

Structured organization chart

Use

Ideally, the structure of a project is established in the initial planning phase. It will need to be completed and adjusted along the way. Its function is:

- to illustrate the institutional embedding of the project as well as the project environment (networks)
- to determine the best possible structure for the project
- to determine clearly who will be involved in the project and who might have a positive or negative influence on its success
- to determine the role and responsibilities of all concerned
- to detect potential and real conflicts
- to identify structural changes and use them to improve the project.

Structural elements

Typical elements of a project structure:

A. Executing organization/contractor

Project team including project manager(s)	The project team includes all who are directly involved in the planning, implementation and self-evaluation of the project. The project team is usually placed in the centre of the structured organization chart: the names of the team members are included.
Organization responsible for the project	The responsibility for a project is usually given to an organization that in turn recruits and contracts the project leader(s) and the team. The key-person should be mentioned in the organizational chart; it is often the director of the organization or, if the project is sub-contracted to a third party, the person who signed the contract on behalf of the mandated organization.
Department or program	Within the organization responsible for the project, it is usually a particular department that is taking on the responsibility for any project. It is also possible that a project is part of an overarching program. Correspondingly, the structured organization chart should mention the head of department or the head of program.

B. Client/Commissioner

Funding organizations	Important financial backers will usually have a number of demands. These are regulated by contract and the name of the key-person of the main funding organization should appear in the project organization chart (it is often the person signing the contract).
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C. Target groups - Settings

Target groups/Settings	The desired effects on each target group and/or setting are clearly stated in the project design and in the objectives. Each target group has to appear separately in the organization chart and the name of the contact person for each group has to be clearly indicated.
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D. Other elements

Steering group	A steering group is sometimes formed if several organizations and/or backers are behind a project or a program. Delegates from these organizations form the steering group. They establish the strategic orientation and decide on questions of strategy. The project leader is accountable to the steering group. All organizations and the members representing them in the steering group should feature in the structured organization chart.
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Expert advisory board	The expert advisory board supports and advises the project leader and the team during the project's planning, implementation and evaluation. It can also activate useful contacts relating to the project. The group is composed of experts from relevant fields. The expert advisory board usually does not have any decision-making authority. All members of the expert advisory board are mentioned by name (and their organization) in the structured organization chart.
Government agencies, authorities, administration	Government agencies and decision-makers on the political level influence the long-term success of a project in an important way. Sometimes, their position allows them to have an impact on the financial or legal conditions or they might act as intermediaries between the stakeholders in the project. These key-players must also be mentioned by name.
Networking and collaborations	Collaboration with other projects (e.g. similar intervention projects in different regions) generates synergies and contributes to the success of all involved. Consistent contacts to other projects should also be mentioned in the organization chart. The key-persons are usually the project managers.

Elements in D are not necessarily present in all projects. It is also possible to list other important elements that are not mentioned here e.g. health promotion programmes, associations, political groups, etc.

Generally speaking, all persons, groups and organizations mentioned in the planning chart and the evaluation table should also appear in the structured organization chart.

Remarks

Various project elements and the links between them

Use different colours/shapes/sizes for the various types of elements in your chart. You are free to draw the organizational structure in any appropriate way of your choice. It should show the structure and the context or networks of the project as comprehensively and clearly as possible and help you to have a clear vision of how your project is organised and networked. Insert and link the various project elements according to the place they have in the project and in relation to each other. Units from different levels of hierarchy within the same organization or institution are best illustrated by overlapping them. Remember to draw the relationships between 'secondary' elements of the structure and not just those going or coming directly to and from the project team.

Relative importance of the elements and relationships

In order to indicate which relative importance you want to give to the various elements and the relationship between them you can vary the thickness of the lines linking the elements. You might use very thick lines to indicate important links needing special attention or you might use a dotted line to show links that are desirable but not yet established.

Variants of the project organization chart

Make sure that your organization chart contains all important relationship aspects such as:

- professional aspects
- financial aspects
- political matters
- etc.

If your drawing becomes too complex when you are trying to show all the aspects of it, you can produce separate charts for each aspect (e.g. one showing just financial aspects and another for contractual matters).

Resistance and conflicts

Difficult relationships could be indicated with bolts of lightning. Other particular aspects of the organizational structure can be highlighted with other symbols.

Evolution of the structured organization chart

The structural organization of a project changes during its course. People or relationships and their relative importance might change. New elements appear or disappear. It is best to draw the chart with the help of one of many available computer programmes for flow charts (e.g. ConceptDraw (Mac/Win), Microsoft Powerpoint (Mac/Win), Microsoft Visio (Win), OmniGraffle (Mac)). This enables you to update it during the course of the project.

Template

<http://www.quint-essenz.ch/en/tools/1001> proposes a Powerpoint document containing all the elements mentioned above. It is easily adaptable to your own needs and preferences, allowing you to erase, add, move or change text, elements and links and thus creating your own structured organizational chart.

Example

Project "quint-essenz: Better quality through project tutoring" - version 1.1.1998

