

WELCOME

Capitalisation in practice: Preparing programmes for implementation.

Kelly Zielniewski, Nicolas Garnier

30.06.2026 – 01/07/2026

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What does capitalisation mean?
**Transfer & reuse of
knowledge generated by
Interreg projects.**

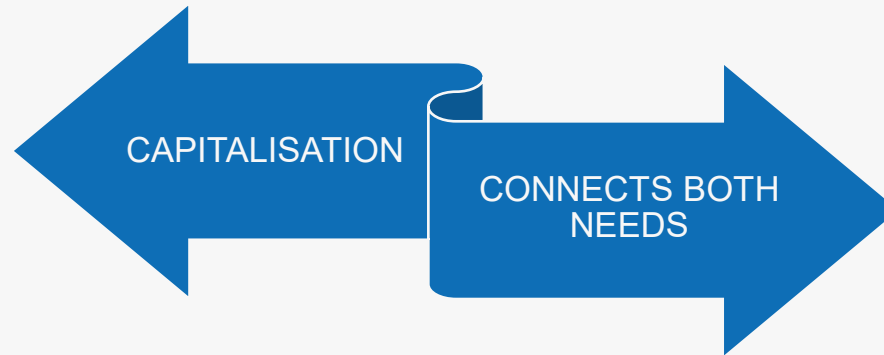
When should capitalisation happen?
**At all stages of the lifecycle of
the programme.**

How can you realistically do capitalisation?
**One step at a time and based
on the resources available.**

WHY is capitalisation important?

PROGRAMMES

Need to demonstrate the results & impact, as well as the EU added value.



PROJECTS

Needs to make their results visible, useful & sustainable.

Agenda

01

State of play: Where does my programme stand?

02

Capitalisation into the programme lifecycle

03

Making capitalisation happen

04

Bottlenecks & ways around them

05

Your capitalisation action plan

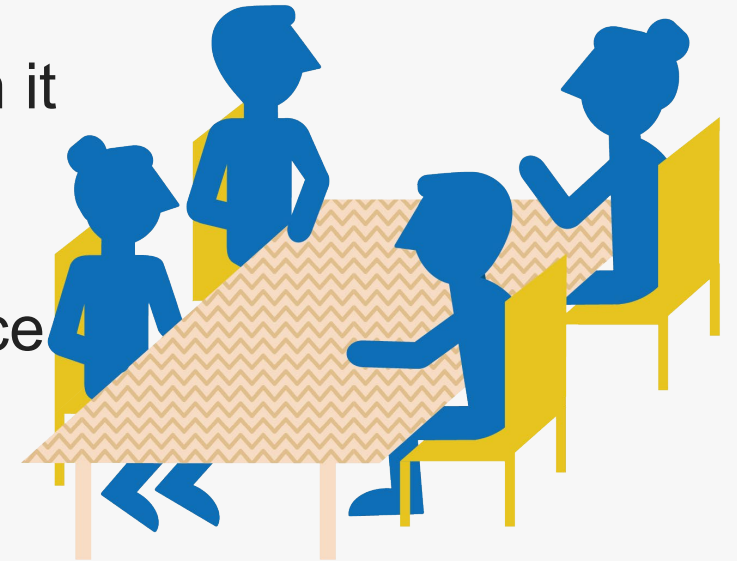
06

HIT

Discussion in groups (5 min)

At your table, briefly introduce yourself and explain:

- What's currently your biggest challenge when it comes to capitalisation?
- What's this one small step, success or practice your programme already has in place?



STEP 01

Where does **my** **programme** stand?

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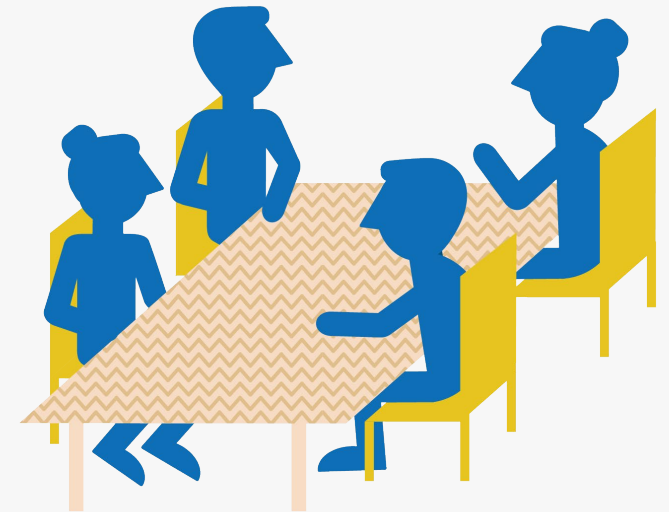


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Self-assessment (15 min)

Go to workbook, Step 1 (p.3):

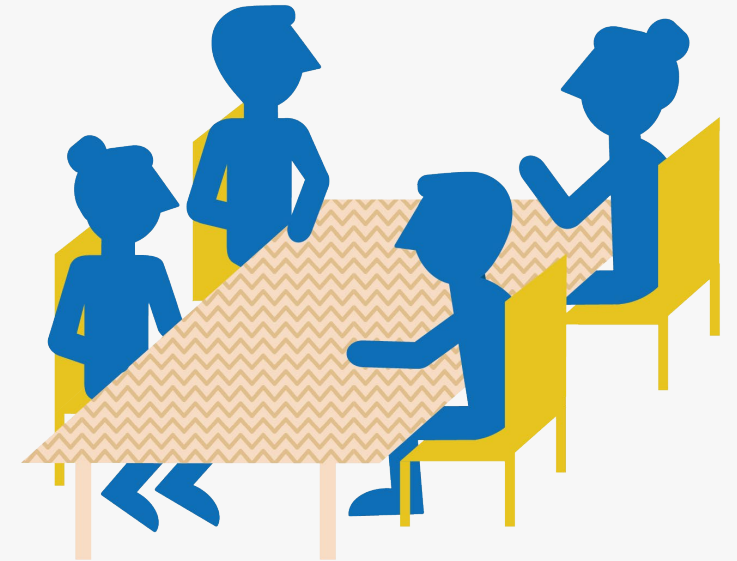
- Read the different statements and rate each of them from 1 to 5 (1 being not all true, 5 fully true).
- Then calculate your subtotal for each pillar and identify your strongest pillar, your weakest, the direction your programme could take (p.4).



Discussion in pairs (10 min)

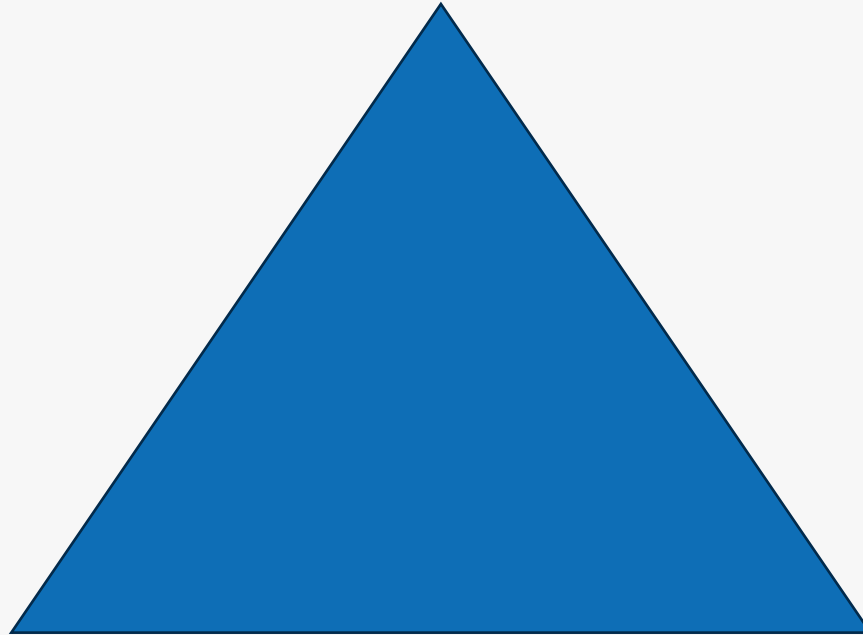
Turn to the person seated next to you and briefly discuss your results:

- Which pillar is strongest?
- Which one is weakest?
- What explains that result?
- Where do you see the biggest opportunity for improvement?



WHAT does a programme do to support capitalisation?

STRATEGIC POSITIONING



PROGRAMME MECHANISMS

SUPPORT & FACILITATION



STRATEGIC POSITIONING

WHY are we doing capitalisation?

- Shared understanding
- Clear objectives
- Clear vision
- Links to programme priorities
- Internal ownership



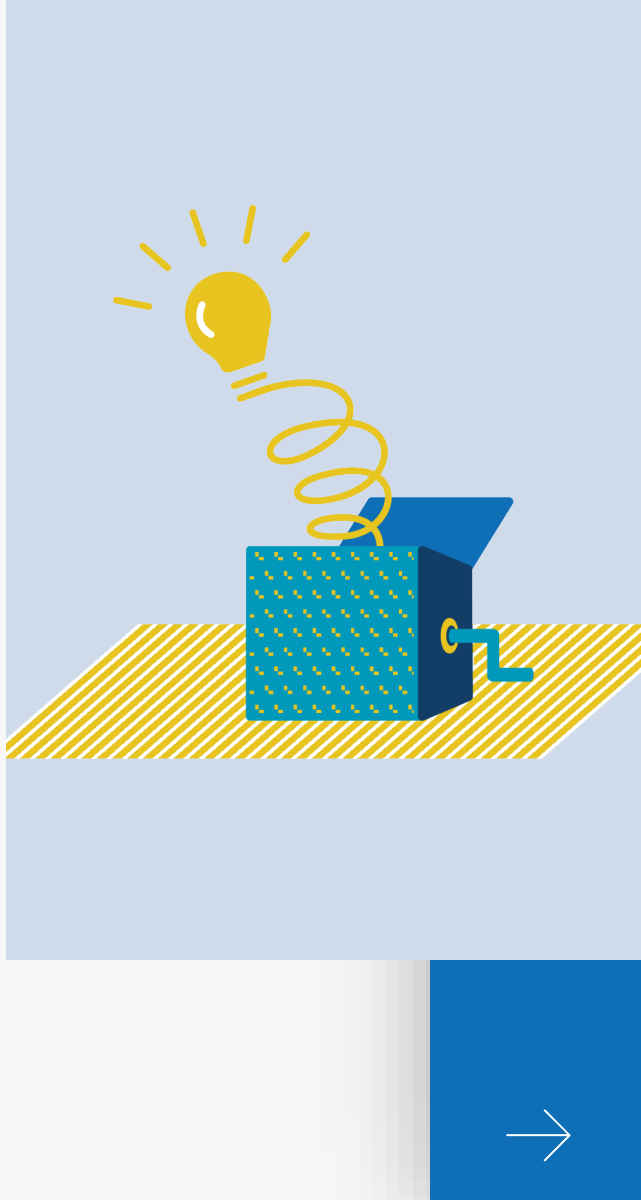


PROGRAMME MECHANISMS

HOW is capitalisation embedded?

- Calls
- Selection
- Procedures
- Monitoring
- Processes





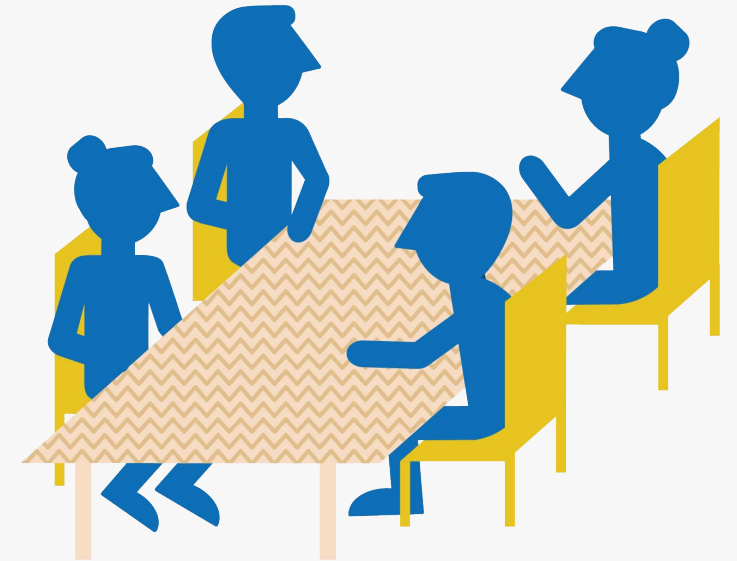
SUPPORT & FACILITATION

HOW do we support projects?

- Guidance
- Exchanges
- Learning
- Stakeholder engagement
- Support for transfer and uptake

Plenary (10 min)

- Which pillar is strongest?
- Which one is the weakest?
- Collective reflection, Q/A



Break

STEP 02

Capitalisation in the programme lifecycle

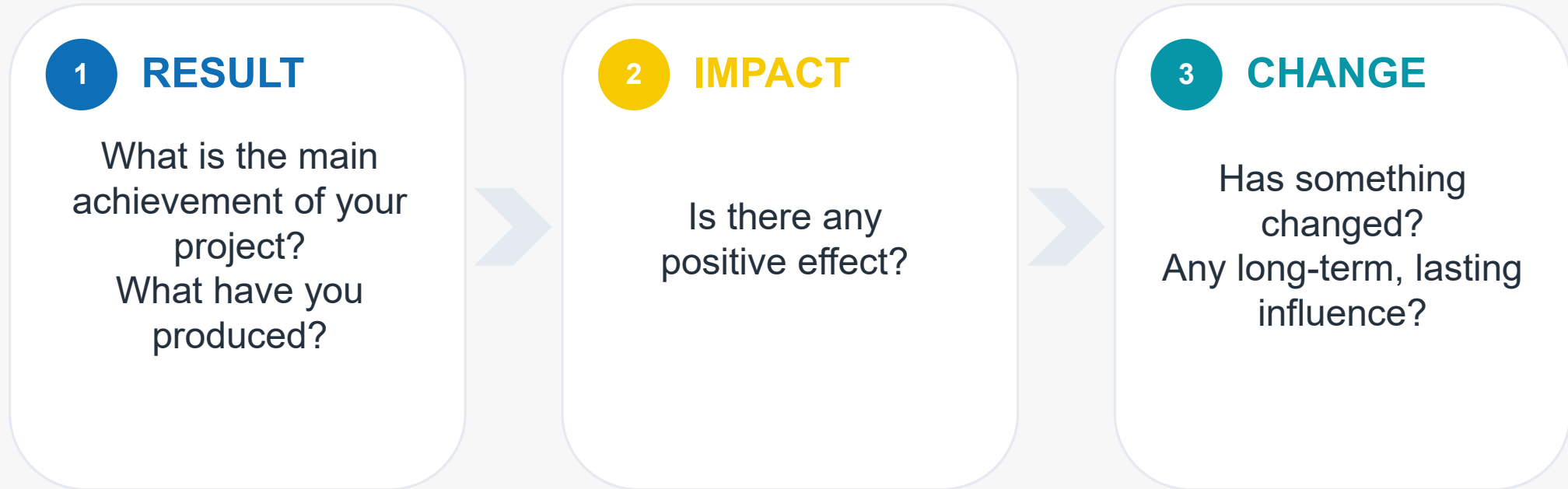
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The bigger picture



The aim is not only to produce something, but to enable positive change that lasts

What is, and is not, an impact?

IMPACT

**Positive, meaningful
CHANGE**

Not an activity, an award or a
number on its own



Impact is not (just) numbers

Numbers can support the story, but they do not describe the change.



It is about positive, meaningful change

What improved, for whom, and why does it matter?



It also needs other components

Takers, end-users, scale, time ... and the way change is achieved.

Interreg example: WARM HOMES



Challenge

Households struggle to access energy renovation support

Project result

A tested one-stop-shop model for municipalities

IMPACT STATEMENT

To reduce household energy poverty (**POSITIVE CHANGE**), the project equips 25 municipalities (**TAKERS**) with a tested one-stop-shop model (**HOW**), helping 2,000 vulnerable households (**END-USERS / SCALE**) access renovation support within three years (**WHEN**).



POSITIVE CHANGE



HOW



TAKERS



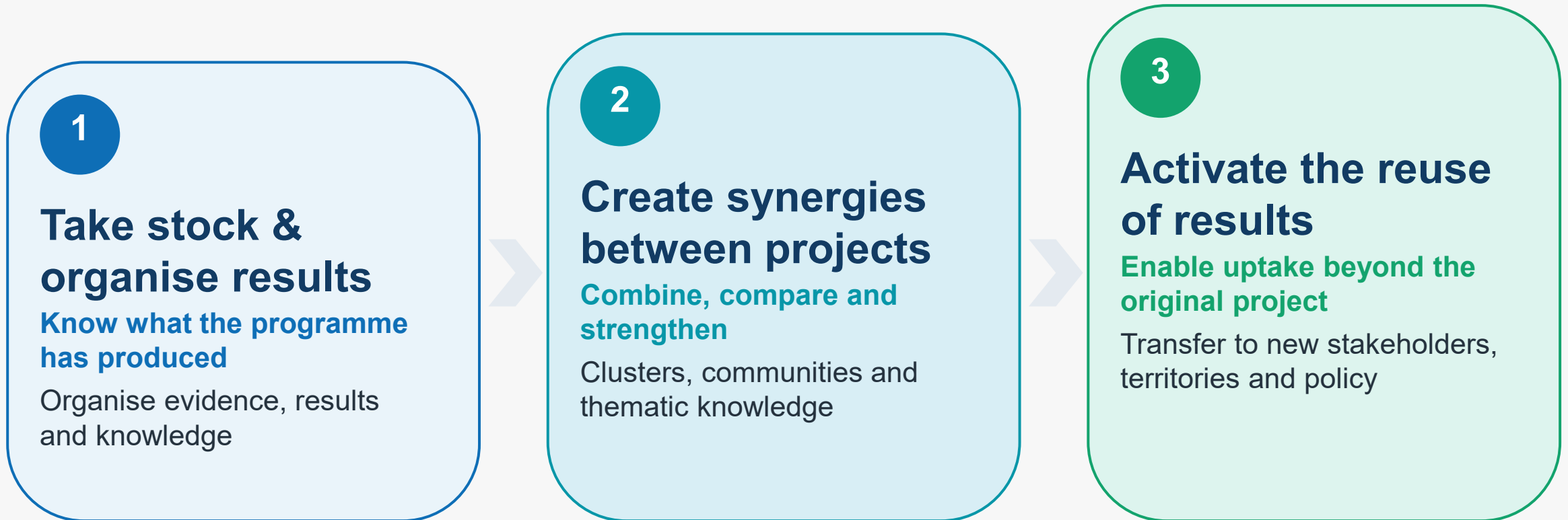
END-USERS



WHEN

Three levels of capitalisation

A programme can start with one level and progressively build towards the next



The direction of travel: from knowing results, to strengthening them, to enabling reuse and lasting change

Thematic capitalisation

Clustering, communities and other ways to connect project knowledge



CONNECT

Create links between projects to improve quality of results and their impact

GROW

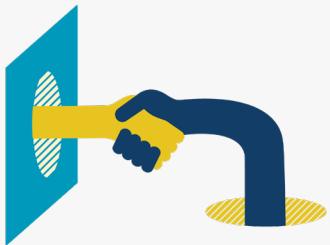
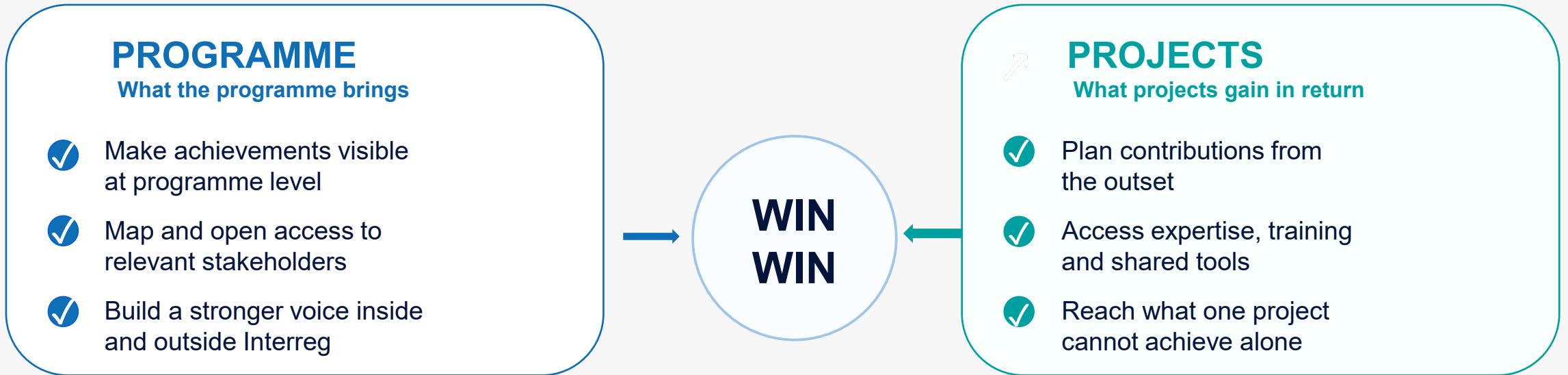
Encourage new partnerships for future projects

REACH

Support the visibility and reach of the programme and its results to stakeholders outside Interreg

Thematic capitalisation: programme and projects aligned

Capitalisation works when contribution is expected, supported and mutually beneficial.

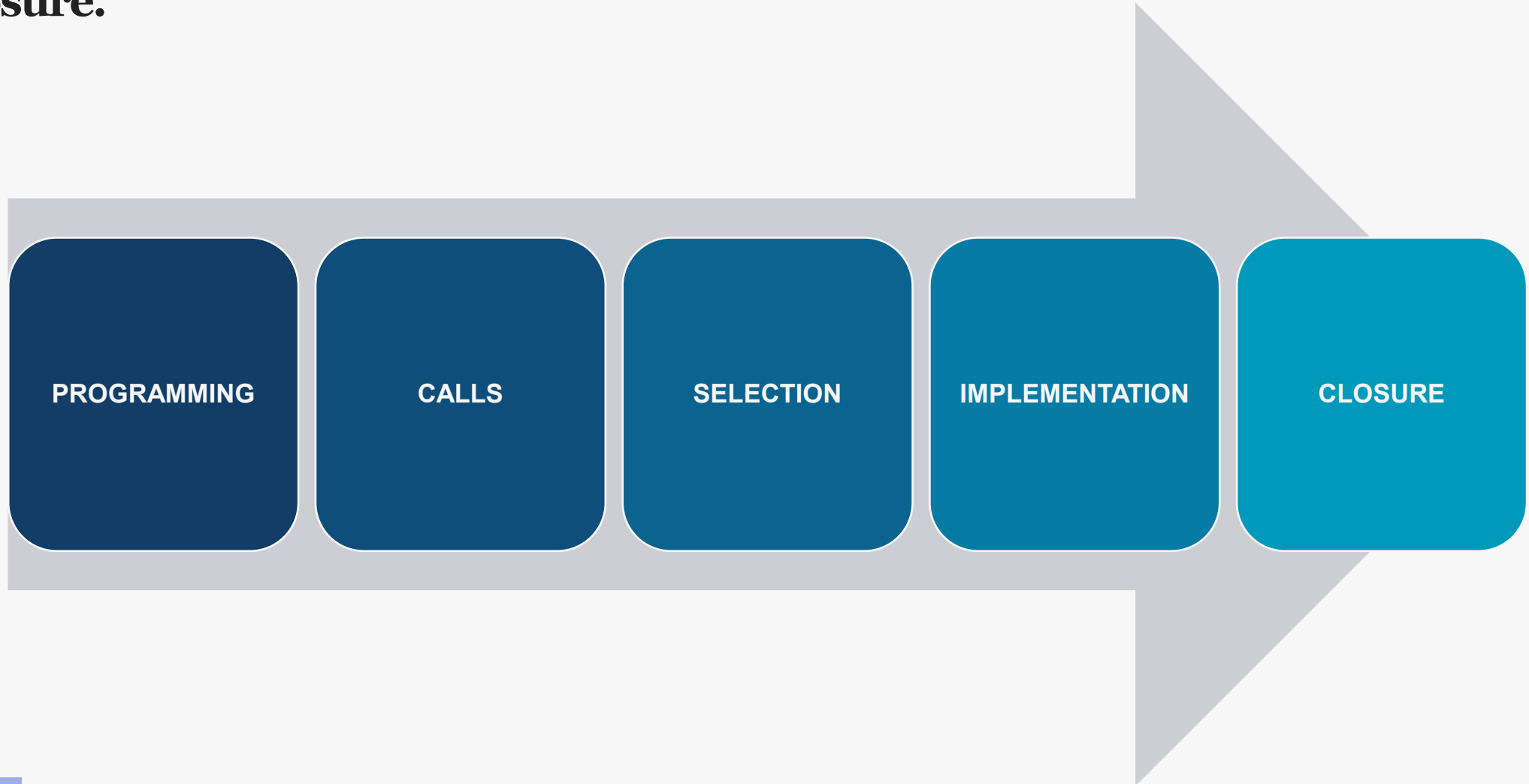


Shared logic: programme-level visibility, stakeholder access and mutual benefit make thematic capitalisation worth contributing to

Many programmes think about capitalisation at the end of projects BUT it should happen throughout the programme lifecycle.

Capitalisation opportunities across the programme lifecycle.

Programmes can influence capitalisation at different moments, not only at closure.



EXAMPLES

WHAT to do & WHEN?

PROGRAMMING

Define thematic priorities for capitalisation

CALLS

Ask applicants how they built upon previous results

SELECTION

Assess transferability and reuse potential

IMPLEMENTATION

Discuss capitalisation during project reviews

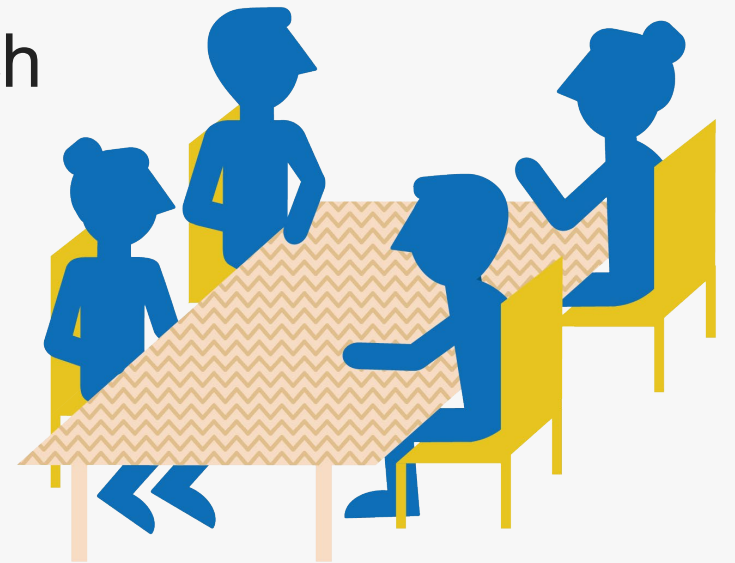
CLOSURE

Identify and promote reusable results

Individual reflection (15 min)

Go to workbook, Step 2 (p.5) and reflect individually on the following:

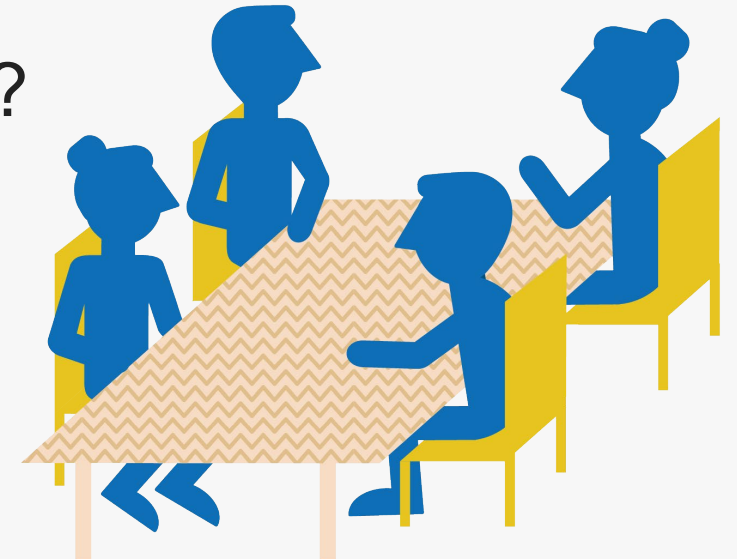
- What does my programme do under each stage (first column)?



Group discussion (20 min)

Discuss at your table:

- Which stage is already strong?
- Which stage is weak? What is missing?
- What can you realistically improve?



Lunch

STEP 03

Making capitalisation happen: Exploring practical approaches

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Making capitalisation operational

Three levers programmes can use without creating a heavy new system



The programme role is to create the conditions, support progress and connect results to opportunities for uptake

Capitalisation mindset from the outset

When planning an Interreg project, the starting point is solving a territorial challenge that is:

Territorial challenge

Demand-driven

Responds to the needs of a specific target group

Relevant

Responds to priorities of the programme and EU

Result-oriented

Addresses the need, agreed from the start

Cooperation added-value

Solves challenges across borders

Two additional capitalisation lenses

Building on existing results

What proven knowledge, practices or tools can the project use, adapt or advance?

End-users uptake and impact

Who is expected to take up the result, and what change should happen beyond the partnership?

Building on results : HIT template questions

C.2.6 Which synergies with past or current EU and other projects or initiatives will the project make use of?

Project or initiative	Synergies
<i>Enter title</i>	<i>Enter text</i>
<i>Enter title</i>	<i>Enter text</i>

C.2.7 How does the project build on available knowledge?

Please describe the experiences/lessons learned that the project draws on, and other available knowledge the project capitalises on.

Enter text here

Do you have such questions in your application form? Share your example!



Building on results : HIT template questions

As a programme, we would like to support projects that have a long-lasting effect in the territory and those who will benefit from them. Please describe below what you will do to ensure this.

C.8.1 Ownership - Please describe who will ensure the financial and institutional support for outputs/deliverables developed by the project (e.g., tools), and explain how these outputs/deliverables will be integrated in the work of partner organisations.

Enter text here

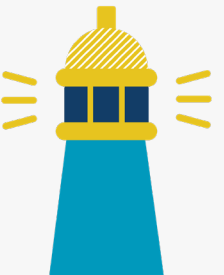
C.8.2 Durability - Some outputs/deliverables should be used by relevant groups (project partners or others) after the project's lifetime, in order to have a lasting effect on the territory and the population. For example, new practices in urban transport need to be used by local authorities to have cleaner air in the city, and the whole population will benefit from this. Please describe how your outputs/deliverables will be used after the project ends, and by whom.

Enter text here

C.8.3 Transferability - Some outputs/deliverables that you will deliver could be adapted or further developed to be used by other target groups or in other territories. What will you do to make sure that relevant groups are aware of your outputs/deliverables and are able to use them?

Enter text here

Essential that outputs are thought with transferability and lasting impact in mind from the start...



What makes a result transferable?



Useful, understandable, tested, adaptable, accessible

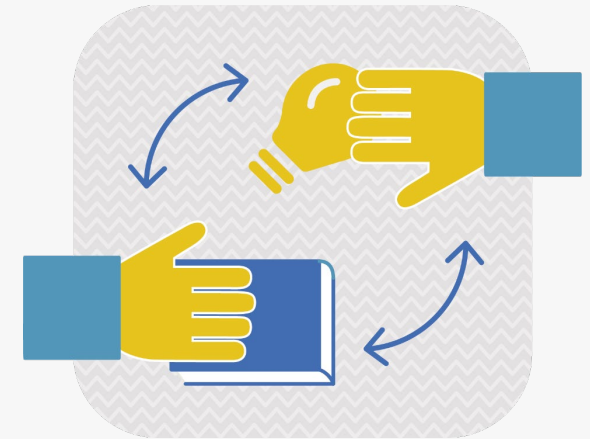


Relevant to others and usable beyond the original project context

Substantiate what is meant by “**good project**”

The objective is not visibility only, but:

- ❖ Uptake
- ❖ Adaptation
- ❖ Re-use
- ❖ Long-term impact



Operational criteria for transferability

Questions programmes can use in applications, assessment and project reviews

RELEVANCE

Does it address a need confirmed beyond the project partnership?

EVIDENCE

Has it been tested and validated with users in real conditions?

OWNERSHIP

Is someone responsible for maintaining, updating and sharing it?

ACCESS

Are the result, guidance and evidence easy to find and use?

ADAPTABILITY

What can change in another context without losing the core value?

FEASIBILITY

Are costs, skills, permissions and resources clear?

DEMAND

Are potential takers identified and engaged early enough?

EXAMPLE: BRAVE

Catalysing green energy investment

- Business model for large solar roof.
- SME coaching programme.



BRAVE

Interreg
North Sea



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Supporting projects during implementation

How can programmes help projects contribute to capitalisation without overloading them?

WHEN

**At which moments
do we engage with
projects?**

WHAT

**Which emerging
results should we
look for?**

HOW

**What support can
the programme
provide?**

The goal is not more reporting. It is earlier identification, better evidence and clearer preparation for uptake

Identifying reusable results early

Project results are not only found in final reports

WHERE

- Applications and progress reports
- Deliverables, outputs and pilots
- Events, study visits and peer exchanges
- Stakeholder feedback and evaluations
- Follow-up activities

WHEN

- 1 Kick-off** Clarify intended users and possible reusable results
- 2 First testing** Check what is working and what evidence exists
- 3 Mid-term** Identify emerging results and potential takers
- 4 Pre-closure** Prepare ownership, access and transfer conditions

The best results are often hidden between the reporting lines

Supporting projects step by step

Three practical checkpoints during project implementation

START-UP

Agree intended users, existing results to build on and evidence needed

1

MID-TERM

Review emerging results, user validation, takers and barriers

2

PRE-CLOSURE

Confirm ownership, maintenance, guidance, access and next steps

3

Suggestions for actions



Dedicated questions in progress report



Set format for mid-term meeting



One-page result card



Present results among peers at programme level

From results to capitalisation

How programmes support transfer and reuse



Capitalisation checkpoints help programmes decide what is ready, what needs support and where to connect it

False 'good CAP results'

Some outputs look impressive but are difficult to capitalise



Highly context-specific solutions



Platforms with no users



Tools nobody maintained after project end



Pilots never validated by users



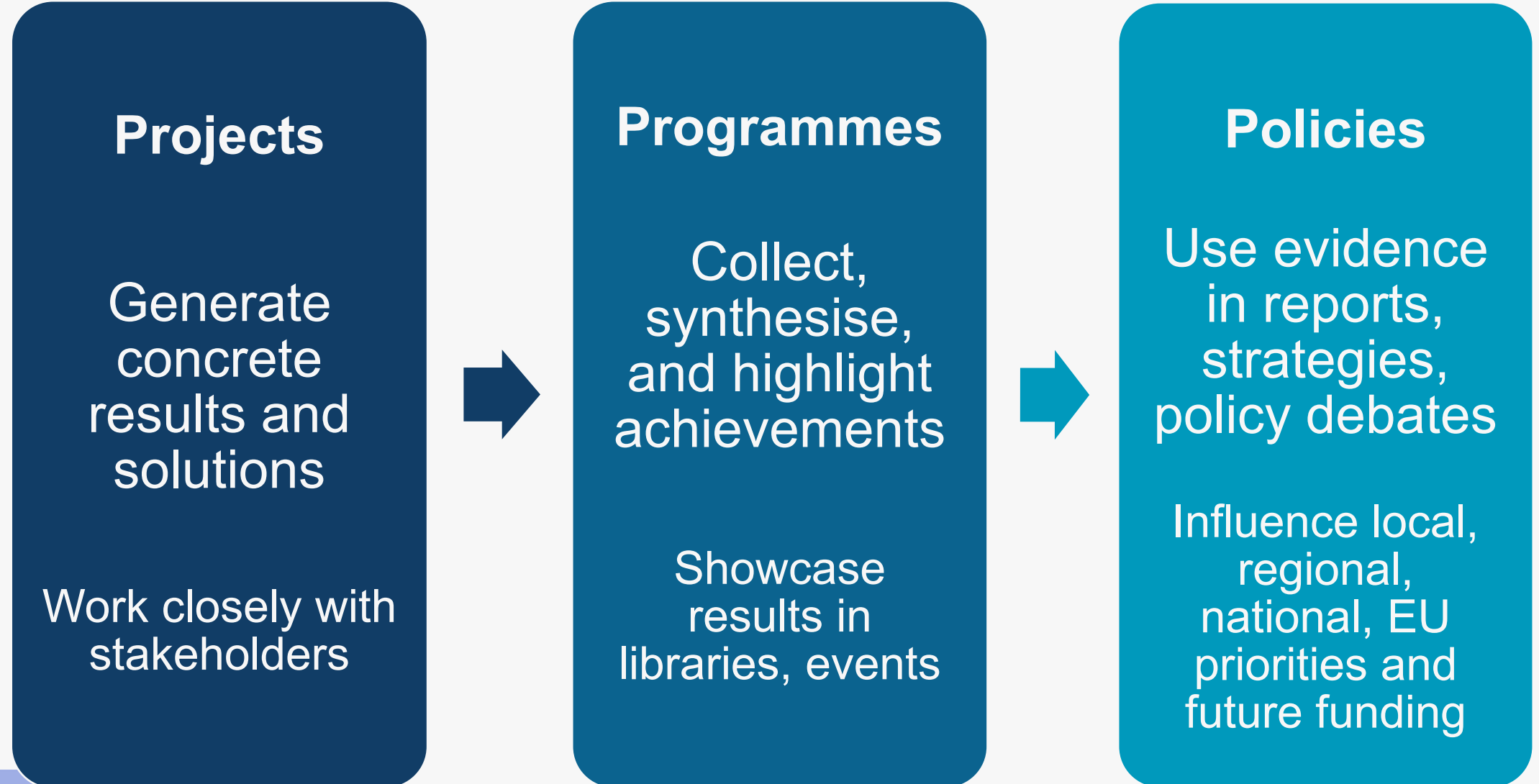
Outputs available only in national language



Innovation solving no real need

A successful project output is not automatically a transferable result

Feeding results into policy processes



Roles in the capitalisation process

Who do you need on board

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The starting point: programme ambition

Roles only become clear once the programme knows what it wants capitalisation to achieve

- 1 **Gather knowledge and expertise on key objectives**
- 2 **Ensure the relevance of funded outputs**
- 3 **Encourage transfer to other areas or stakeholders**
- 4 **Facilitate engagement after project end**
- 5 **Ensure legacy of programme investment**
- 6 **Influence public policy and mainstreaming**

Exercise: build the capitalisation team

Four role stations, one shared programme ambition

1 Programme

2 Monitoring
Committee

3 National
Contact Points

4 Projects

ADD

What actions can this body take?

RANK

Which actions matter most?

CONNECT

What does it need from the other bodies?

4 rounds of 5 minutes – **EITHER flipcharts around the room, or on tables**

Capitalisation Role card: Programme (MA / JS)



DIRECTION SETTER

The programme creates the framework, keeps the overview and organises support

Core role in capitalisation

Direction and framework

- ✓ Define the capitalisation ambition and overall approach
- ✓ Translate expectations into calls, criteria and guidance

Support and coordination

- ✓ Provide tools, checkpoints and practical support
- ✓ Dedicate coordination and, where possible, thematic capacity

Results and opportunities

- ✓ Maintain an overview of results and promising practices
- ✓ Create networking, reuse and visibility opportunities

Capitalisation Role card: Monitoring Committee



LEGITIMACY ENABLER

The MC gives political weight, strategic direction and institutional reach to capitalisation

Core role in capitalisation

Strategic role

- ✓ Align capitalisation with territorial and national priorities
- ✓ Trust and openness to support the capitalisation mindset shift

Opening doors

- ✓ Champion promising results within member institutions
- ✓ Connect results to mainstream funds and policy processes

Added value

- ✓ Bring legitimacy that helps move beyond project-level exchange
- ✓ Reinforce awareness of Interreg among national networks

Capitalisation Role card: National Contact Points



TERRITORIAL CONNECTOR

NCPs know the territory and can connect programme results to relevant networks and takers

Core role in capitalisation

Know the territory

- ✓ Identify needs, institutions and potential takers
- ✓ Spot where project results could be relevant beyond single Interreg programme

Connect and relay

- ✓ Bring programme results into national and regional networks
- ✓ Feed opportunities and stakeholder needs back to the programme

Promote

- ✓ Raise awareness of Interreg results within relevant institutions
- ✓ Support dissemination through existing national/regional channels

Capitalisation Role card: Projects and beneficiaries



SOLUTION PROVIDER

Projects generate evidence, engage users and make their tested solutions ready for uptake

Core role in capitalisation

Generate and test

- ✓ Develop and validate solutions in practice
- ✓ Document evidence, use conditions and transfer requirements

Engage

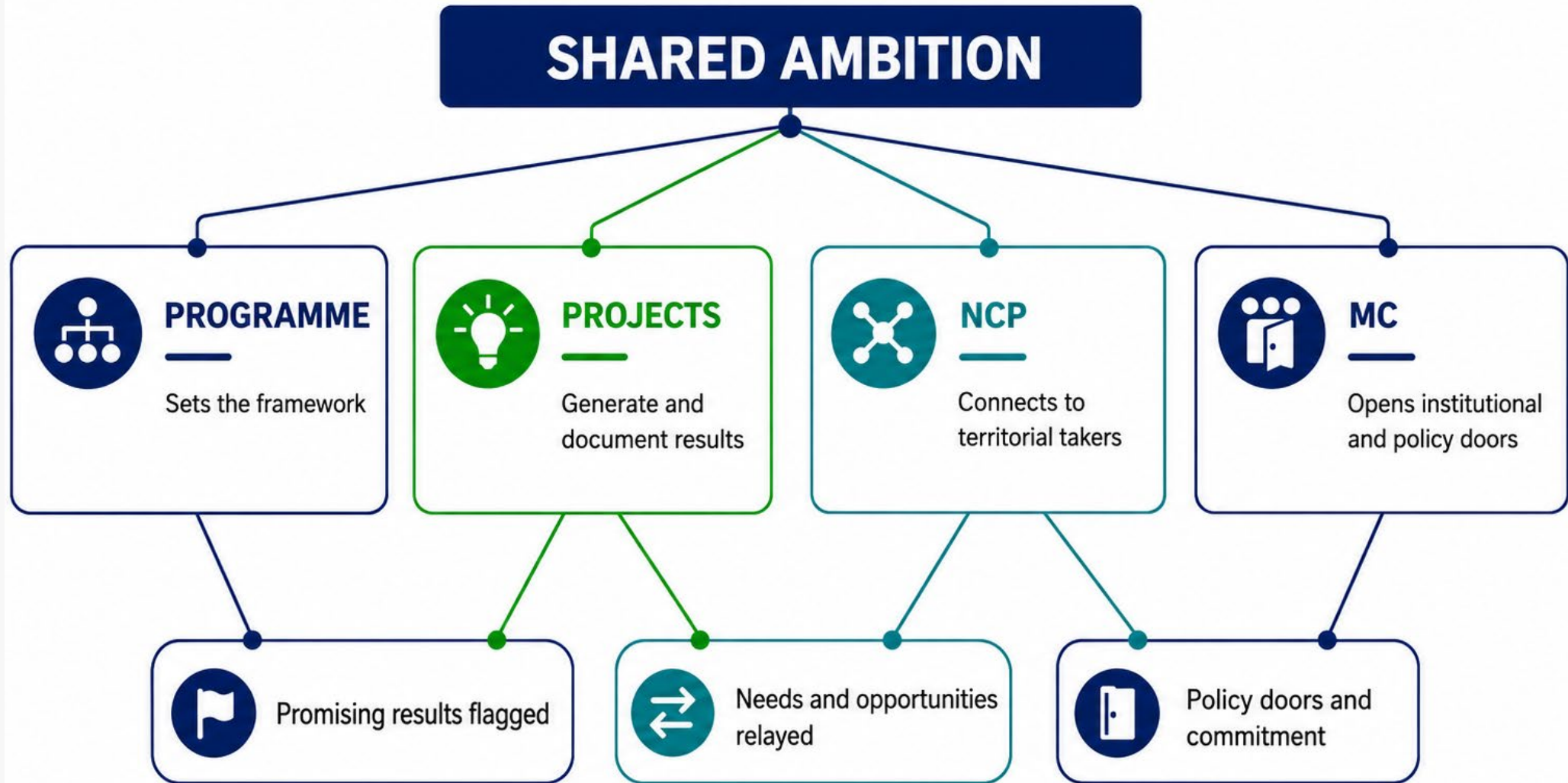
- ✓ Work with takers and end-users early enough
- ✓ Capture feedback that shows whether the result creates change

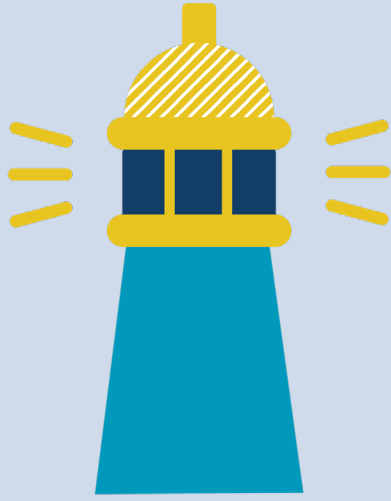
Contribute

- ✓ Make outputs accessible and maintainable
- ✓ Contribute to programme communities and act as multipliers

Connect the roles: all on board

Capitalisation is a shared process, a partnership at programme level





WHAT do we mean by soft-touch approaches?

Small programme practices that help cross-border and low-capacity programmes move from capitalisation plans to action.

- Low resource
- Quick to set up
- Build on what exists



A few examples to get started

A set of CAP practices is on your table.

IMPLEMENTATION

Capitalisation questions in project reviews

Challenge addressed: Projects only think about capitalisation at the end

Practice: include one short capitalisation question in review meetings or reports

Resources: ★ low



CALLS/SELECTION

One result worth reusing

Challenge addressed: programmes struggle to identify what is reusable

Practice: ask each project to flag one result with reuse potential

Resources: ★ low

CLOSURE

Story-based result page

Challenge: Useful results remain hidden in long technical reports

Practice: Replace long reporting with a one-page plain-language result summary for reuse

Resources: ★ Low–medium



Break



WHAT do we want with the soft-touch approaches?

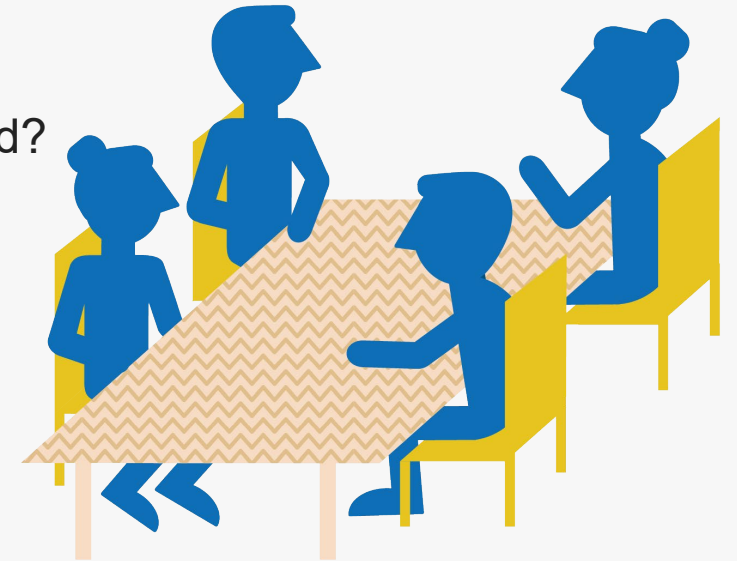
Create possible programme responses to questions such as:

- How do we help projects think beyond their own project?
- How do we identify results worth keeping alive?
- How do we create small but useful capitalisation habits & actions?

Group work (20 min)

Look at the practice cards on your table, and discuss:

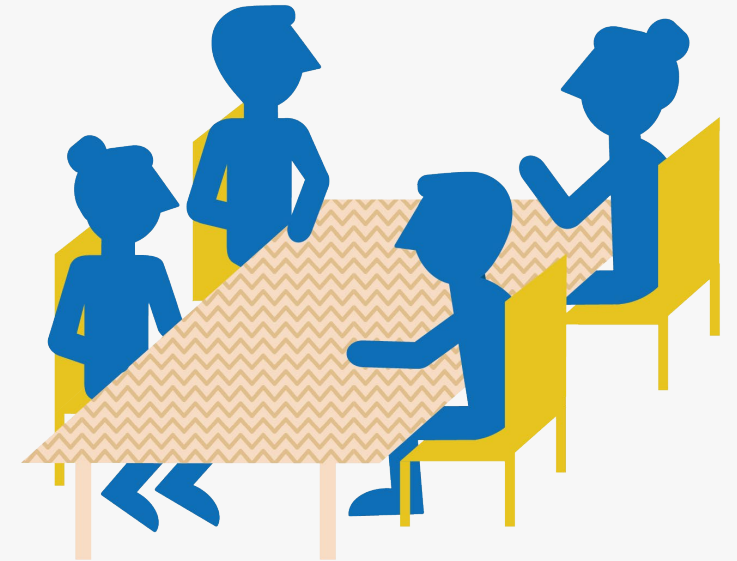
- Which practices could really work for your programmes?
- Which practices are interesting but would need to be adapted?
- Which ones feel too ambitious or not relevant right now?
- Any new CAP practice you can think of?



Plenary (10 min)

Each table shares:

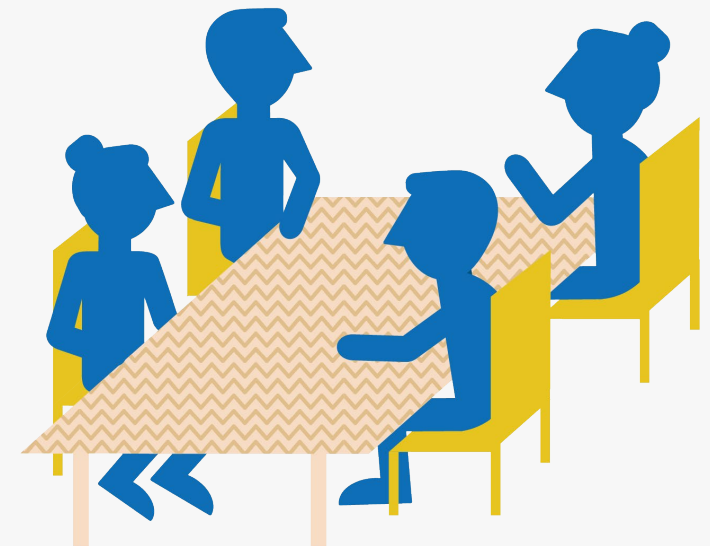
- Which practices would work best?
- At which stage of the programme lifecycle.



Individual reflection (10 min)

Go to workbook, Step 3 (p.7) and reflect individually on the following:

- What is your chosen practice? Why?
- Who/What do you need to implement it?



STEP 04

Why is capitalisation not happening?

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Types of bottlenecks



INTERNAL

Bottlenecks inside the programme (how it is staffed, organised, and equipped to support capitalisation)



EXTERNAL

Bottlenecks around the programme (in the wider landscape it operates)

INTERNAL

Programme design

**NOT A PRIORITY**

Capitalisation is seen as a “nice to have” rather than as part of programme delivery and results.

**UNCLEAR OWNERSHIP**

If capitalisation is everyone's job, it can easily become no one's job.

**WEEK INTERNAL SUPPORT**

The programme may have some ideas, but not enough shared commitment across MA / JS / communication / coordination to move them forward.

INTERNAL

Programme procedures

**NOT EMBEDDED**

Capitalisation is expected, but not reflected in forms, criteria, reporting or review moments.

**WRONG TIMING**

Capitalisation often comes too late in the project or competes with other programme priorities and deadlines.

**NO FORMAL SPACE**

Projects may produce useful results, but there is no structured moment to identify them and discuss what could happen next.

INTERNAL

Capacity & resources

**LIMITED STAFF, TURNOVER**

Capitalisation competes with day-to-day programme management for the same people and hours.

**NO DEDICATED EXPERTISE**

Programme teams may want to do more, but lack confidence, methods or examples on how to organise capitalisation in practice.

**NO OR VERY LIMITED BUDGET**

Without even a small budget for support, facilitation or follow-up, capitalisation is often the first thing postponed.

EXTERNAL

Stakeholders & uptake



LATE ENGAGEMENT

Relevant institutions or users of project results are not involved early enough to shape reuse or transfer.



SOLUTIONS NOT MOVING FORWARD

Projects may produce interesting outputs, but there is no clear pathway for uptake, ownership or continuation afterwards.



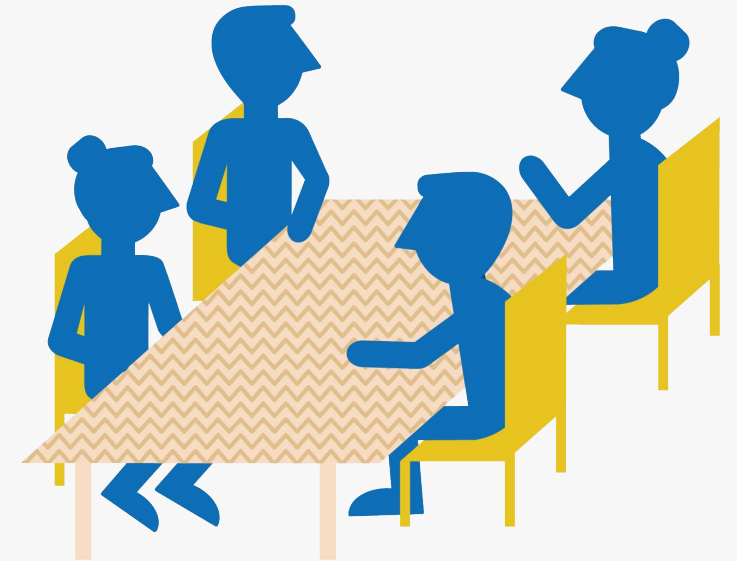
LIMITED POLITICAL/INSTITUTIONAL BUY IN

Results exist, but are not packaged, described or positioned in a way that makes reuse easy.

Group work (25 min)

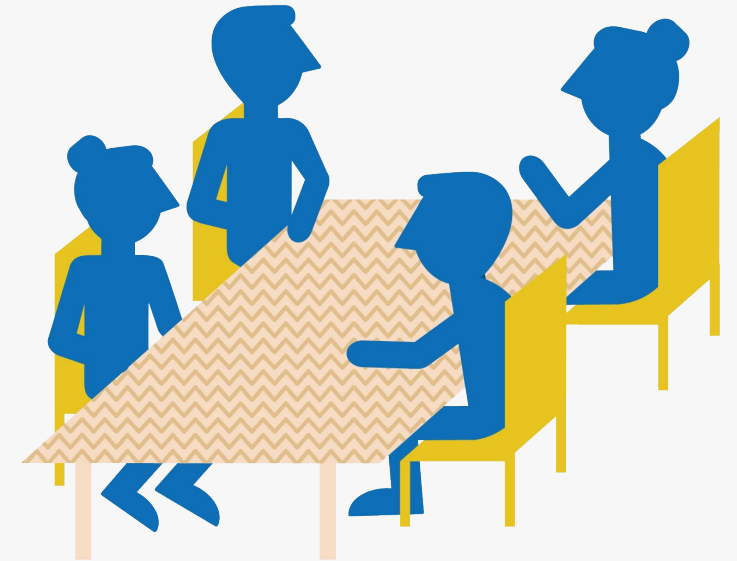
At your table, discuss:

- Which bottlenecks appear most often?
- Which are **within our control**?
- What are possible ways around them?



Plenary (15 min)

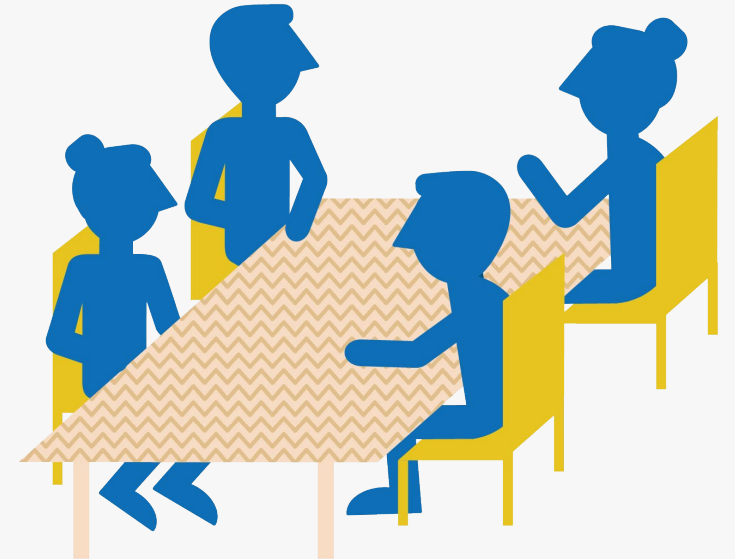
Each table shares their reflections/solutions (i.e. enablers/actions) identified for the bottlenecks within their control.



Individual reflection (10 min)

Go to workbook, Step 4 (p.8) and reflect individually on the following:

- My bottlenecks
- The ones under my control
- My programme response



Break

STEP 05

Design your action plan now: From ideas to implementation

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HOW the exercise works

WORKBOOK

Go to workbook, Step 5 (page 9). Use the questions in the workbook to turn one idea into a realistic next step (25min)

PEER REVIEW

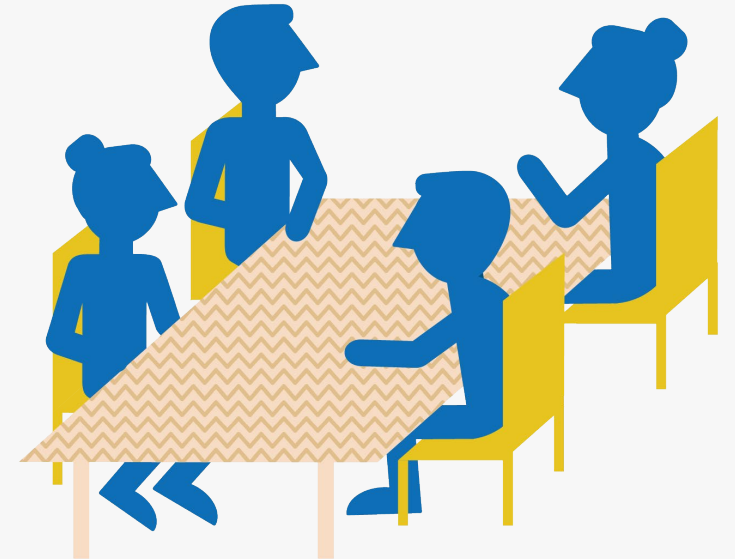
Discuss your draft with another participant and test whether the action is clear, realistic and concrete enough (10min)

WORKBOOK

Short exchange on the types of actions emerging and what support programmes need most. (10min)

Go to the workbook (25 min)

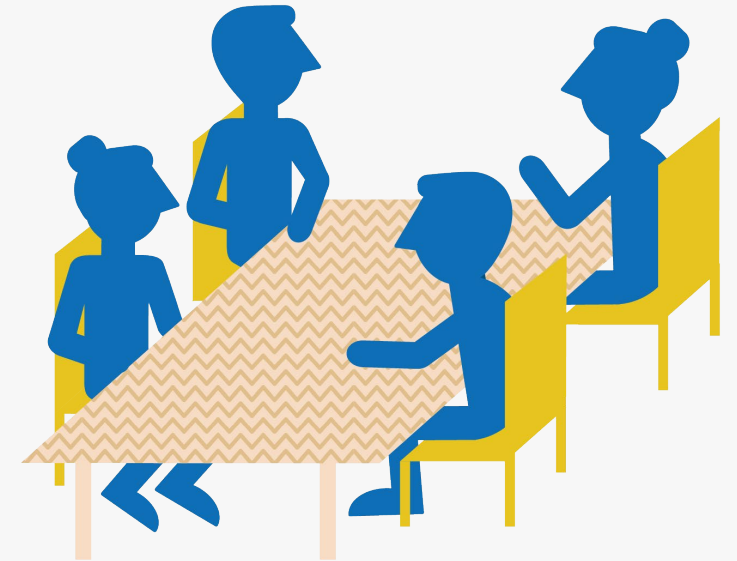
Individual drafting of an action plan based on a series of questions provided in the workbook.



Peer review (15 min)

Discuss your draft action plan with another participant:

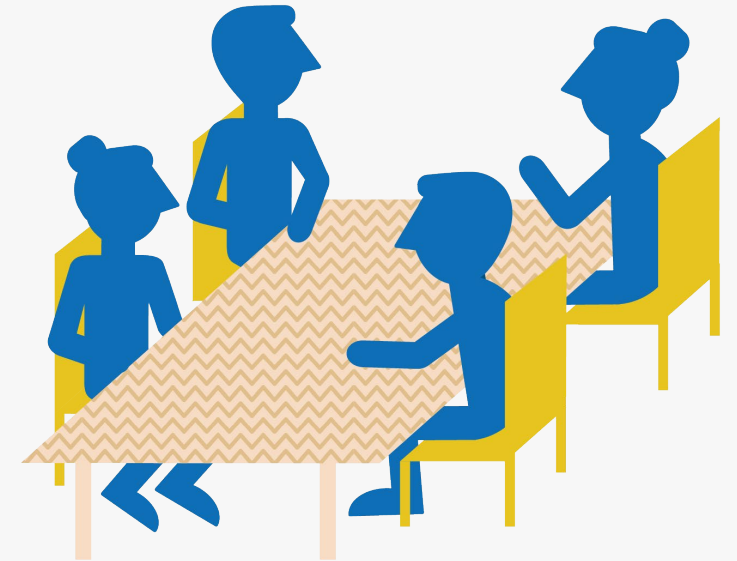
- Is the action clear?
- Is it realistic for the programme context?
- Is the first step concrete enough?
- Does the timing make sense?
- How could the plan be strengthened?



Plenary (10 min)

As a group, exchange on:

- What types of actions are emerging?
- What support would help most?





Final considerations

- Capitalisation does not require a perfect system from day one.
- Capitalisation can be embedded throughout programme practice & lifecycle.
- Capitalisation is both strategic and operational.

STEP 06

Capitalisation by design

HIT application form and assessment criteria templates

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Capitalisation mindset from the outset

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Territorial challenge

Demand-driven

Responds to the needs of a specific target group

Relevant

Responds to priorities of the programme and EU

Result-oriented

Addresses the need, agreed from the start

Cooperation added-value

Solves challenges across borders

Two additional capitalisation lenses

Building on existing results

What proven knowledge, practices or tools can the project use, adapt or advance?

End-users uptake and impact

Who is expected to take up the result, and what change should happen beyond the partnership?

Building on results : HIT template questions



C.2.6 Which synergies with past or current EU and other projects or initiatives will the project make use of?

Project or initiative

Enter title

Synergies

Enter text

Enter title

Enter text

C.2.7 How does the project build on available knowledge?

Please describe the experiences/lessons learned that the project draws on, and other available knowledge the project capitalises on.

Enter text here

Building on results : HIT template questions

As a programme, we would like to support projects that have a long-lasting effect in the territory and those who will benefit from them. Please describe below what you will do to ensure this.

C.8.1 Ownership - Please describe who will ensure the financial and institutional support for outputs/deliverables developed by the project (e.g., tools), and explain how these outputs/deliverables will be integrated in the work of partner organisations.

Enter text here

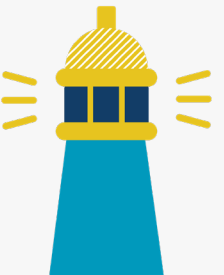
C.8.2 Durability - Some outputs/deliverables should be used by relevant groups (project partners or others) after the project's lifetime, in order to have a lasting effect on the territory and the population. For example, new practices in urban transport need to be used by local authorities to have cleaner air in the city, and the whole population will benefit from this. Please describe how your outputs/deliverables will be used after the project ends, and by whom.

Enter text here

C.8.3 Transferability - Some outputs/deliverables that you will deliver could be adapted or further developed to be used by other target groups or in other territories. What will you do to make sure that relevant groups are aware of your outputs/deliverables and are able to use them?

Enter text here

Essential that outputs are thought with transferability and lasting impact in mind from the start...



Building on results : HIT template questions

Strategic assessment criteria

Project relevance

How well is the need for the project justified?

- The project addresses common territorial challenges of the programme or a joint asset of the programme area - there is a real need for the project (well justified, reasonable, well explained). – AF C.2.1 and C.2.2
- The project clearly contributes to a wider strategy on one or more policy levels (EU / national / regional). – AF C.2.5

To what extent will the project contribute to the achievement of programme's objectives and indicators?

- The project overall objective clearly contributes to the achievement of the programme priority specific objective. – AF C.1
- The project outputs clearly link to programme output indicators and their contribution to programme targets is sufficient. – AF C.4 Output tables in work packages
- Project's contribution to programme result indicators is realistic and sufficient. – AF C.5

How does the project build on existing practices?

- The project makes use of available knowledge and builds on existing results and practices. – AF C.2.7
- The project tries to avoid overlaps and replications; there is evolution of ideas. – AF C.2.2
- The project demonstrates new solutions that go beyond the existing practice in the sector/programme area/participating countries or adapts and implements already developed solutions. – AF C.2.2



Building on results : HIT template questions

Project intervention logic

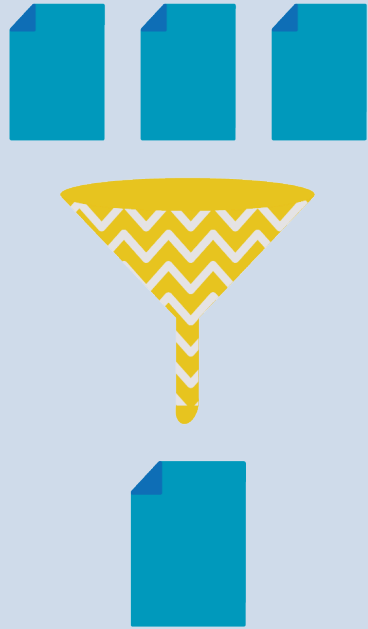
To what extent is project intervention logic plausible?

- Project specific objectives are specific, realistic and achievable. – AF C.4 Specific objectives in work packages
- Proposed project outputs are needed to achieve project specific objectives. – AF C.4 Output tables in work packages
- Project outputs and results that contribute to programme indicators are realistic (it is possible to achieve them with given resources – i.e., time, partners, budget - and they are realistic based on the quantification provided). – AF C.4, C.5, C.6, D

To what extent will project outputs have an impact beyond project lifetime?

- Project outputs are durable (the proposal is expected to provide a significant and durable contribution to solving the challenges targeted) – if not, it is justified. – AF C.8.2
- Project main outputs are applicable and replicable by other organisations/regions/countries outside of the current partnership (transferability) – if not, it is justified. – AF C.8.3





Capitalisation by design

What applicants should show

- **Starting point:** building on what exists
- **Pathway:** thought about adaptation and transfer of results
- **Right people:** involvement of takers and end-users
- **Realistic workplan:** activities, timing and resources support uptake
- **Durability and ownership:** plan after closure



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Capitalisation sections

Your opinion – live poll



- What do you expect vs what do you actually get?
- What is currently difficult for applicants to understand or address well?
- What should be clearer in the AF or assessment criteria... without making the application heavier?

Cooperation works

All materials will be available on:
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Capitalisation

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