

Context analysis

Introduction

The context analysis is the second substep in Step 1 of ESTEEM. It builds on the narrative and extends the project manager's historical and present understanding of the project to also include the opportunities and barriers of the context within which their project is to be deployed. In short, it allows the project manager to reflect on the dynamics between their project and the context within which it is to be deployed. Two important aspects of context are tackled:

1. Successful implementation of a technology depends very much on how the actual technological artifacts will fit into the local context where they are implanted. For example wind turbines are considered positively by many citizens, but many would be shocked if they were sited too close to their house or a historical or natural landscape.
2. The context in which the technology is deployed consists of multiple levels (international, national, and the local project level).

Process of context analysis: context analysis tables and a *guide* to filling them in

The context analysis relies on filling in the two tables below, called 'context analysis table part I & II', the first one listing opportunities, the second listing barriers, to make explicit positive and negative forces in the context of the project, to develop a clear sense of sensitivity to local, national and international context issues (both general and specific)¹.

The output is two filled in tables: one table describes opportunities coming from developments in the context, which are analysed in detail through several additional questions; the second table describes constraints emerging from the context, which are also analysed in more detail.

A list of example questions and topics is provided (see below) and should be used as a guide in filling in the two tables to identify the most important possible barriers and opportunities and their key characteristics². There are five topics (technological issues; government policies; socio-economic factors; cultural factors; and geographical factors) to be considered and the questions noted here are not necessarily the questions to be answered but should be used selectively or in addition to other appropriate questions to guide project managers' in thinking about opportunities and barriers. The consultant must be careful in making sure that additional questions are relatively 'standardised' in allowing for a limited range of answers (e.g. 'high', 'medium', 'low')

Technological issues:

- To what extent does the project fit with existing infrastructure? (e.g. 'high', 'medium' or 'low' degree of fit).
- To what extent is there a need for complementary technologies?
- What other technological opportunities and barriers are there?
- ...

¹ See Appendix 2 of the ESTEEM manual for further details on context analysis and its role in the wider ESTEEM process.

² The list of topics is based on work conducted under WP2 of Create Acceptance, which examined the contextual opportunities and barriers in deploying renewable energy technology projects.

Government policies:

- To what extent does the project fit with governmental policies on new energy technologies and related topics?
- To what extent is there stability of national policy?
- What other government policy opportunities and barriers are there?
- ...

Socio-economic factors:

- To what extent is there a widespread availability of natural resources?
- To what extent are existing energy prices an opportunity?
- What other socio-economic opportunities and barriers are there?
- ...

Cultural factors:

- To what extent is there trust in relevant institutions?
- To what extent is there environmental awareness in the relevant population?
- What other cultural factors need to be considered as opportunities and barriers?
- ...

Geographical factors:

- To what extent is the local climate suitable for the project?
- To what extent is there availability of suitable locations for the project?
- What other geographical factors need to be considered as opportunities and barriers?
- ...

Context analysis part I- Opportunities

Part 1: The relationship between project and context: what opportunities emerge?

Name the opportunity	When will this opportunity become important to the project (immediately, within the next year, within next five years, or long-term)?	Level on which opportunity emerges (local, national, international)?	How large are the possibilities to seize the opportunity (low, medium, high)?	To what extent is the project concerned with seizing the opportunity? (low, medium, high, go-no-go)?	Describe the project strategy to seize the opportunity (monitoring, indirect influence, direct influence).	Describe specific actions within the strategy.
Technology context						
Policy context						
Socio-economic context						
Cultural context						
Geographical context						
Other opportunities						

Context analysis Part II - Barriers

Part 2: The relationship between project and context: what barriers emerge?

Name the barrier	When will this barrier become important to the project (immediately, within the next year, within next five years, or long-term)?	Level where barrier emerges (local, national, international)?	What is the expected influence of the barrier on the project (low, medium, high, go-no-go)?	To what extent is the project concerned with dealing with the barrier? (low, medium, high)?	Describe the project strategy to seize the opportunity (monitoring, indirect influence, direct influence).	Describe specific actions within the strategy
Technology context						
Policy context						
Socio-economic context						
Cultural context						
Geographical context						
Other opportunities						