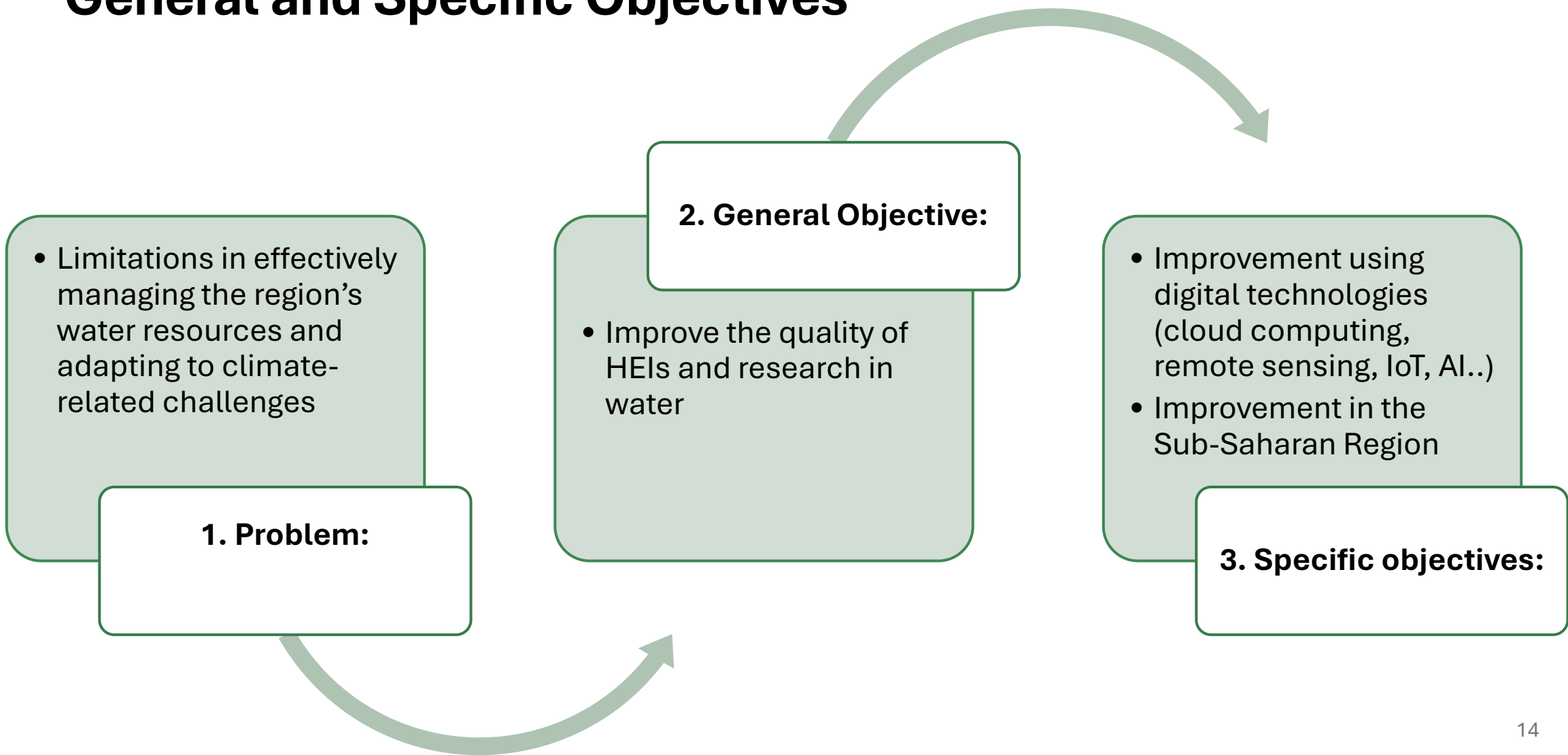


They address problems relevant to the participating organisations and countries

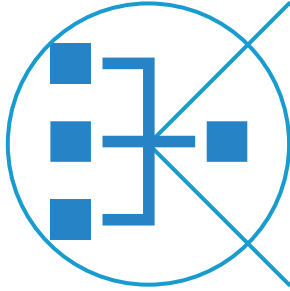


From Problem tree to Objectives

General and Specific Objectives



Understanding Needs Analysis



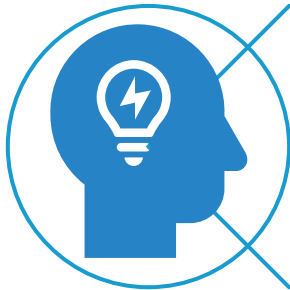
What is it?

- A systematic identification of the needs of the target population/group



What is the purpose?

- To identify the gaps between the current problem and desired outcome(s)
- Link your solution to EU / VLIRUOS objectives



Why does it matter to your proposal?

- Direct link to relevance & impact scores
- Ensures that the project objectives and activities are relevant and effective

Understanding Needs Analysis



What is one key project need in your target region ?





Need Analysis

From Problem Tree to Objectives



1. Project Scope and Purpose

- Why are you doing the need analysis? *To justify project scope, identify problems, activities...*
- What are the geographic scope, sectors, target groups etc.



2. Compile Secondary and Primary Evidence

- Desk research to gather existing information + Establish baseline metrics (national strategies, ministry reports)
- Collect primary data (surveys, interviews, focus groups)
- Analyse desk research and primary data to identify gaps



3. Formulate SMART objectives and add measurable target and indicators

- Objectives
- Target
- Indicators



Need Analysis - DIGIWATER

From Problem Tree to Objectives



1. Project Scope and Purpose

- Water scarcity in Africa - **17% deficit** in water supply by 2030
- Geographic scope: Ethiopia, Uganda, South Africa
- Sectors: Connects academia, industry and policymakers
- Target audience: Students, academics, policymakers, water managers, industry stakeholders



2. Compile Secondary and Primary Evidence

- Comprehensive need analysis conducted across three partner countries - Ethiopia, Uganda, and South Africa
- Desk research
- Needs analysis survey



3. Formulate SMART objectives and add measurable target and indicators

- Objectives: *Enhanced Digitisation in Water Education and Research*
- Target: **5 digital modules**/tools developed and implemented in partner universities.
- Indicators: Total number of digital learning modules



Need Analysis - DIGIWATER

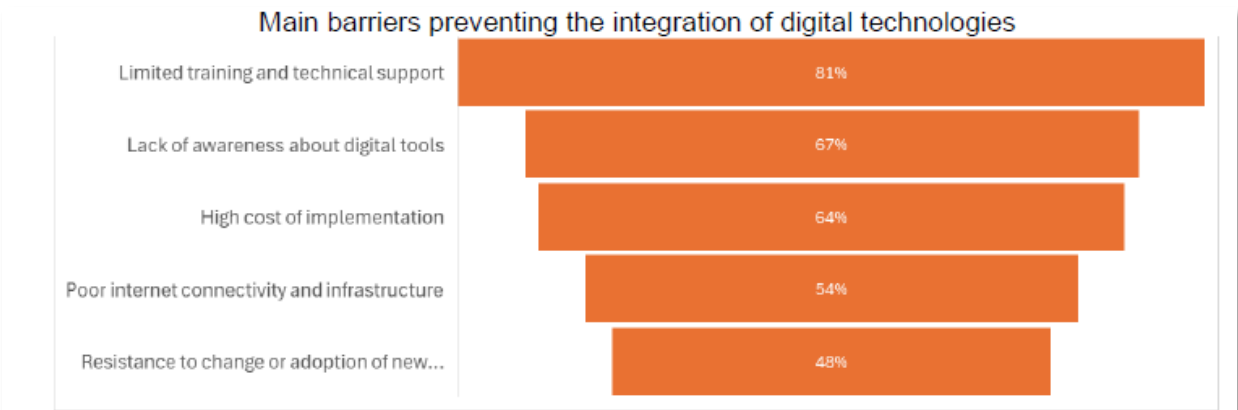


Figure 3: limited training and technical support is the most significant barrier to digital integration, followed by lack of awareness, high costs, poor connectivity, and resistance to change. Participants emphasize the need for better digital literacy, infrastructure, and affordability to enhance adoption.

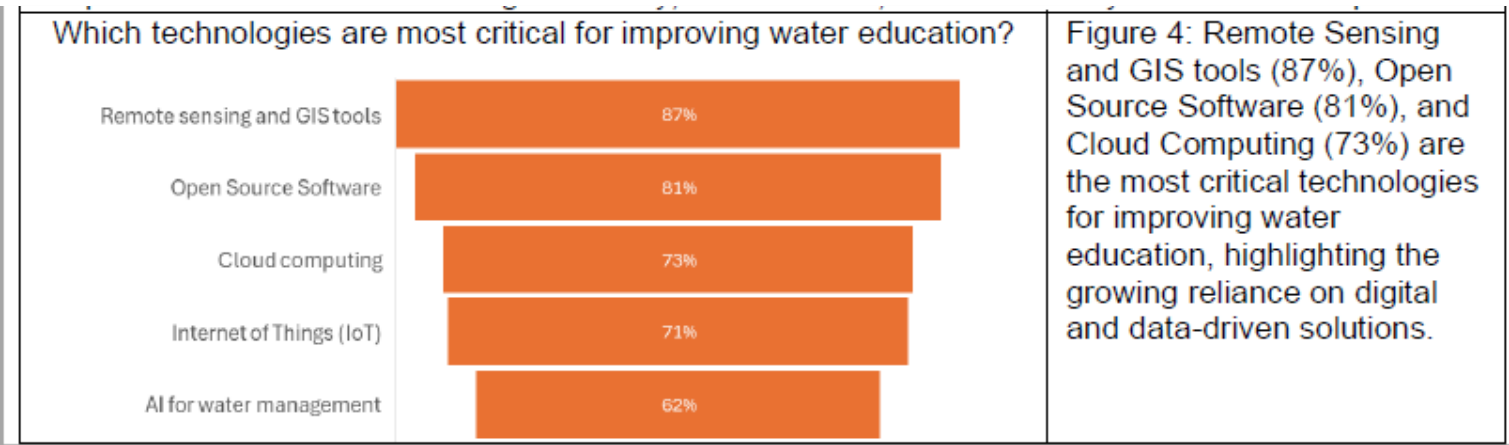
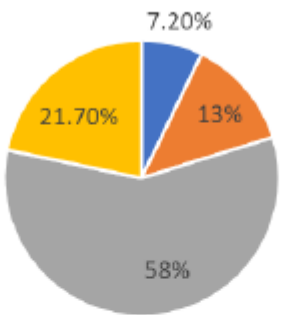


Figure 4: Remote Sensing and GIS tools (87%), Open Source Software (81%), and Cloud Computing (73%) are the most critical technologies for improving water education, highlighting the growing reliance on digital and data-driven solutions.

How involved are local stakeholders and citizens in water-related education and research in your country?



■ Very High ■ High ■ Moderate ■ Low

Figure. 7: Stakeholder and citizen involvement in water education and research is generally low, with only a small fraction reporting strong engagement. These findings highlight the need for stronger stakeholder collaboration, increased outreach, and participatory research initiatives to bridge the gap between academia and real-world water management challenges.



Need Analysis – Your Project

From Problem Tree to Objectives

1. Project Scope and Purpose



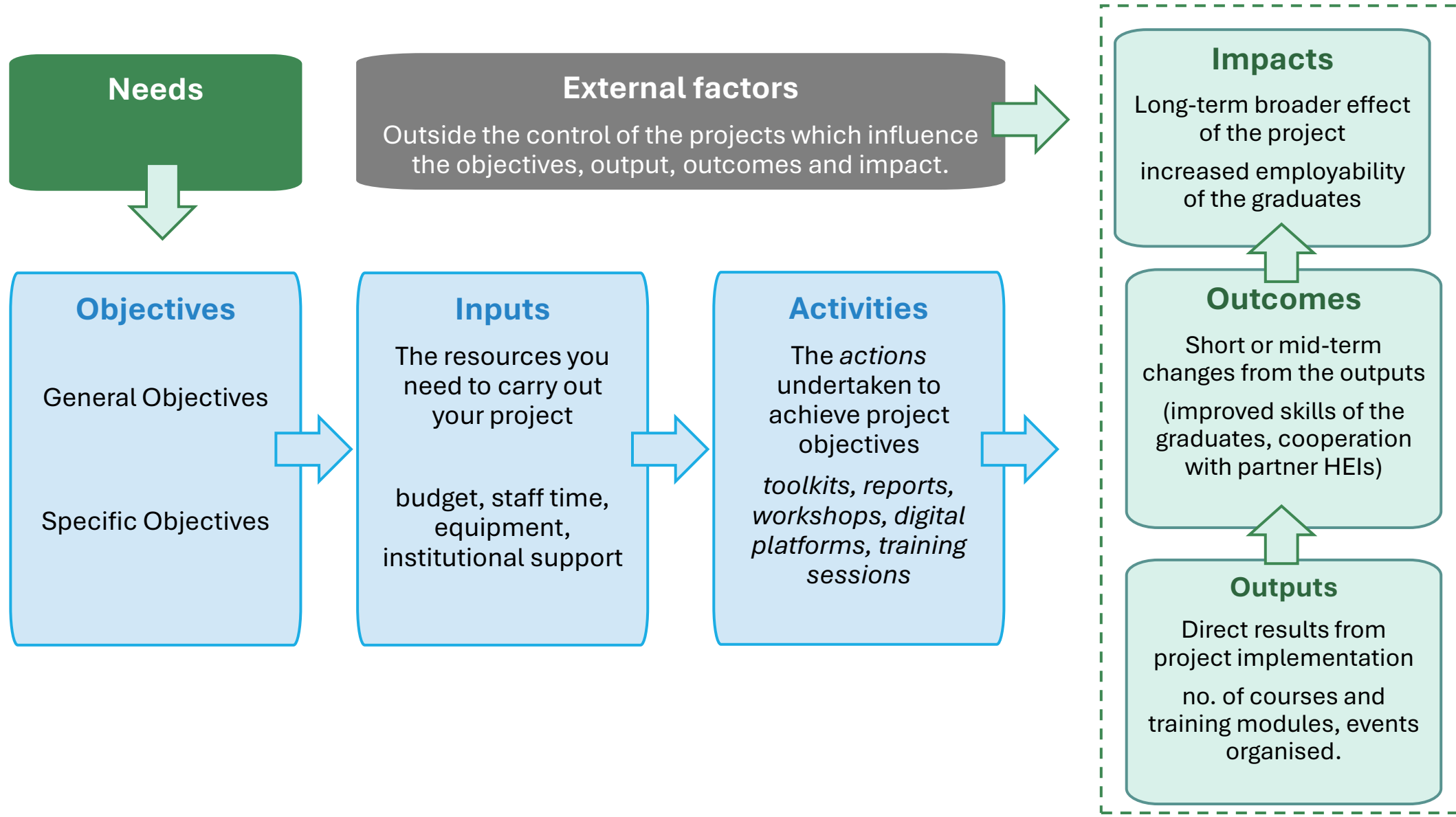
2. Compile Secondary and Primary Evidence



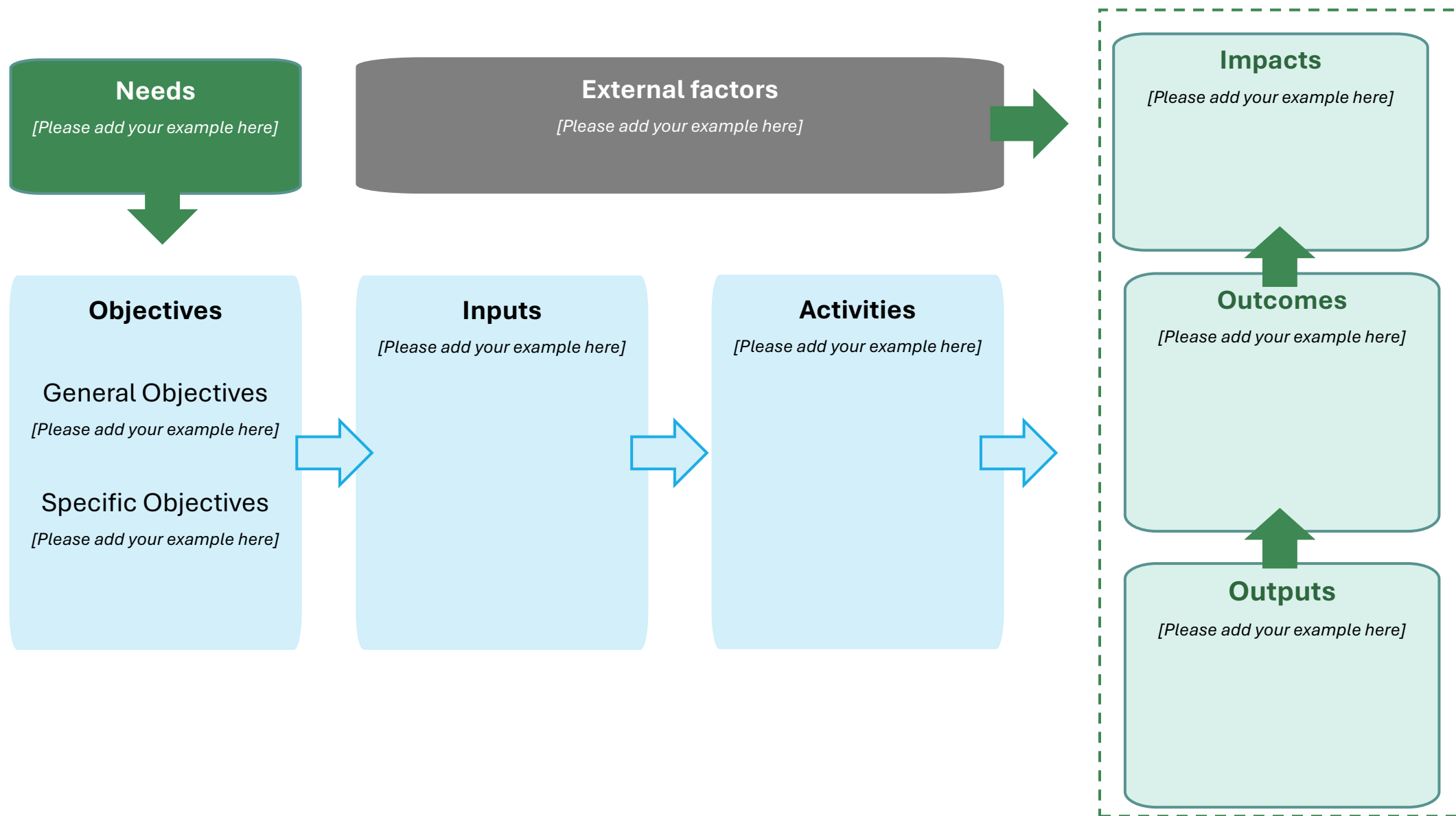
3. Formulate SMART objectives and add measurable target and indicators



Logical Framework



Logical Framework (Example)





Typical evaluator criticisms and solutions

Criticisms

“Unclear impact or sustainability plan”

“Activities not linked to objectives”

“Needs not supported by data”

“Does not address the specific institutional needs of the target HEIs”

“No measures to mitigate the environmental impact”

“Identification of risks and barriers is lacking”



Quick solutions

Include measures for long term life of the project

Ensure logical flow
(Problem → Solution → Result → Impact)

Use evidence & references

Make it relevant to the universities/partners' strategy

Have plans to have environmental dimension – reduce carbon footprint

Identify external barriers – political, cultural etc. that could hinder project deliver + include mitigation strategy

Summary of this session



Your proposal should have



Clear project objectives



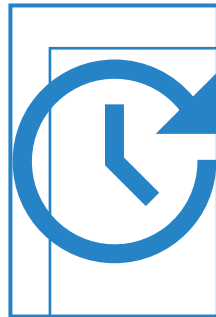
Clear, strong and evidence-based needs analysis



Clear target group



Clear workplans and Strong consortium / partnership



Clear plans for project life beyond its lifespan



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Thank you Any Questions?



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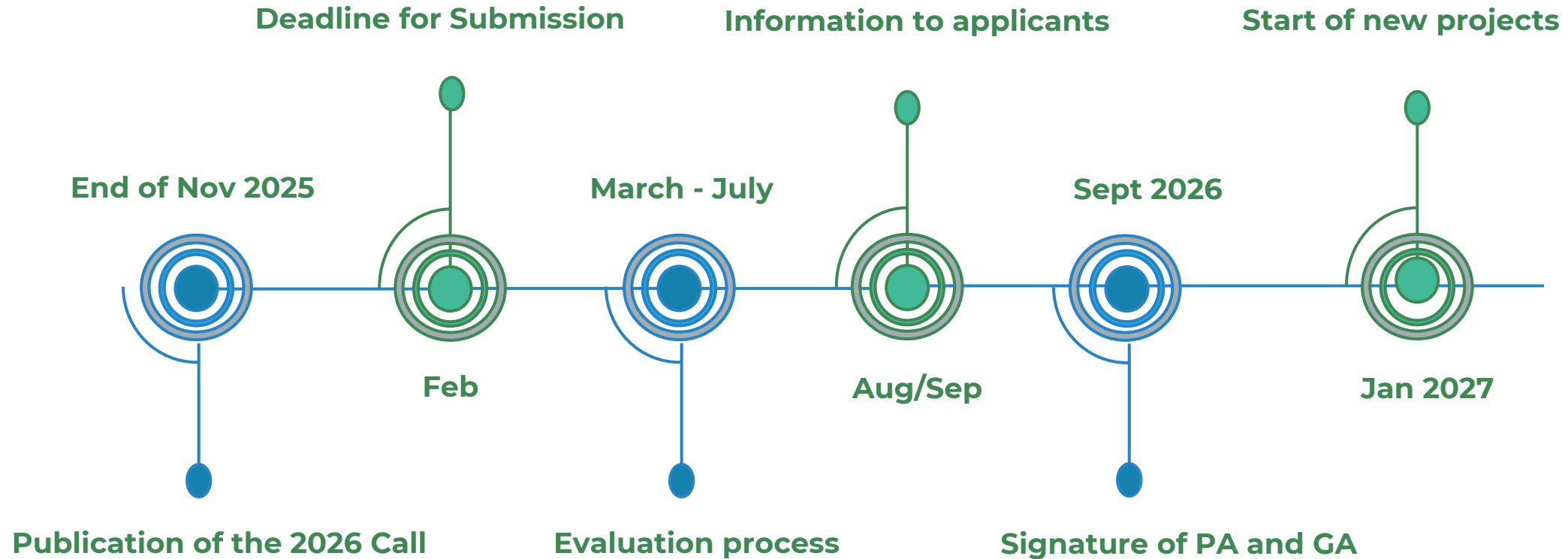
erasmusprojects@vub.be

Additional Resources



1. [Erasmus+ Programme Guide 2025](#) [Programme Guide document]
2. [2025 annual work programme for the implementation of Erasmus+](#) [Strategy document]
3. [Calls for proposals on the EU Funding & Tenders Portal \(EACEA-managed calls\)](#) [Call for proposals]
4. [Advice for organisations on how to apply](#) [Application guidance webpage]
5. Erasmus+ past projects: Good practice [examples](#)
6. <https://www.vliruos.be/get-funded/project-funding>
7. <https://www.vliruos.be/get-funded/calls>

Erasmus+ Project timeline



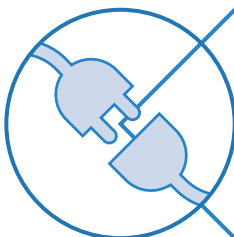
Erasmus+ Horizontal Priorities



Inclusion and Diversity

Framework on Inclusion Measures

Inclusion and Diversity Strategy



Digital Transformation

Digital Education Action Plan 2021 -2027

European Digital Education Hub



Environment and Climate Change

The European Green Deal

Green transition and sustainable development



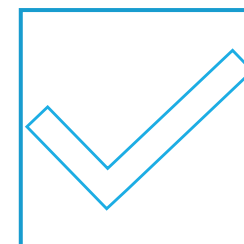
Participation in Democratic Life

Youth Participation Strategy

Youth Participation Toolkit



Broad general concepts



Important to incorporate
(parts) in the project

SMART Objectives



Specific

The goal is concrete and tangible - everyone knows what it looks like.



Measurable

The goal has an objective measure of success that everyone can understand.



Attainable

The goal is challenging, but should be achievable with the resources available.



Relevant

The goal meaningfully contributes to larger objectives like the overall mission.



Timely

This goal has a deadline or, better yet, a timeline of progress milestones.