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AN INTRODUCTION TO OOPP\*  
(Objectives-Oriented Project Planning)

Prepared by  
the UNIDO Secretariat

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## **FOREWORD**

Following the decision of the General Conference of UNIDO in 1991 to introduce **Objectives-Oriented Project Planning (OOPP)** at UNIDO (GC.4/Dec.11), the Programme and Project Appraisal Section (APP) has adapted this methodology to the needs of UNIDO.

This adaptation is also based on the experience gained in the application of OOPP and in the training of UNIDO, UNDCP and other institutions's staff in OOPP over a 2-year period.

This introductory guide provides information on the main OOPP steps; it should preferably be used in consultation with APP.

A video on OOPP is also available, demonstrating the practical application of each step in the methodology.

This introductory guide is also available in Spanish and French.

Vienna, 1 December 1993

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## OOPP: AN OVERVIEW

### WHAT IS OOPP?

OOPP stands for Objectives-oriented Project Planning. It is a methodology originally developed by the German Technical Co-operation Agency (GTZ) with a view to facilitating the design as well as the implementation and monitoring of projects.

OOPP is an attempt to combine a comprehensive analysis of a project's environment with a planning tool such as the Logical Framework Approach (LFA) - which has long been used by all major development agencies.

OOPP is intended to help those who are involved in the project management cycle to analyze a given situation, assess different options and decide on a viable course of action.

OOPP provides a better understanding of the views, perceptions and interests of different parties, allows to bring into the open - and possibly to clarify - controversial issues, makes it easier to reach agreement on a common strategy and increases commitment to its implementation.

### HOW DOES IT WORK?

OOPP is based on team-work and provides a framework for the identification and formulation of a programme or project with the direct participation of the parties concerned - i.e. recipient government, development agency, donor, local counterparts and, above all, beneficiaries.

Workshops are a key element in the methodology. To improve communication among the parties, OOPP makes a systematic use of a number of techniques such as visualization, brainstorming etc. The discussion is facilitated by an independent person, a "moderator", who guides the group through the different steps of the process.

OOPP is divided into two major phases, each consisting of a number of mutually supportive stages.

- I. The first phase is focussed on the *analysis* of an existing, unsatisfactory situation: the group examines the parties affected and their specific problems, identifies potential objectives and possible approaches. This provides a firm foundation on which to build a project.
- II. The second phase consists in *planning* the intervention: the group decides on the strategy to be followed, defines its main elements (immediate objective, outputs, activities), determines how these can be measured, what inputs are required and who is going to provide them, identifies external factors which are crucial to the success of the project.

OOPP is an open methodology, which can be complemented, whenever appropriate, by other planning and management techniques (e.g. cost-benefit analysis, risk and sensitivity analysis, impact analysis, critical path etc).

#### ☛ WHEN CAN IT BE APPLIED?

OOPP can be used at different points of the project cycle. The duration and level of detail of an OOPP session may vary, depending on a number of factors - e.g., the nature and the complexity of the situation to be addressed, the type of the action envisaged, the resources available, etc.

At a preliminary stage, the OOPP methodology can be used to review an idea or a request for assistance, examine the information available and decide on how to proceed.

At a later stage, when preparatory activities have already been carried out, an OOPP exercise can be organized to finalize a project proposal.

In the case of larger and more complex projects, a fully-fledged workshop can be organized in the field with representatives of all the parties concerned to conduct an in-depth analysis of the situation and plan the project strategy.

Additionally, field workshops can be organized to prepare or revise detailed workplans, to monitor the implementation of on-going projects or to evaluate completed projects.

The OOPP methodology can also be applied individually by project planners who may wish to assess the relevance of the information available to them or conduct a quick check on the consistency of a project document.

**ES** WHO APPLIES IT?

A growing number of bilateral agencies and multilateral organizations make use of OOPP (among others DANIDA, NORAD, FINNIDA, Japan, The Netherlands) in their project cycle management; contacts are under way with other international organizations.

The European Community recently decided to adopt OOPP not only for the design of technical co-operation projects but also for the formulation and detailed planning of joint initiatives between private firms and universities in Europe (within the framework of programmes such as MERIT, SPRINT etc.).

The methodology is also applied by several departments and institutions in developing countries to prepare and implement their own projects.

**ES** OOPP AT UNIDO

UNIDO has started to introduce OOPP in late 1991, following the deliberations taken by the policy-making organs on the need to ensure the consistent application of the methodology.

To start with, research has been carried out on the latest developments at the international level; contacts have been established with agencies and institutions with a long experience in the application of OOPP.

The work undertaken in the course of 1992 has made it possible to adapt and upgrade OOPP to the requirements of UNIDO. Modifications and improvements have been introduced in the methodology both at the conceptual and application level.

A standard OOPP workshop module has been defined for the formulation of programmes and projects. Field workshops have been organized in the following countries: China, Bangladesh, Nepal, India, Laos, Guinea, Niger, Indonesia, Kenya and Colombia; several others are in the pipeline. At the request of the substantive officers, a number of preliminary workshops have been conducted at UNIDO to review mission reports and analyze draft project proposals.

Training programmes on the application of OOPP have been designed and implemented both for UNIDO staff and external clients. Specific training material has been prepared; a video and detailed manuals on the methodology will soon follow.

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**O O P P**

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**A GUIDE TO  
THE MAIN STEPS**



O O P P

CONSISTS OF TWO MAJOR PHASES:

ANALYSIS

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of an existing  
unsatisfactory  
situation

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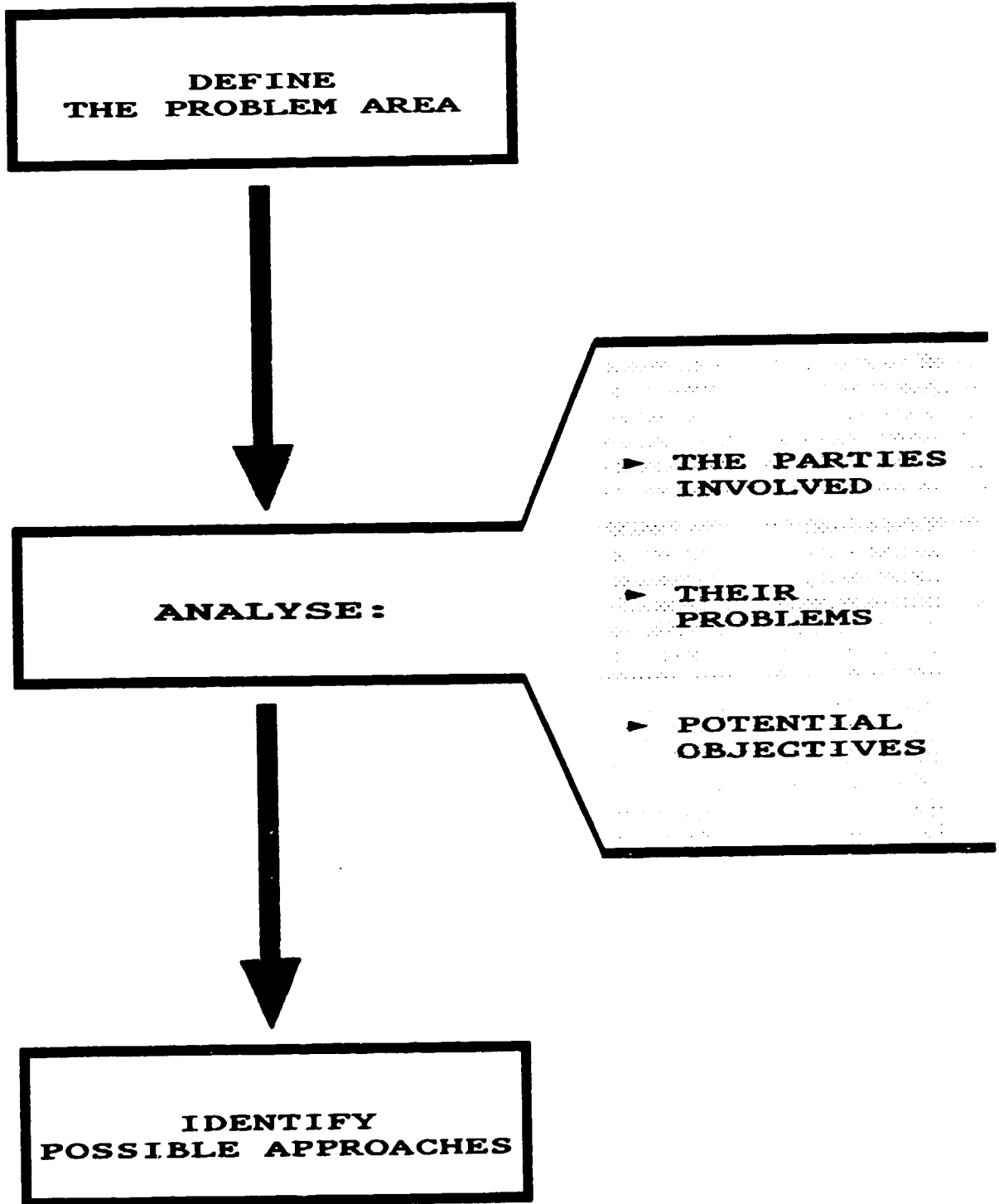
PLANNING

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of the most  
appropriate  
intervention

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**ANALYTICAL PHASE**



**DEFINE THE PROBLEM AREA**

**THE UNSATISFACTORY SITUATION  
TO BE ANALYSED IS CALLED  
THE PROBLEM AREA**

- ▶ **WRITE IT LIKE A TITLE, BECAUSE IT  
SETS THE FRAMEWORK FOR THE WHOLE  
EXERCISE**
  
- ▶ **AVOID ANY REFERENCE TO SPECIFIC  
CONSTRAINTS OR POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS  
WHICH COULD BIAS THE ANALYSIS**

**ANALYSE THE PARTIES**  
**INVOLVED**

1. IDENTIFY ALL THE PARTIES CONCERNED WITH THE PROBLEM AREA
  
2. RECORD THEIR MAIN CHARACTERISTICS:
  - FUNCTIONS/TASKS
  - WEAKNESSES
  - EXPECTATIONS
  
3. IDENTIFY THE RELATIONS AMONG THE VARIOUS PARTIES  
  
(e.g. COOPERATION, COMPETITION, HOSTILITY, CONFLICT)
  
4. DETERMINE THE PARTIES' RELEVANCE TO THE PROBLEM AREA
  
5. IF NECESSARY, CONDUCT A DETAILED ASSESSMENT OF THE MAIN PARTIES



**ANALYSE THE PROBLEMS**

1. IDENTIFY SPECIFIC PROBLEMS OF THE DIFFERENT PARTIES

2. CHECK WHETHER THERE ARE OTHER RELEVANT PROBLEMS

(WITH PARTICULAR REGARD TO ECONOMIC, ENVIRONMENTAL AND GENDER ISSUES)

3. CHECK THAT THE PROBLEMS ARE UNDERSTOOD

4. SELECT A "STARTER" PROBLEM AROUND WHICH TO BUILD A DIAGRAM

5. IDENTIFY CAUSES AND EFFECTS AMONG THE PROBLEMS

6. INCORPORATE ALL THE PROBLEMS IN THE DIAGRAM

7. CHECK THE VALIDITY OF THE CAUSE-EFFECT RELATIONSHIPS

8. DRAW CONNECTING LINES TO MAKE A "PROBLEM TREE"

NOTE

SOME TIPS ON HOW TO  
FORMULATE PROBLEMS:

WRITE ONLY  
ONE PROBLEM PER CARD

DON'T COMBINE  
CAUSE AND EFFECT  
ON THE SAME CARD

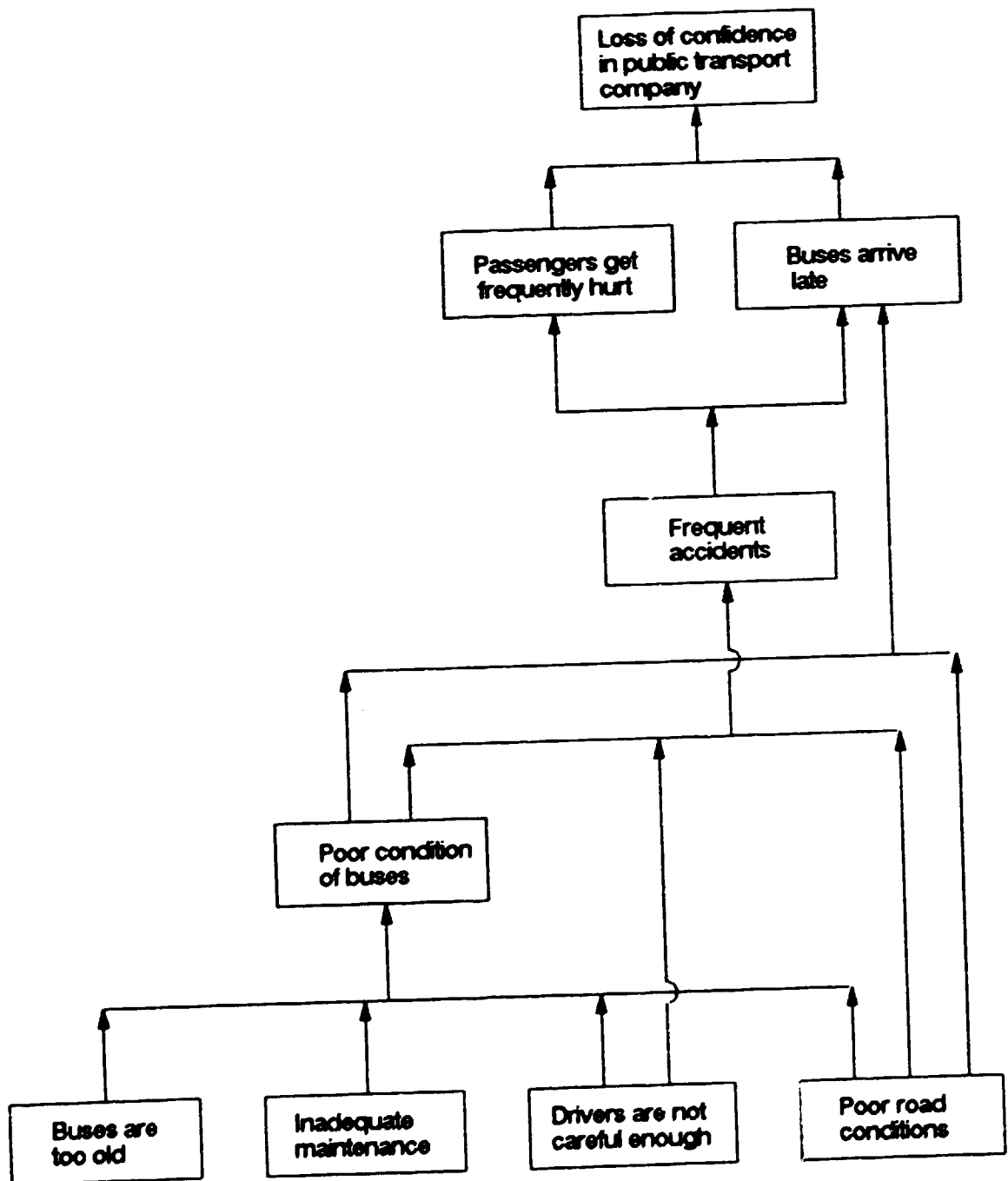
STATE EACH PROBLEM  
AS AN EXISTING  
NEGATIVE STATE

IN THE DISCUSSION  
RESPECT  
EACH OTHER'S VIEWS

# PROBLEM TREE

(CAUSE-EFFECT RELATIONSHIPS)

Problem Area = Public Transport in Oopp City





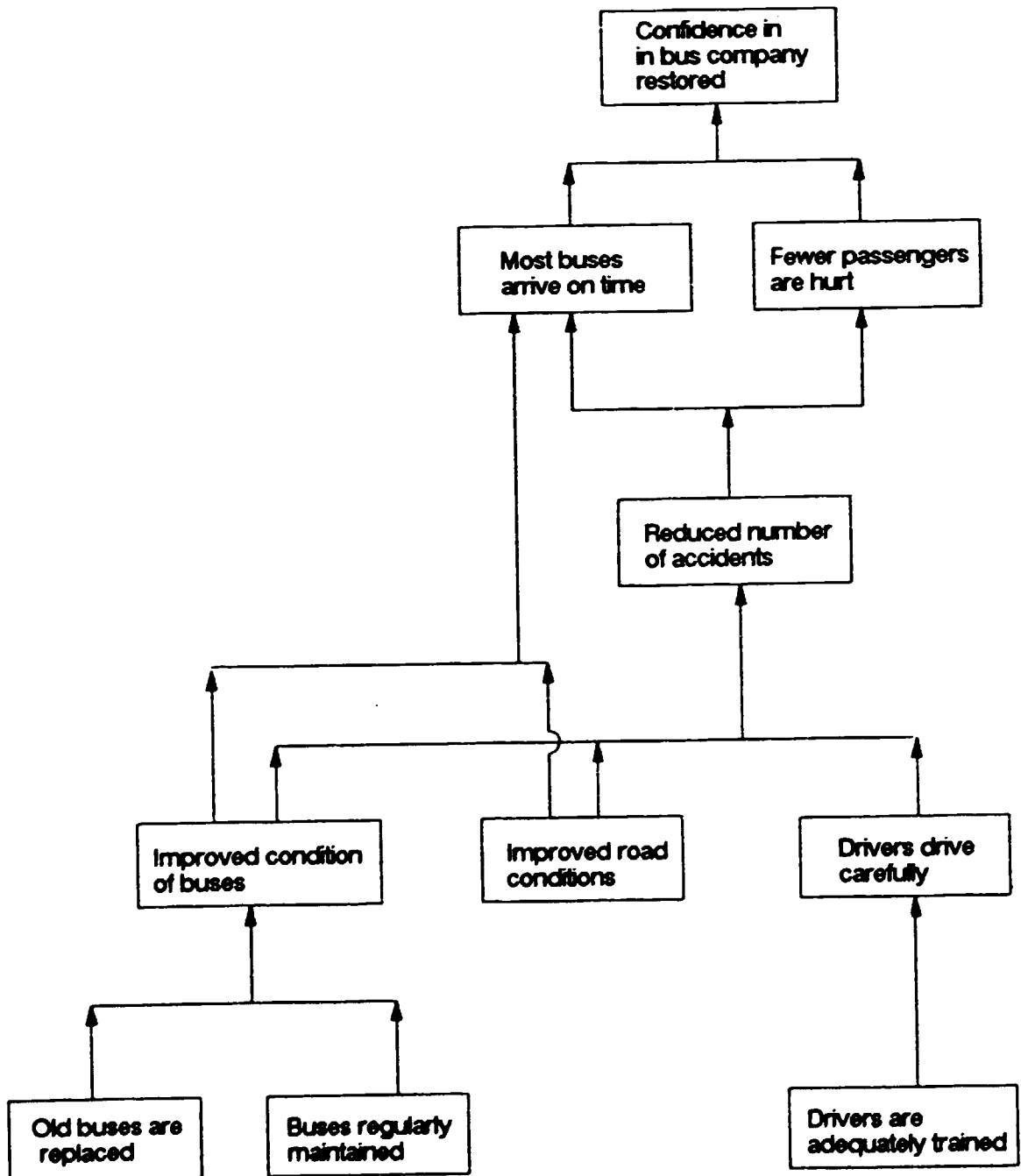
**ANALYSE THE OBJECTIVES**

1. REFORMULATE THE PROBLEMS AS POTENTIAL OBJECTIVES
2. CHECK THAT THE OBJECTIVES ARE UNDERSTOOD
3. PLACE THE OBJECTIVES IN A DIAGRAM FOLLOWING THE STRUCTURE OF THE PROBLEM TREE
4. REVIEW THE MEANS-END RELATIONSHIPS
5. IF NEEDED, IDENTIFY ADDITIONAL OBJECTIVES AND ADJUST THE DIAGRAM
6. DRAW CONNECTING LINES TO MAKE AN "OBJECTIVES TREE"

# OBJECTIVES TREE

(MEANS-END RELATIONSHIPS)

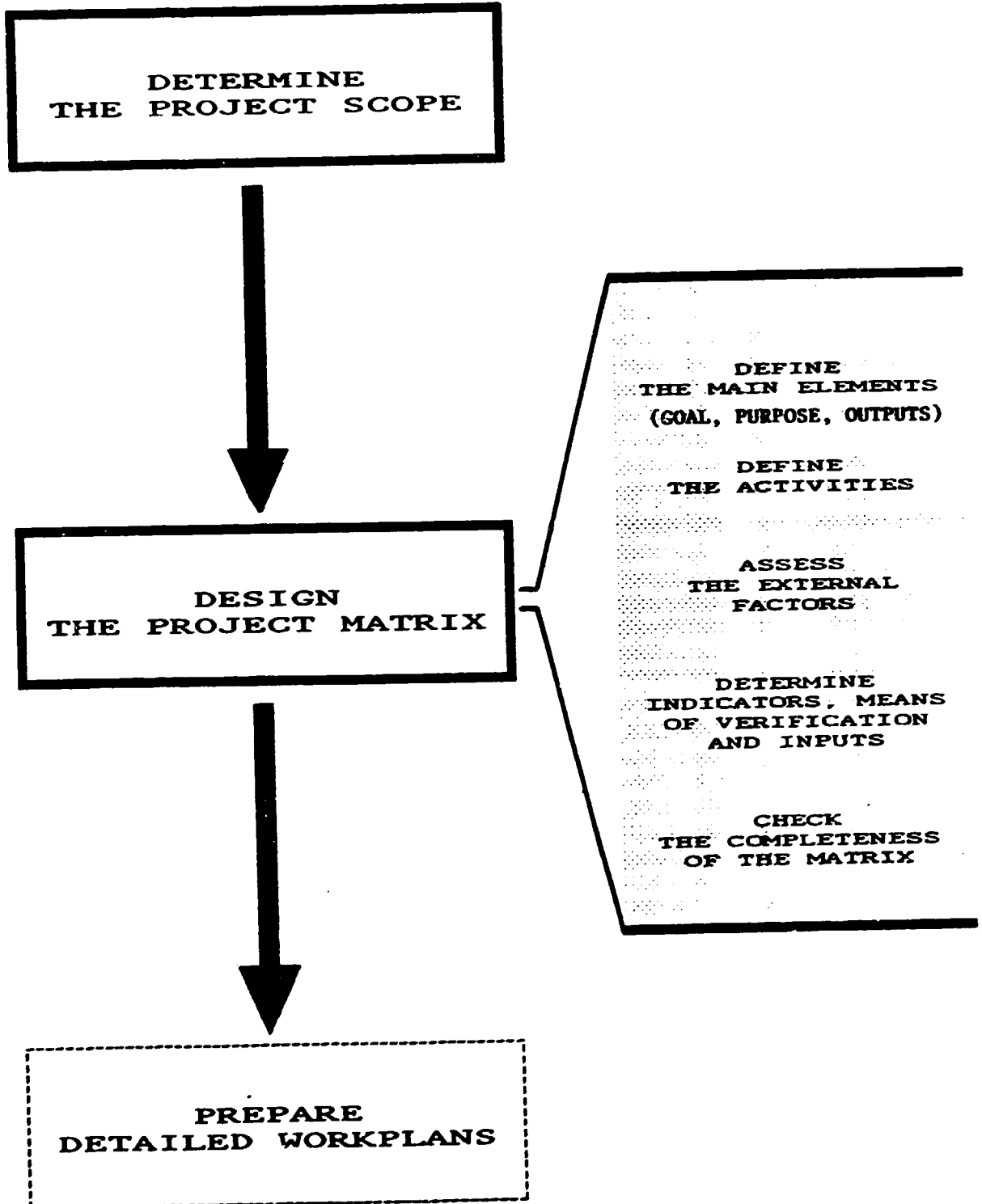
Problem Area = Public Transport in Oopp City



**DEFINE**  
**POSSIBLE APPROACHES**

1. IDENTIFY "BRANCHES"  
OF OBJECTIVES WHICH  
ARE RELATED IN TERMS  
OF EXPERTISE AND/OR  
PARTIES INVOLVED
  
2. CHECK WHETHER THEY  
CAN REPRESENT VIABLE  
APPROACHES FOR THE  
IMPROVEMENT OF THE  
PROBLEM AREA.

PLANNING PHASE



**DETERMINE THE PROJECT SCOPE**

1. DEFINE CRITERIA FOR  
SELECTING THE APPROACHES
2. ASSESS THE APPROACHES  
AGAINST THESE CRITERIA
3. DECIDE ON THE APPROACH(ES)  
TO BE ADOPTED BY THE  
PROJECT

NOTE

SOME CRITERIA FOR ASSESSING  
THE APPROACHES

- RELEVANCE TO PRIORITIES OF HOST COUNTRY AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
- RELEVANCE TO TARGET GROUPS
- SUSTAINABILITY
- NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES REACHED
- SIDE EFFECTS (POSITIVE/NEGATIVE)
- SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS
- ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS
- RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER INTERVENTIONS IN THE SAME FIELD/AREA
- COSTS INVOLVED
- ETC.

APPROACHES PRIORITY MATRIX

<b>CRITERIA</b>  <b>APPROACHES</b>	<b>CRITERION (a)</b>	<b>CRITERION (b)</b>	<b>ETC.</b>		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>RANKING</b>	<b>SELECTED APPROACHES</b>
<b>APPROACH A</b>							
<b>APPROACH B</b>							
<b>APPROACH C</b>							
<b>ETC.</b>							

**THE STRUCTURE OF  
THE PROJECT MATRIX**

<b>HIGHER-LEVEL GOAL</b>	<b>INDICATORS</b>	<b>MEANS OF VERIFICATION</b>
------------------------------	-------------------	----------------------------------

<b>PURPOSE</b>	<b>INDICATOR</b>	<b>MEANS OF VERIFICATION</b>
<b>OUTPUTS</b>	<b>INDICATOR</b>	<b>MEANS OF VERIFICATION</b>
<b>ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>INPUTS</b>	<b>COSTS</b>

<b>ASSUMPTIONS</b>
<b>ASSUMPTIONS</b>
<b>ASSUMPTIONS</b>

<b>PRECONDITIONS</b>
----------------------



**DEFINE**  
**THE MAIN PROJECT ELEMENTS**

1. IDENTIFY THE PURPOSE  
FROM THE OBJECTIVES TREE
  
2. SELECT THE HIGHER-LEVEL  
GOAL
  
3. CONSIDER THE OBJECTIVES  
LEADING TO THE PURPOSE  
AND CHECK WHETHER THEY  
CAN BECOME PROJECT OUTPUTS  
(OR ASSUMPTIONS)

DEFINE THE MAIN ACTIVITIES

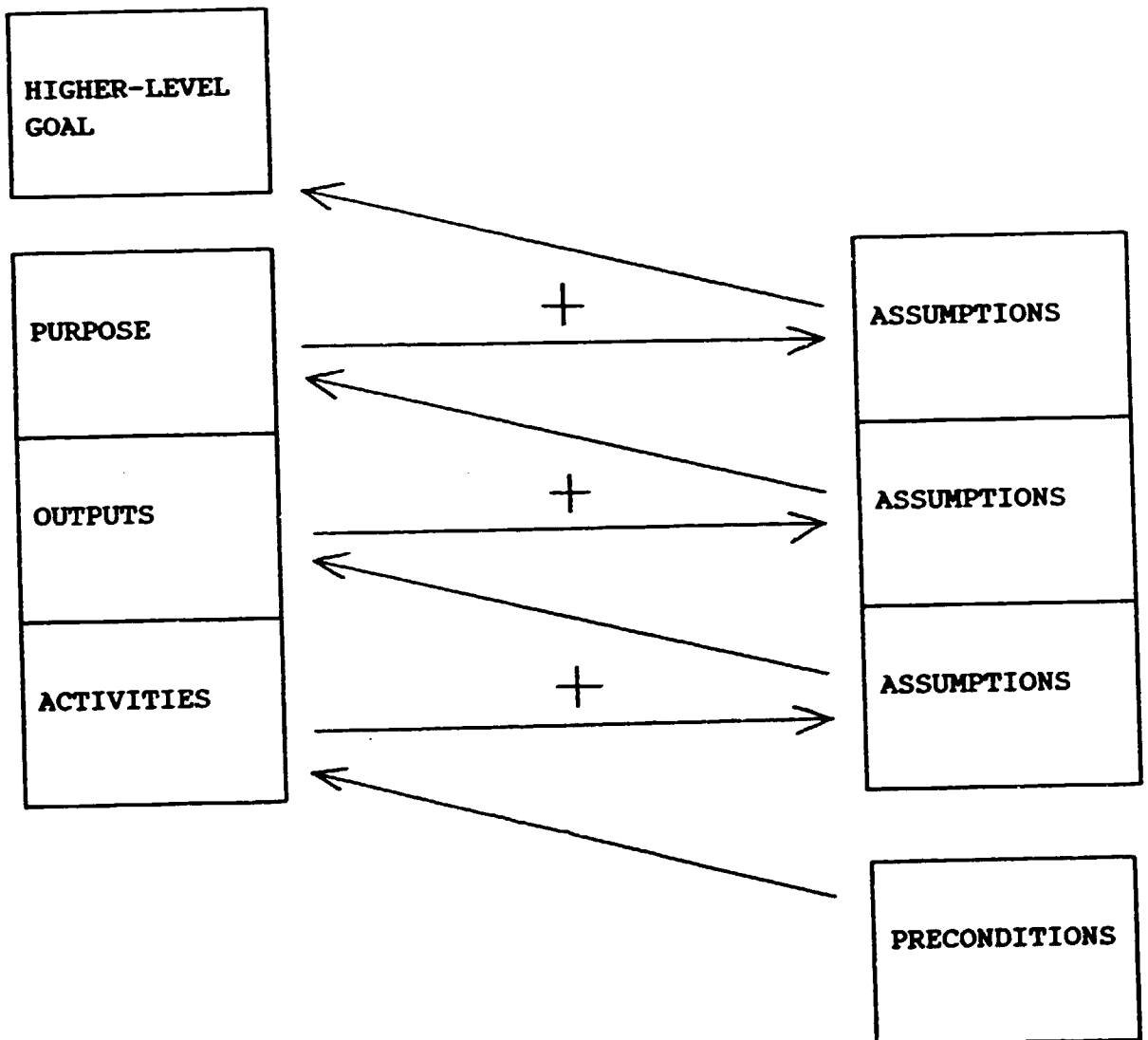
1. CONSIDER THE OBJECTIVES  
LEADING TO THE OUTPUTS
  
2. REFORMULATE THEM AS THE  
MAIN ACTIVITIES AND CHECK  
WHETHER THEY ARE  
SUFFICIENT TO PRODUCE  
THE RELEVANT OUTPUTS
  
3. IF NEEDED, IDENTIFY  
ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES
  
4. CHECK THE CONSISTENCY  
OF EACH SET OF ACTIVITIES
  
5. IDENTIFY THE ESSENTIAL  
ACTIVITIES AND ASSIGN  
RESPONSIBILITIES

**ASSESS THE EXTERNAL FACTORS**

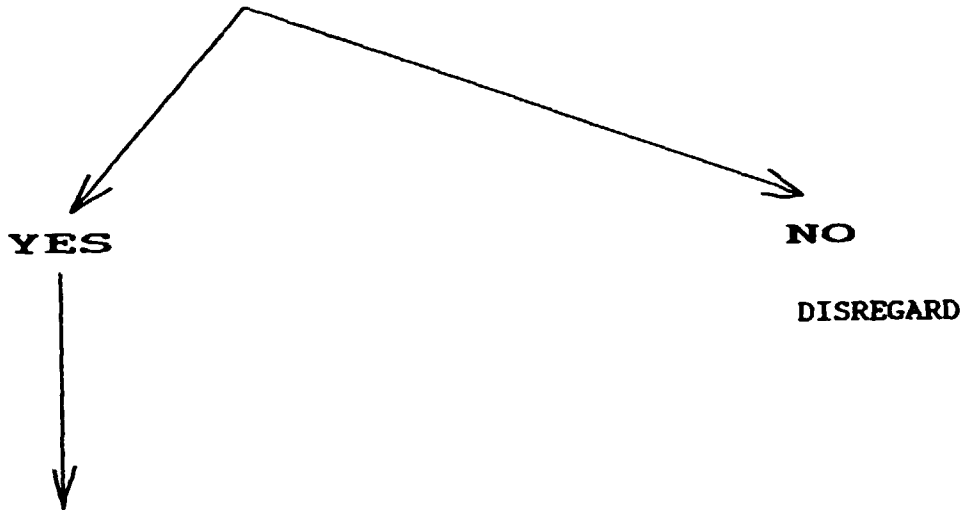
1. IDENTIFY EXTERNAL FACTORS WHICH MAY BE NEEDED TO ACHIEVE THE MAIN ELEMENTS
2. ASSESS THESE FACTORS ON IMPORTANCE AND PROBABILITY OF OCCURRENCE
3. IF APPROPRIATE, INCLUDE THEM IN THE PROJECT MATRIX AS ASSUMPTIONS
4. CHECK WHETHER THERE ARE ANY PRECONDITIONS

# EXTERNAL FACTORS AND ASSUMPTIONS

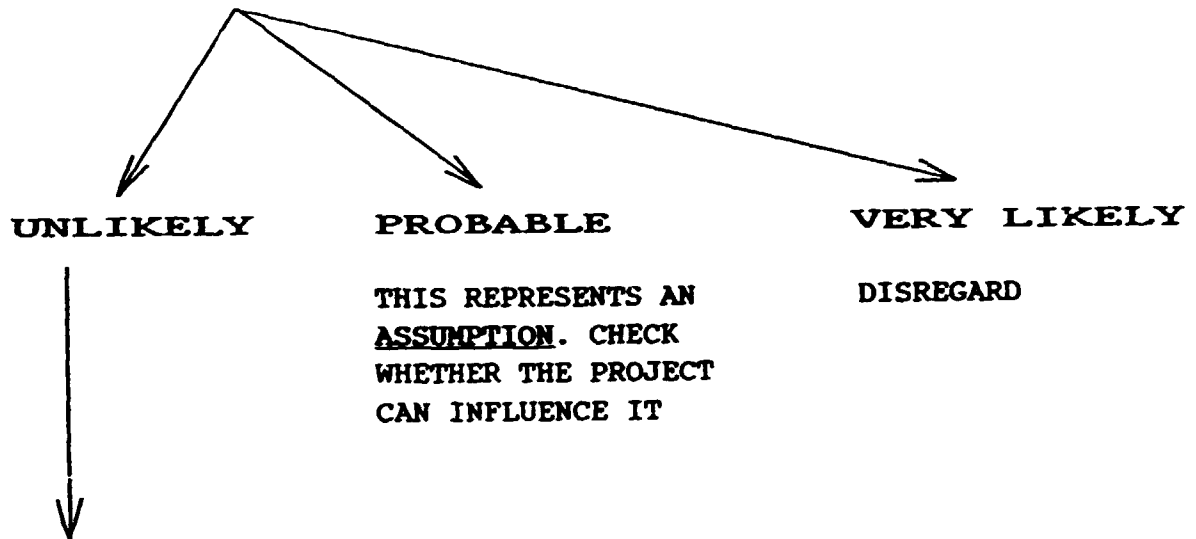
LOGIC OF THE  
PROJECT PLANNING MATRIX



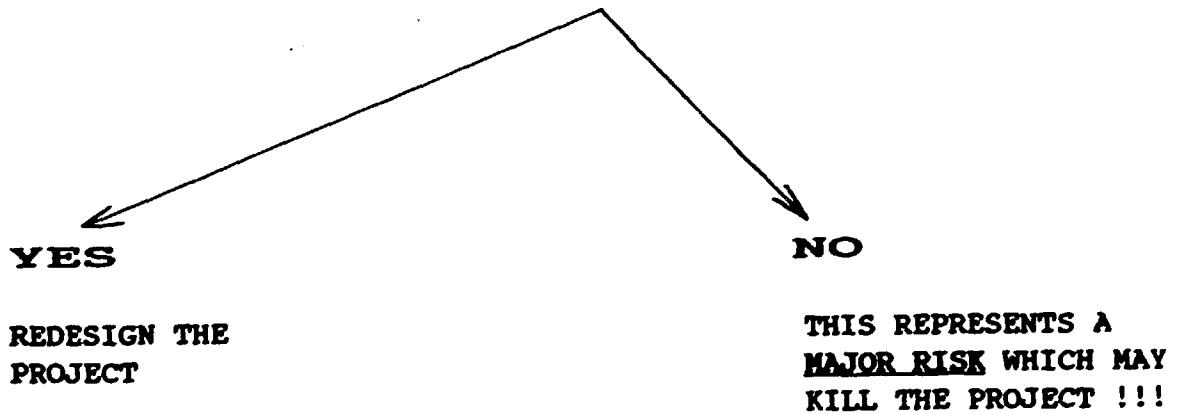
IS [ the External Factor ] IMPORTANT FOR THE PROJECT ?



IS [ the External Factor ] LIKELY TO OCCUR ?



CAN THE PROJECT INCLUDE [ the External Factor ] ?



DEFINE INDICATORS, MEANS OF VERIFICATION AND INPUTS

1. DETERMINE WHICH INDICATORS CAN BE USED TO MEASURE THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE PURPOSE AND OUTPUTS
  
2. FORMULATE THE INDICATORS IN TERMS OF:
  - QUANTITY
  - TIME
  - TARGET GROUP
  - PLACE
  
3. DECIDE ON THE MEANS OF VERIFICATION (SOURCE OF DATA) FOR EACH INDICATOR
  
4. MAKE AN ESTIMATE OF THE INPUTS AND COSTS REQUIRED TO IMPLEMENT THE ACTIVITIES

NOTE

MEANS OF VERIFICATION

- DETERMINE WHETHER EXTERNAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION CAN BE USED OR WHETHER THE RELEVANT INFORMATION SHOULD BE PRODUCED BY THE PROJECT
  
- REPLACE THE INDICATOR IF NO SUITABLE SOURCE OF INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE
  
- DEFINE APPROPRIATE MONITORING MECHANISMS

**CHECK THE COMPLETENESS  
OF THE MATRIX**

1. CHECK AGAIN IF THE  
OUTPUTS AS DESCRIBED BY THE  
INDICATORS ARE SUFFICIENT  
TO ACHIEVE THE PURPOSE
  
2. CHECK AGAIN IF THE  
ACTIVITIES ARE SUFFICIENT  
TO ACHIEVE THE OUTPUTS AS  
DEFINED BY THEIR INDICATORS
  
3. CHECK AGAIN IF THE  
ESTIMATED INPUTS AND COSTS  
ARE IN LINE WITH AVAILABLE  
RESOURCES
  
4. CHECK AGAIN IF THE PURPOSE  
AND OUTPUTS AS DEFINED BY  
INDICATORS ARE CONSISTENT  
WITH THE ASSUMPTIONS