EUROPEAN UNION | Erasmus+

Phase 1
Applying for Funding

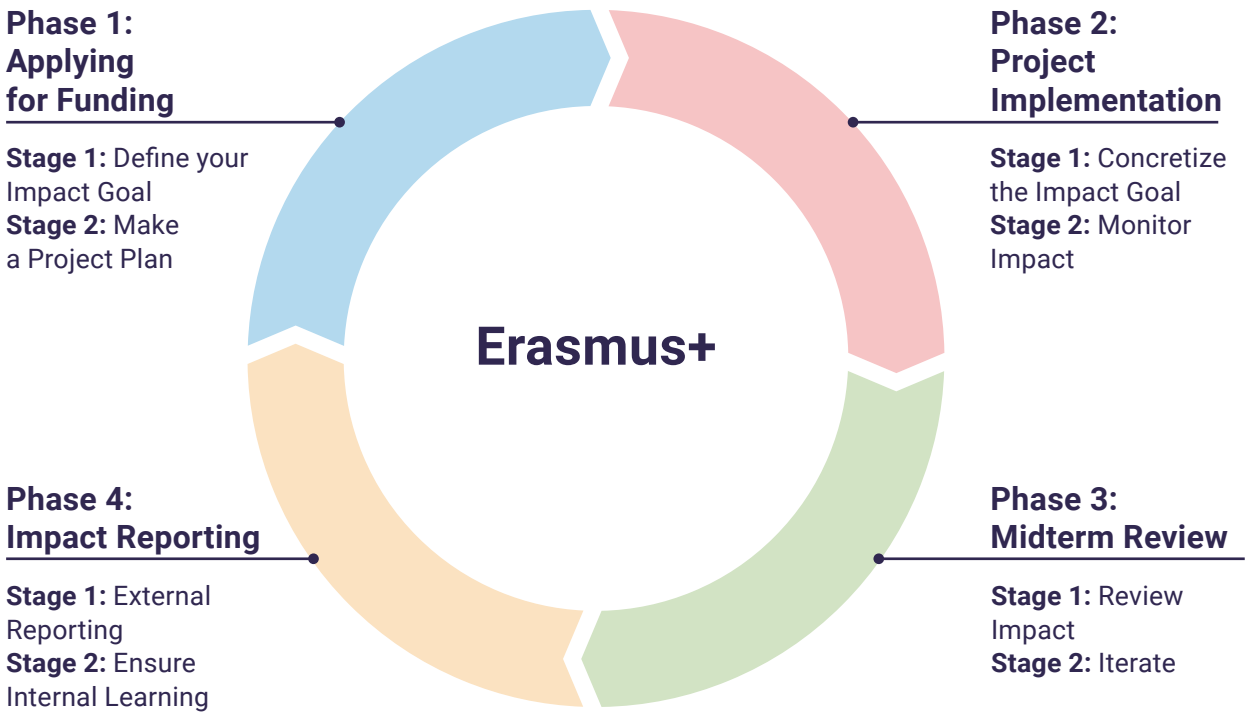
Impact Toolkit for Erasmus+ Beneficiaries

2025 | Original content and templates

Toolkit Structure

This toolkit is structured around a project cycle consisting of four phases, each essential for the success of any Erasmus+ project. This cycle provides an overview for project coordinators, even those new to the process. However, it is important to keep in mind that the cycle is a bit of a simplification: in real-world projects, the phases will sometimes overlap, and some steps may come before others. Below each step, you can find concrete impact tools that you can use during your project.

This toolkit contains nine impact tools. Each tool is described in detail to outline the purpose of the tool, and simple step-by-step instructions for using the tool in practice. The toolkit contains examples of what the final output of a tool may look like. At the end of the document you find all the templates for the tools that can be printed out and filled by hand. However, do not let the design of the tools limit your creativity – the tools are designed to give flexibility to beneficiaries. You can take the core idea of the tool but make your own digital version of it, or take a tool from one phase but apply it in another. The toolkit is a compass and not a map – what matters is that it helps you think about impact in your daily work.



Let's break down each phase and its associated stages:

By following this structured approach, even those new to project coordination can effectively manage their Erasmus+ projects, ensuring they not only meet administrative requirements but also create meaningful, lasting impact. The toolkit provides concrete methods and approaches for each step of the project.

Phase 1: Applying for Funding
This initial phase sets the foundation for your project.

Stage 1: Define your Impact Goal
Here, you will articulate what change you want to see as a result of your project. This could be, for example, improving language skills, enhancing cultural understanding, or developing professional competencies.

Stage 2: Make a Project Plan
Outline how you will advance your impact goal. This includes detailing activities, timelines, and resources needed.

Phase 2: Project Implementation
This phase is where your plans come to life.

Stage 1: Concretize the Impact Goal
Transform your broad impact goal into specific, measurable or observable, objectives. For example, "improve language skills" might become "70% of participants will advance one CEFR level in their target language."

Stage 2: Monitor Impact
Regularly check if you are on track to meet your objectives. This might involve surveys or detailed note-taking during your project.

Phase 3: Midterm Review
Halfway through, it is crucial to assess your progress and make necessary adjustments.

Stage 1: Review Impact
Evaluate how well you're on the road towards the impact goals. For example, are participants showing the expected improvements?

Stage 2: Iterate
Based on your review, make any needed changes to better align the project with its goals. This could mean adjusting activities or reallocating resources.

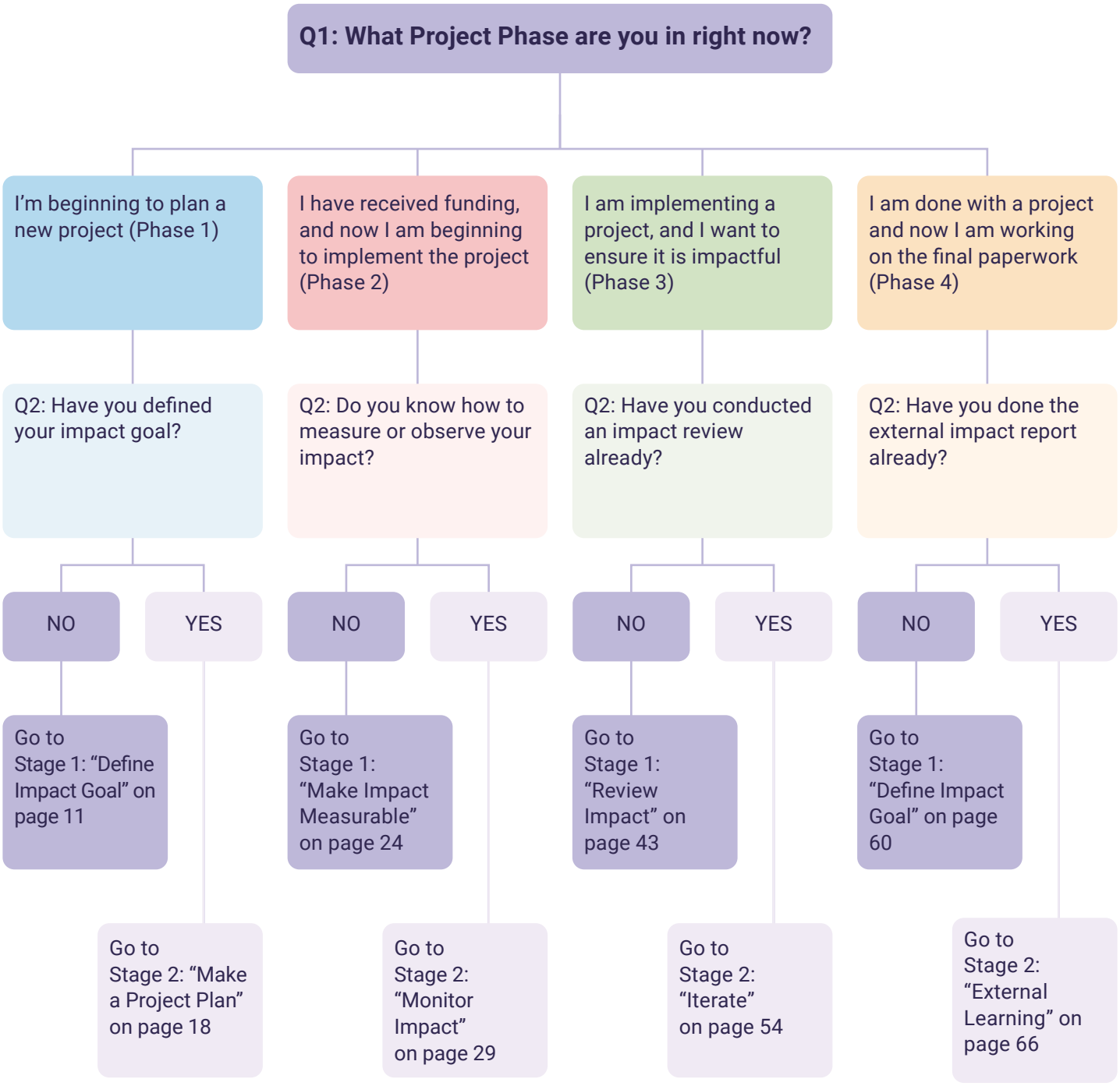
Phase 4: Impact Reporting
As your project concludes, it is time to report your results and learn from the experience.

Stage 1: External Reporting
Prepare a comprehensive report for your funders, detailing your achievements, challenges, and signs of impact.

Stage 2: Ensure Internal Learning
Reflect on the project within your team. What worked well? What could be improved? Use these insights to enhance future projects.

User Instructions

Are you unsure of which tool that you are in need of right now? Use the decision-tree below to get a sense of which part of the toolkit that could be of most use to you!



PHASE 1

Applying for Funding

STAGE 1

Define your Impact Goal

Tool: Problem Tree

What is it? Problem Tree Analysis is a participatory tool for making a reflected choice of an overarching impact goal for any project. The tool enables mapping a central problem that needs to be solved, its root causes, and its consequences in a tree-like diagram. The “trunk” represents the core problem, the “roots” symbolize its causes, and the “branches” depict its effects.

When to use? Problem Tree Analysis is best used as one of the first steps of project planning, preferably already when applying for funding. It is used to clarify the overarching impact goal by identifying root causes and effects of the central problem your project aims to address. The tool also helps you to clarify the causal logic of your project.

Why use it? This tool provides a visual and structured way to understand the core issues affecting your project’s context and to use these to define an impact goal. It helps ensure the project addresses the right problems and aligns the team on priorities, fostering a shared understanding and focus.

Step-by-Step Guide

Step 1 **Identify the core problem:** Agree on the main challenge your project aims to solve, phrased as a clear and specific issue. Write it in the center of the canvas.

Step 2 **Brainstorm causes:** Discuss and list all possible factors contributing to the problem. Group similar causes, and draw them as “roots” connecting to the trunk.

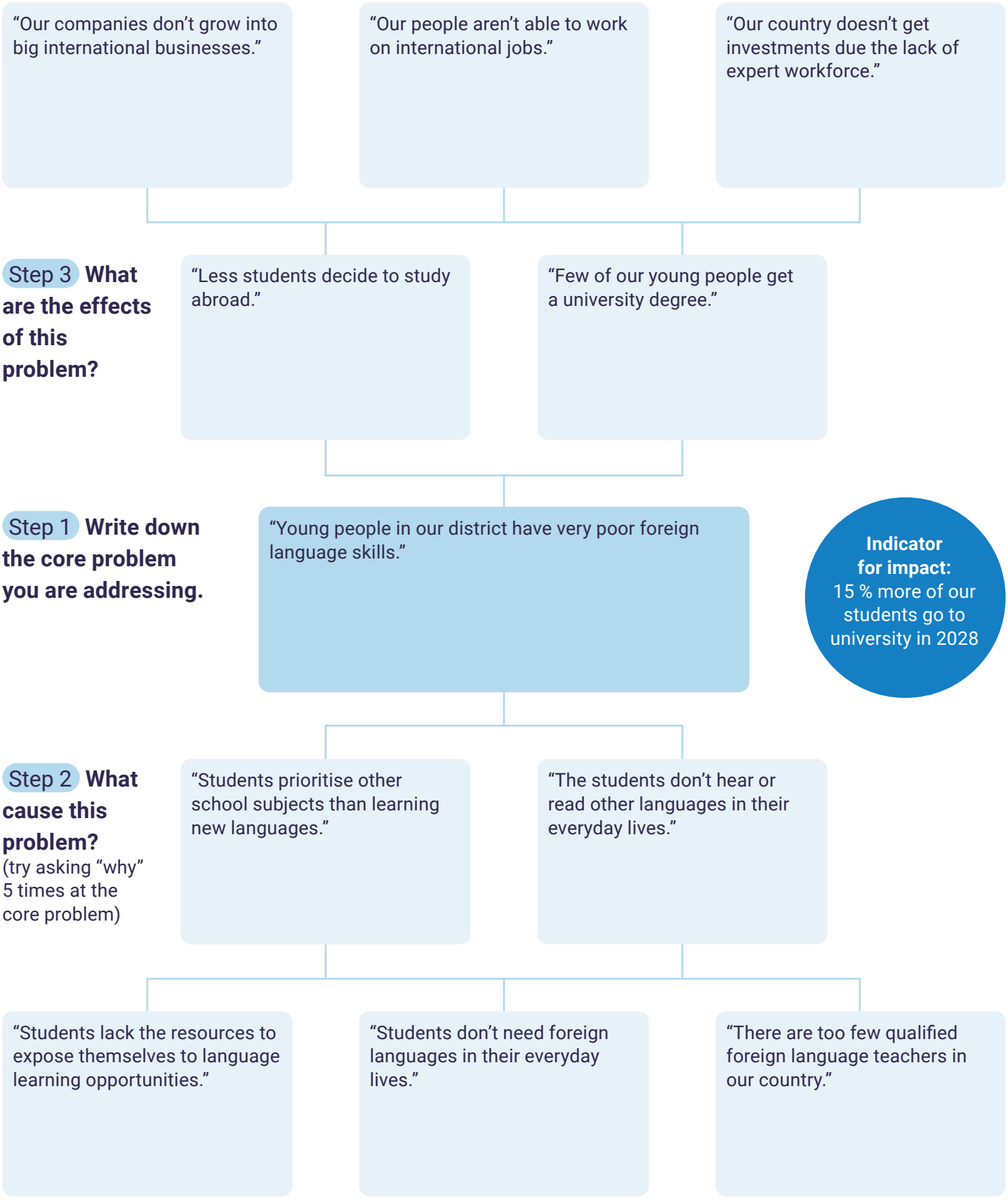
Step 3 **Identify consequences:** Map the effects or consequences that you think may result from the central problem. Draw these as “branches” extending from the trunk. This step helps you to see how your project may contribute to solving different societal issues.

Step 4 **Review and revise:** Examine the relationships between causes and effects. Which branches (effects) have the most significant consequences? Which roots (causes) are the most critical to address? Are you working with the correct core problem, or have you identified a more central problem through the exercise?

Step 5 **Define the final impact goal:** Formulate the impact goal of your project by writing a statement that describes the desired end state when to core problem has been solved. You can try this by flipping your problem statement into a positive statement and iterating the sentence then further (see next page for an example).

Step 6 **Narrow down your project’s scope:** As a final step, analyze your completed problem tree and highlight the specific causal chain of problems that your project most focuses on. This helps you to ideate concrete project activities and indicators for measuring whether your project is having the planned positive effects.

Tool: Problem Tree [Example]



Tool: Problem Tree [Example]

Step 4 Review and revise

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Step 5 Define the final impact goal

Students improve foreign language skills test by one grade level.

Step 6 Narrow down your project's scope

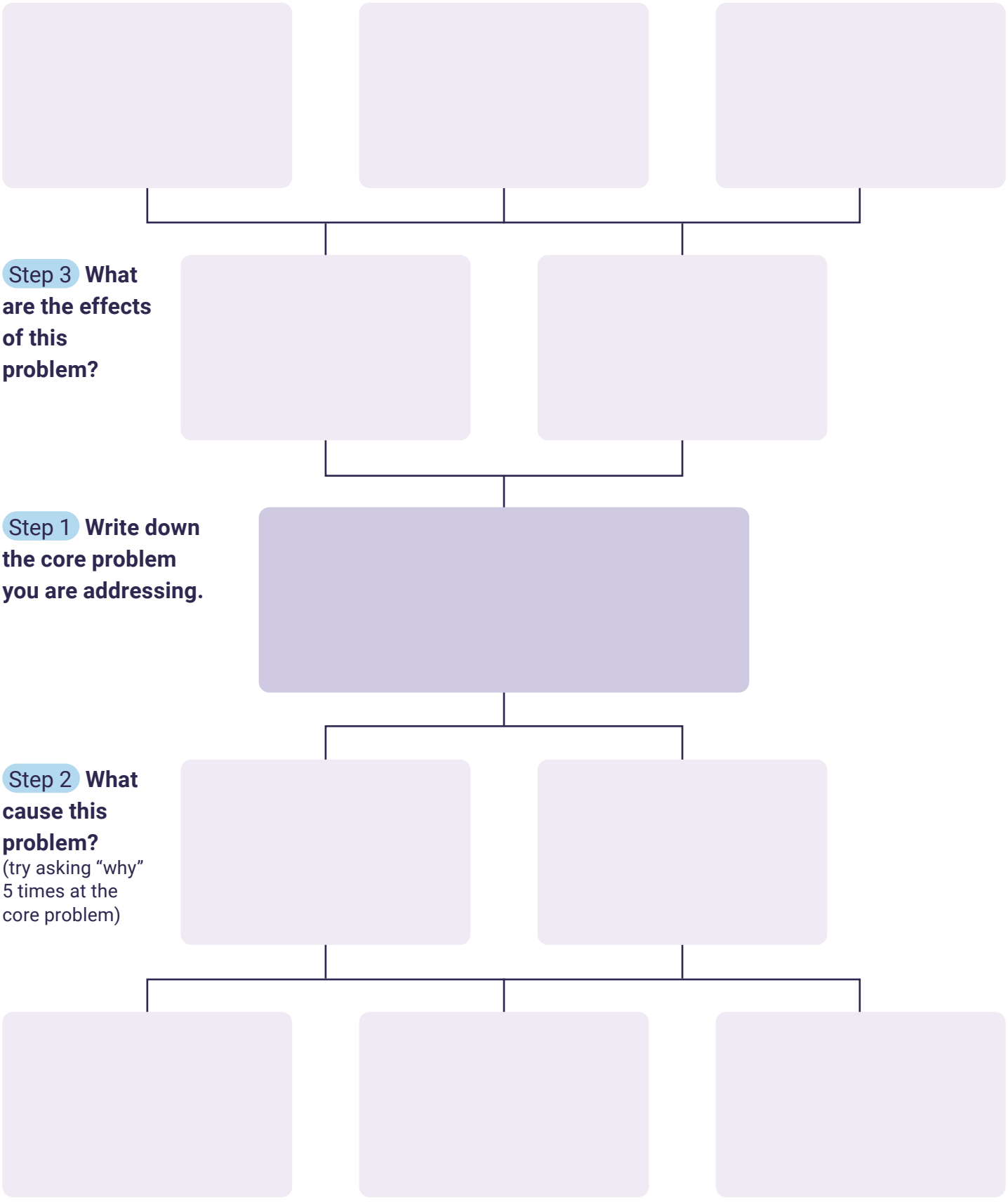
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Tool: Problem Tree

PRINT OUT

USE ONLINE

Step 1: Write down the core problem you are adressing.
Step 2: What causes this problem? (try asking why 5 times at the core problem)
Step 3: What are the effects of this problem?



Tool: Problem Tree

PRINT OUT

USE ONLINE

Step 4: Review and revise.
Step 5: Define the final impact goal.
Step 6: Narrow down your project's scope.

Step 4 Review and revise

Step 5 Define the final impact goal

Step 6 Narrow down your project's scope

Define your Impact Goal Additional Tools

Erasmus+ Impact Tool: Developed by the Dutch National Agency, this tool helps applicants think about intended changes, design projects effectively, and monitor progress.

SMART Framework: A structured approach to goal-setting ensuring goals are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.

Theory of Change: A comprehensive framework that outlines how and why a desired change is expected to occur in a specific context.

STAGE 2

Make a Project Plan

Tool: Project Plan Canvas

What is it? The project plan canvas outlines a simple step-by-step procedure for making a project plan for an Erasmus+ project. The content from the canvas can be used directly for a funding application.

When to use it? When writing a project plan and applying for Erasmus+ funding.

Why use it? The tools helps to move from broad impact goals to a concrete project plan by connecting desired impact with concrete actions in a project plan.

Step-by-Step Guide

Step 1 **Impact goal:** What is the change you wish your project to bring about in the lives of your beneficiaries or the wider society? Write down your impact goal as the heading of the canvas. Feel free to use the tool “Problem Tree Analysis” to come up with a well thought-through impact goal.

Step 2 **Milestones:** What are the goals that need to be achieved to move towards the wider impact goal? Break down your impact goal into concrete milestones that are reachable during your project. Write these in the slots reserved for milestones.

Step 3 **Activities:** For each milestone, think about the different activities that are needed to reach that milestone. These activities are the concrete deliverables of your project. Identify the activities and write them down.

Step 4 **Resources:** Look at the activities and think on a concrete level, what is needed to carry out each activity. Identify the relevant organizations and people you need to reach out to and work with (stakeholders) and the resources you need, be it time, workforce, facilities, money or material resources.

Step 5 **Timeline:** Create a timeline for your project.

- Look at each milestone with its activities and resources and estimate, how much time you need for each milestone to happen.
- After you have decided on the time needed, calculate the duration of your project: how many weeks/months/years?
- Then make a chronological plan: At what stage of the project cycle will the each milestone’s activities be implemented? Decide on the timing of each milestone, this can be e.g. “month 1–4” or “week 8–5”.
- Write the timing of each milestone on the canvas.

Tool: Project Plan Canvas [Example]

Step 1 Impact goal

Our students' quality of education has improved.

Step 2 Milestones	Step 3 Activities	Step 4 Resources	Step 5 Timeline
Participants understand basic digital tools.	3 digital literacy workshops.	Schools, local experts, budget for materials.	Month 1–3
Participants apply the skills in a project.	Organize hands-on project-based learning sessions.	Teachers, Erasmus+ mentors, access to digital tools.	Month 4–6
Participants lead digital activities.	Facilitate student-led initiatives in local communities.	Local NGOs, mentoring support, promotional materials.	Month 7–9

GOAL Measured impact goal at the end of the project (indicator):

We meet our impact goal indicator: Our schools students' quality of education has increased as baccalaureate scores have improved by 10 % by 2028.

Tool: Project Plan Canvas

USE ONLINE

PRINT OUT

Step 1: Impact goal
Step 2: Milestones
Step 3: Activities
Step 4: Resources
Step 5: Timeline

Step 1 Impact goal

Step 2 Milestones | Step 3 Activities | Step 4 Resources | Step 5 Timeline

GOAL Measured impact goal at the end of the project (indicator):

Make a Project Plan Additional Tools

Logical Framework Matrix: A structured tool for project planning that helps outline objectives, activities, and expected results.

Gantt Chart: A visual representation of project tasks and timelines, showing the order of activities, their duration, and dependencies. It helps project managers track progress and manage resources effectively.

Work Breakdown Structure (WBS): A hierarchical decomposition of project deliverables into smaller, more manageable components. It helps in organizing and defining the total scope of the project.

Project Charter: A document that formally authorizes a project and outlines its objectives, scope, and stakeholders. It serves as a reference point throughout the project lifecycle and helps align expectations.

Risk Register: A tool for identifying, assessing, and managing project risks throughout its lifecycle. It helps in proactive risk management and decision-making.

Resource Allocation Plan: A tool for assigning and managing project resources effectively across various tasks and timelines. It helps in optimizing resource utilization and preventing overallocation or underutilization.

Impact Mapping: A visual planning technique that helps align project processes with the broader impact goal of a project.