

Specifying S.M.A.R.T Project Activities

To specify the range and type of activities of a project

Before you start

- **Participative Approach:** Bringing together those people and staff who have the appropriate thematic background, experience in project management and implementation, and experience in working directly with the target groups of the project.
- **Specification:** Specifying what type of activities will be appropriate to achieve the project's objectives and what the key target groups are and need to be involved in these activities.
- **Focusing:** Refining further the project specifications, as to when, where, to which intensity and for how long the project activities will be implemented and how the target groups will be reached.
- **Contextualising the added value:** Identify current and planned projects operating in the same thematic or geographic area. Assess the extent of overlap, synergies, and complementarity your project might have with them. Confirm that your project fills a gap in current/planned service provision.

Project activities should relate very closely to the aims and objectives of the project and should have a direct impact on the needs and problems identified.

Just like the aims and objectives of a project, its distinct activities need to be designed following the SMART approach (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic & time-bound). This task (used in a team-approach) will facilitate to gain a clear understanding of the necessary characteristics of a project activity that will enhance the feasibility of its implementation.

The tool comes as a table with different headings to think through the intended project activities following the SMART approach.

What for?

- To specify a number of relevant project activities in line with the project's aims and objectives.

Tools useful to support this exercise

- *Defining SMART Objectives & Aims*
- *Action Table*

How to use it?

Step 1 Refer to the aims and objectives developed using the SMART approach and specify which project objective you want to focus on first. Note the objective in the table of the planner below. Take one objective at a time.

Step 2 Debate as a group what kind of project activities will be needed to achieve the project objective. Seek to identify a number of specific project activities that are distinct yet complementary to each other to effectively achieve the selected project objective.

Step 3 Define the intended outputs, if possible, separate them into **measurable outputs**, i.e. number of workshops, and **not easily measurable outputs**, i.e. improved motivation or behaviour.

Step 4 Consider for each project activity what key tasks are required to implement it.

Step 5 Think about each of the five reality check topics and consider what potential issues might create a problem for implementation of the activity. Use a traffic light system approach when filling in the table whereby green indicates 'no issue', amber 'potential issue' and red 'serious issues' anticipated.

Step 6 Approximate a realistic timescale, i.e. how long the project activity might take for being implemented (use project months, instead of actual dates).

Step 7 Review the filled in table and assess the overall feasibility of implementing the identified project activities in light of your capacities as an organisation.

Step 8 Potentially use the **URBACT Action Table Tool** to further refine your design.



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S.M.A.R.T. PROJECT ACTIVITIES PLANNER									
Project Objective: A	Intended Outputs / Results		Key Actionable Tasks	Relevance / Reality Checks (traffic light indication: green/amber/red = no/potential/serious issue identified)					Timescale
	Measurable	Not measurable		Legal	Institutional	Operational	Practical	Psychological	
Specific Project Activity									