NATIONAL INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AUTHORITY - UGANDA

IT Project Management Methodology

Project Planning Support Guide

Version 0.3

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1 Introduction

After initiating a project and appointing of a project manager, the project moves into the planning phase. This involves creating a suite of planning documents required to guide the Project Implementation Team throughout the project execution. The main objective of this stage is to develop a solid and comprehensive Project Management Plan, which describe how a project should be carried out during execution or implementation stage in order to attain the project objectives.

This guide provides guidance on the processes to go through when planning all aspects of the project to be implemented, provides guidance on expected constituent plans, highlights required resources (human and financial), expected documentation that should be developed, guiding principles to be followed in order to successfully go through this stage; tools and techniques to be used during project planning stage. This stage is very important to the success of the project and enough effort and expertise should be committed. All relevant stakeholders should be consulted in order to come up with a comprehensive and achievable project management plan.

1.1 When should Project Planning Start?

On receiving an approved project charter, a project manager starts engaging organization's key human resources to commence on the project planning exercise. The first task a project manager will do is to set up a skeleton Project Planning Team (PPT) to help him/her develop a draft Project Management Plan.

1.2 Project Planning Team Terms of Reference

The Project Planning Team should be drawn from a cross section of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) who could have supported the development of the Concept Note and scope of work defined in the project charter and others within or external to MDA for purposes of setting up a pool of skillsets to undertake the project planning exercise. A PPT may be maintained to implement the project (Project Implementation Team – PIT) or not depending on the resources required and their availability.

In reference to the approved project charter, the PPT will be required to:

1. Comprehensively study and understand the project charter
2. Create a detailed Work Breakdown Structures (WBS) and its dictionary
3. Define and agree on activities sequencing
4. Estimate activities durations
5. Develop a Project Implementation Plan (PIP)
6. Estimate human resources requirements; Project Implementation Team (PIT)
7. Estimate costs requirements and determine a project budget
8. Develop constituent plans listed in section 1.3.

The main deliverable expected from the PPT will be the draft Project Management Plan. A kick-off meeting with all identified PIT and their supervisors should be organized to discuss the draft project management plan. Subsequent planning meeting should be organized by the Project Manager until a final Project Management Plan is agreed upon by all identified human resources and other key stakeholders.

The project manager will present the final project management plan to the Steering Committee or Project Sponsor for large/medium or small projects respectively for considerations and approval. It is this approved project management plan that will become a baseline project management plan. The baseline project management plan will form a basis for evaluating the project success.

It should be noted that in some cases the high level estimated timelines and costs specified in the project charter may change after the detailed planning, so approvals must be given before proceeding to the next stage of project life cycle guided by stage gate 2 checklists.

The IT project Management Methodology below illustrates the activities, deliverables and controls the PPT should be aware of.

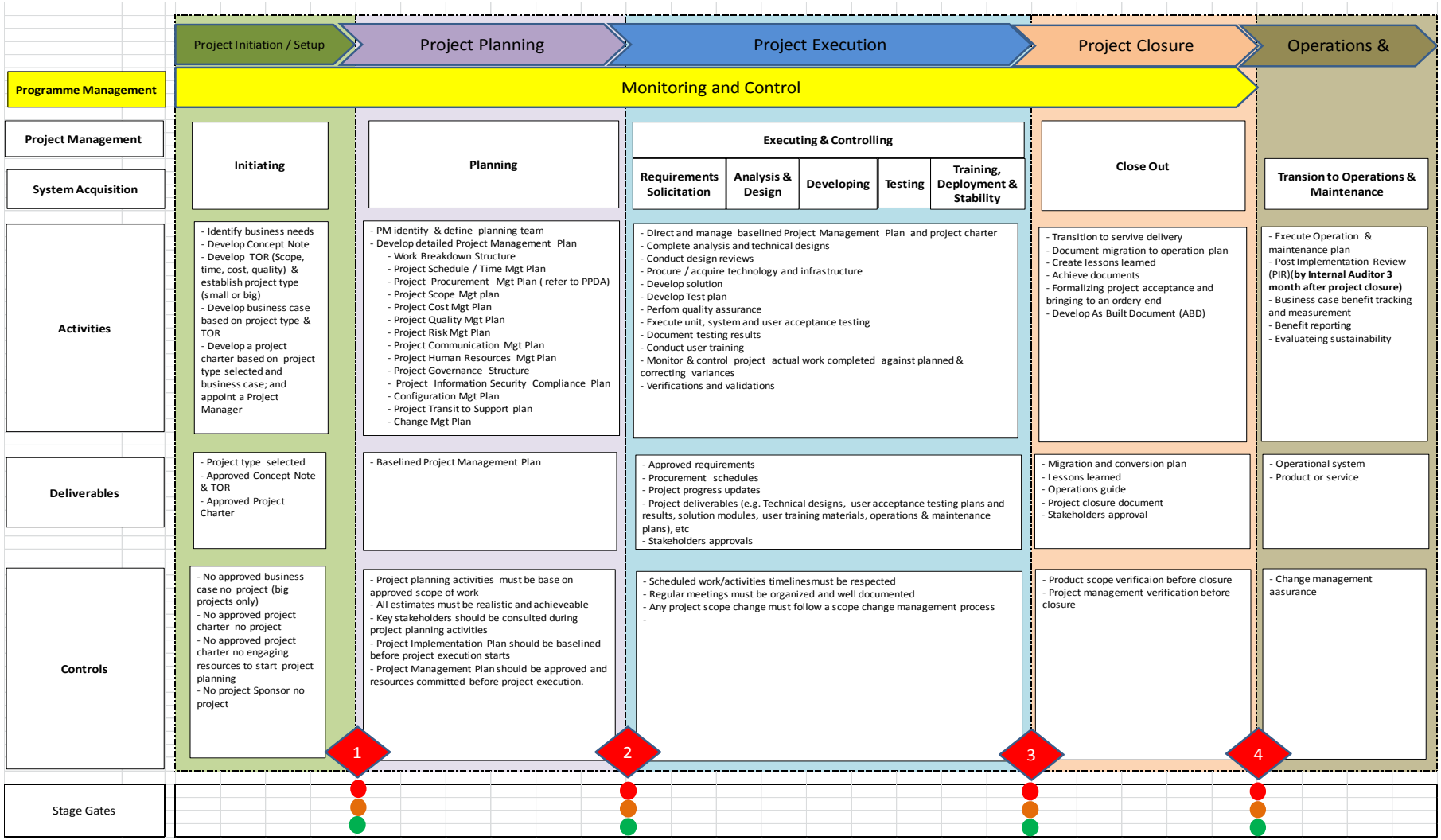

Figure xxx: IT Project Management Methodology

1.3 What are the constituent plans?

A Project management plan should be created and should include a description of the following areas, among others, at planning stage to guide the Project Implementation Team (PIT) execute the planned activities.

No.	Plan	Objective
1	Project Implementation Plan (PIP)	The creation of a comprehensive Project Implementation Plan (PIP) is critical to the success of the project. The PIP will include a complete list of all activities required to complete the project scope, milestones, estimated activities durations, dependencies, resources required to undertake the project. Creating a detailed project Implementation plan is an important step in the project lifecycle because it is a basis for estimating project duration, resource requirements like budget, HR; and identification of key stakeholders, risks among others. A detailed WBS should be developed to achieve this.
2	Resource Plan	Following the creation of a PIP, a detailed assessment of the required resources to undertake the project should be made. The required human resources to perform identified activities, hardware, software, equipment, material, service and goods should be listed and the amount of each resource quantified. Finally, the resource usage should be scheduled to provide the Project Manager with a complete view of the total amount of resources needed for each stage of the project.
3	Financial Plan	Should describe the total quantity of financial resources required during each stage of the project and required to transit to support. The total cost of each item of hardware,

		software, services, goods, equipment and material should be calculated, as well as the total cost of undertaking each activity within the project plan.
4	Quality Plan	Should be developed to ensure that the project deliverables meet set quality requirements. This plan should explicitly list the quality targets to be achieved, and a suite of Quality Assurance and Control activities are scheduled to ensure that the required level of quality is achieved throughout the project.
5	Risk Plan	Managing project risks is a critical process within the project lifecycle. To mitigate risk effectively, all foreseeable project risks should be identified and rated in terms of their likelihood of occurrence and potential impact on the project. The risks should be prioritized and a set of actions identified to reduce the likelihood of each risk and its impact on the project should it occur. A plan should also identify risk owners and frequency of analyzing them. Dedicated meetings should be planned to discuss project risks. More details are found in Risk Management Support Guide.
6	Project Information Security Management Plan	Should describe how information security management will be implemented to ensure that project information and information systems involved in the project are secure. More details are found in Information Security Support Guide.
7	Acceptance Plan	The key to end user satisfaction is in giving approval from the user that the deliverables meet the quality criteria stated in the quality plan. An acceptance plan should be created for each deliverable produced by the project. It

		should provide a schedule of Acceptance Reviews to be undertaken for each deliverable within the project.
8	Communication Plan	Should describe the information to be provided to project stakeholders to keep them informed of the progress of the project. Stakeholders' categories should be listed and their requirements for information clearly defined. A schedule of communication events and activities should be laid out to ensure that the right information is communicated to the right people at the right time.
9	Project Stakeholders Management	Should describe how stakeholders will be identified, analyzed (for their interest and influence) and specify their specific requirements.
10	Procurement Plan	In consultations with Procurement Disposal Units within MDAs, a procurement plan should be developed and processed to enable procurement of items (such as products, services, goods) required for the delivery of the project objectives. PPDA regulations should be followed.
11	Scope Management Plan	Should describe a process how scope changes will be managed. Define how change requests should be raised, analyzed, approved and tracked.
12	Project Transit to Support Plan	In consultation with the Project Owner (the focal point from the would be end user of the final project outcome on the project) develop a plan how the project outcome will smoothly be transferred into support phase. Things like knowledge transfer should be emphasized.
13	Change Management Plan	Projects always results into organizations reforms. A change management plan should be developed to ensure stakeholders' buy-in.

After a detailed understanding of the activities, resources, finances and procurements required to undertake the project, the PIT will now be ready to enter the Execution stage. A formal approval to proceed to the Execution phase shall be required.

2 Guiding Principles at Planning Stage

1. Sufficient details should be provided to establish baseline plans against which project implementation should be managed, project performance measured and controlled. This should be achieved if the planning team is properly resourced, motivated, by making use of templates and lessons learnt from previous projects.
2. Realistic activities durations and costs estimates and well thought out dependencies contributes a lot to a successful project plan. Planners should be realistic as possible. All estimates should be achievable.
3. Involve and consult key stakeholders when developing a work breakdown structure and subsequent PIP for their input and buy-in. A detailed WBS mitigates challenges of project change requests.
4. A baseline Project Management Plan should be in place before project execution commences. Stage gate 2 checklist should be used as a check point.
5. A baseline should be updated as more information is received, however a steering Committee's approved should be sought if a major change in time or cost is anticipated.
6. It is critical that the Project Manager communicates the roles and responsibilities to all identified stakeholders (Project Implementation Team – PIT and their supervisors and others) in time to seek for their commitment and availability.

7. Awareness / sensitization workshop and or meetings should be arranged to enable the project manager communicate the project plan to the team before a final sign off.
8. The planning stage will be concluded with a Steering Committee or project sponsor approval (Go / NO GO stage gate 2) of the Project Management Plan for large or small projects respectively, signaling that the project is ready for execution or implementation.

3 Tools and Techniques

The following are some of the tools and techniques the planning team should use to deliver a project management plan among others:

3.1 Work Breakdown Structure (WBS)

WBS should be undertaken to subdivide or decompose the project deliverables and project work into smaller and more manageable components. It will be easier to estimate durations, costs and required human resources of small work packages. Furthermore, this tool will facilitate project risks identification and management; and enhance monitoring and controlling the work packages during project execution.

3.2 Delphi Technique

This technique could be used to reach a consensus of SMEs participating in the estimating activities durations, cost and identifying project risks anonymously. This technique will reduce influence on the estimates from a few participants, which may result into wrong estimates.

3.3 MS Project

MS Project application should be used to develop a project schedule. The project schedule should be baselined, and will act as a reference in evaluating the project performance.

3.4 Project Planning Meetings /Walkthroughs

Effective and productive meetings should be organized to plan a project, discuss progress, and resolve issues and making decisions which could call for a group decision. Meetings should be attended by planning team whenever called upon.

4 Planning Templates

In order to expedite the planning phase, below find templates you can use.

1. Project Plan
2. Resource Plan
3. Financial Plan
4. Quality Plan
5. Risk Plan
6. User Acceptance
7. Communication plan
8. Request for Information
9. Communication plan