EMPOWERING EU ISACS WAY OF WORKING

Tips on how to organise working groups

Agenda

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This inspirational document provides concrete tips on how to organise working groups to channel efforts within an ISAC

A <u>working group</u> is a selection of individuals within an ISAC who have collectively been assigned to a **dedicated task** to achieve a **specific ISAC objective**. 'Working group' is often interchanged with other terms such as Work Group/Task Force/Committee/etc. and it often refers to an ad hoc group with a designated lifespan and (a) **clear deliverable(s).** Within the context of ISACs, the following elements of working groups will be elaborated upon in this document:

Structure of this document

Why set up a Working Group?

The Why

- Objectives of Working Groups
- Working Group Themes and Topics
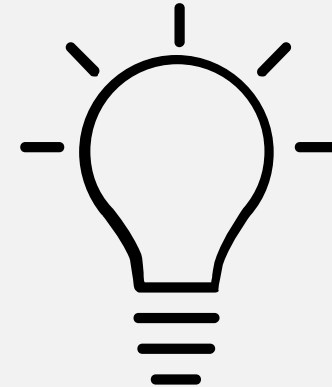- Types of Deliverables

How to organise a Working Group?

The How

- Involving the Right People
- Assigning Responsibilities and Roles
- Process and Project Control

What templates to use?

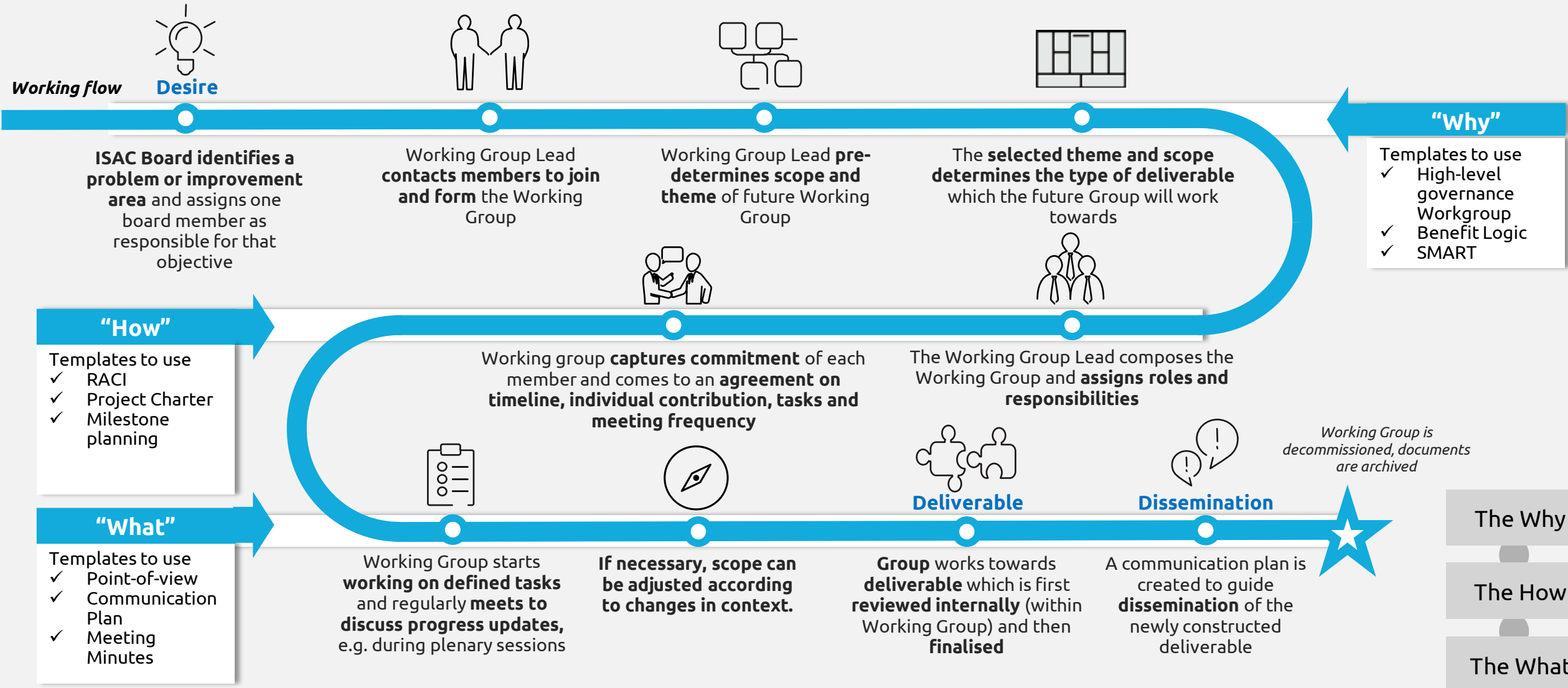The What

- Blueprint ISAC Working Group Journey
- Templates to use

This document serves an **inspirational** purpose: with *concrete tips, outlines and even templates*, we aim to provide ISACs with **practical tools** for effective and efficient cooperation to reach specified objectives of the ISAC.

A typical journey of any given Working Group within ISACs follows a flow from Desire to Deliverable, to Dissemination

Working flow   **Desire**

"Why"

ISAC Board identifies a problem or improvement area and assigns one board member as responsible for that objective

Working Group Lead **contacts members to join and form** the Working Group

Working Group Lead **pre-determines scope and theme** of future Working Group

The **selected theme and scope determines the type of deliverable** which the future Group will work towards

Templates to use
- ✓ High-level governance Workgroup
- ✓ Benefit Logic
- ✓ SMART

"How"

Templates to use
- ✓ RACI
- ✓ Project Charter
- ✓ Milestone planning

Working group **captures commitment** of each member and comes to an **agreement on timeline, individual contribution, tasks and meeting frequency**

The Working Group Lead composes the Working Group and **assigns roles and responsibilities**

Deliverable

Dissemination

Working Group is decommissioned, documents are archived

"What"

Templates to use
- ✓ Point-of-view
- ✓ Communication Plan
- ✓ Meeting Minutes

Working Group starts **working on defined tasks** and regularly **meets to discuss progress updates,** e.g. during plenary sessions

If necessary, scope can be adjusted according to changes in context.

Group works towards **deliverable** which is first **reviewed internally** (within Working Group) and then **finalised**

A communication plan is created to guide **dissemination** of the newly constructed deliverable

The Why

The How

The What

* Based on the scope of your working group, you can decide which steps to undertake and instruments/templates to use

Agenda

Why set up a working group? (1/2)

Your goal as an ISAC is to be of added value to your members and target group, and working groups can help you to do so. Since it should always contribute to the overall goal(s) of the ISAC, it is important to think about the 'why' of a working group:

The objective of Working Groups

An important first choice is to decide if a working group will be enacted for an (internal) topic related to the functioning of the ISAC itself, or a theme of relevance for the (external) constituency and community. Find below some examples:

External:
- ❖ Patchmanagement
- ❖ Incident Analysis & Response
- ❖ IT/OT Security Monitoring
- ❖ Vendor Management
- ❖ Threat Intelligence
- ❖ (Privacy) legislation and compliancy

Internal:
- ❖ Strategy & Roadmap
- ❖ Situational awareness
- ❖ External outreach
- ❖ Analysis Capacity
- ❖ Way of Working
- ❖ Tools & Platform
- ❖ Stakeholder analysis

Determining the scope of a Working Group

An objective of a Working Group is of course closely related to the chosen theme/topic, but besides the dichotomy between external and internal goals, it is good to keep in mind that there are choice you can make about the set-up of the Working Group:

External	*VS*	**Internal**
Products/activities for the sake of the constituency)		Improve the maturity of the ISAC
Short-term	*VS*	**Long term**
For example an article		E.g. Standards of Practice
Continuous	*VS*	**One-Off**
E.g. newsletters/quarterly reports, etc.		E.g. Opinion Papers

Tip #1 – use SURVEYS or POLLS to gather input

These tools will help you find out which topics are of (most) interest to your community

Tip #2 – formulate your objectives SMART

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Relevant
- Time bound

Tip #3 – start off with QUICK WINS

For a good start, it helps to look for low-effort ways to be of value to your constituency on a short time notice

The Why

The How

The What

Why set up a working group? (2/2)

Your goal as an ISAC is to be of added value to your members and target group and working groups can help you to do so. Since it should always contribute to the overall goal(s) of the ISAC, it is important to think about the 'why' of a working group:

The deliverables of Working Groups

When you have determined the topic and the scope of the Working Group, it is important to figure out what the outcome of the Working Group will be, or the deliverables. Once again, the difference can be made between deliverables with an internal or external goal. The following list of examples provide an inspirational purpose and is of course not comprehensive or limitative:

External:

- ❖ **Standards** - (sub) sector tailored cyber security standards, either operational, technical, tactical or strategic
- ❖ **Best / Good Practices**
- ❖ **Opinion Papers** (for example for lobbying purposes)
- ❖ **Trend analysis** – (sub)sectoral analysis
- ❖ **ISAC Reports** – outreach about ISAC activities
- ❖ **Blogs/Articles** – illustrating expertise
- ❖ **Conferences / sessions**

Internal:

- ❖ **Decision documents** – on suggestion for internal improvements
- ❖ **Communication / Marketing plan** – providing an overview and approach to outreach
- ❖ **Strategy Roadmap** – outlining the ISACs strategy and planning
- ❖ **Stakeholder Analysis** – an assessment of the ISAC's stakeholders field
- ❖ **ISAC Reports** – for internal reporting on performance and activities

Tip #4 – Goal shapes FORM

The objective and scope largely determines the type of deliverable, suited to the right audience

The Why

The How

The What

Agenda

How to organise a working group? (1/2)

Once the objective and type of activity or deliverable are agreed upon, the working group itself will need to be formed and measures will need to be takes than this group will be effective and works efficiently:

Involving the Right People

It is important to have an honest conversation about what potential participants can contribute to the working group. Participants in the ISAC organisation, but also members or individuals within the constituency might be invited to contribute, while taking the following elements into account:

❖ **Skills and knowledge:** in many cases, the involvement of Subject Matter Experts will be required

❖ **Availability:** you need to be able to trust the team members to actually deliver, for which availability is crucial.

❖ **Enthusiasm:** the right amount of positive energy will help the working group perform while simultaneously building trust

Assigning Roles and Responsibilities

It is equally as important to assign tasks and activities in such a way that each person feels confident they can fulfil their roles. A simplistic governance or RACI overview (see Chapter 4) can help with this purpose. The following generic roles can be useful to assign (keep in mind that an individual can fulfil multiple roles):

❖ **Lead (or chief)**: the 'lead' of the group, presides meeting and is responsible for external coordination
❖ **Secretary (or scribe):** responsible for documentation and recording
❖ **Thematic Subject Matter Expert:** recognized authority on the topic
❖ **PMO/support:** responsible for practical coordination and facilitation of the project

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Tip #5 – the size of the group matters

The more the merrier does not necessarily apply: small groups often work more efficiently

Tip #6 – participation is a goal by itself!

Working together is an excellent means to build trust, which is one of the ISACs main objectives

Tip #7 – mix up the terms

To prevent misunder-standings with similar roles, use other terms, like 'chief' or 'scribe'

The Why

The How

The What

How to organise a working group? (2/2)

Once the objective and type of activity or deliverable are agreed upon, the working group itself will need to be formed and measures will need to be takes than this group will be effective and works efficiently:

Process and Project Control

If the objective of the working group has been defined SMART, this will help with safeguarding the structure of the way the working group will actually establish its goal. You will have to come to explicit agreements on the: timeline, individual contributions, meetings, tasks. The following instruments can help with outlining this process (templates are to be found in Chapter 4):

❖ Project plan / charter

Document and consolidate the objectives and scope of the Working Group in a (simple) Project Charter or Plan. This will help with keeping focus throughout the entire process.

❖ RACI / Stakeholder Management

It helps to perform and document the analysis of the people and roles involved within the working group, as well as the external players that need to be taken into account.

❖ Progress / Milestone Dashboard

Especially for Working Groups with a larger scope, it helps to keep track of progress being made with a (simple) dashboard, even more so when you are planning to deliver multiple products or perform multiple activities.

❖ Minutes / meeting methodology

Effective meetings are crucial for working together. Making arrangements and agreements on this at the very start of the process will help you along the way, and documentation in the form of minutes can assist with that.

* The use of these instruments is optional and depends on the scope and context of a working group, use instruments if they help facilitate and 'ease' the work: they should not become an objective themselves

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Tip #8– working together is an art

Discussing expectations and 'ground rules' for working together can help set the tone

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The Why

The How

The What

Agenda

What templates to use?

The following tools in our toolbox will help defining the way of working for working groups within the ISAC.

Tools to define reasons of setting-up a working group, define the objectives and to position the Working Group within the organization:

1 Benefit logic
Discover how your working group will contribute to the greater cause of your ISAC. The Benefit Logic is a session in which the answer "if so, then HOW" is often posed. Starting from the ambition that the organisation wants to realize, HOW will this initiative contribute to that?

2 SMART objectives setting
Defining your objectives SMART will ensure that they can be achieved as it filters fuzzy, immeasurable, irrelevant and ill-timed objectives.

3 High-level governance workgroup
Define the place of the working group within the organisation and define common project management roles (not yet appoint roles)
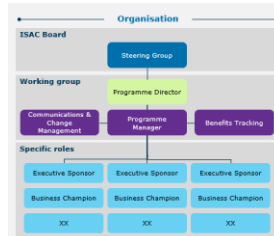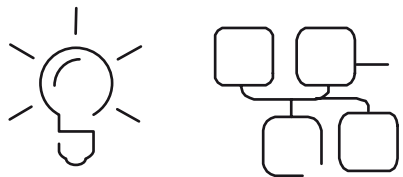
Why-templates

Tools to organise the working group's, roles and responsibilities, way of working and keep track of progress:

4 RACI
Defining who's responsible, accountable, consulted and informed results in clearer understanding of the expected work done by partners in the ISAC

5 Project charter
A Project Charter shows the objectives, scope and resources of a project in order to provide focus and direction for the project.

6 Milestone tracking
Milestones help track the progress of a project by providing mini-check points and completion dates

How-templates

Tools to work out deliverables or communicate once deliverables are finalised:

7 Minutes template
Writing good minutes is essential for the preservation of knowledge.

8 Templates of Point-of-View
Tips and tricks on writing a point-of-view with structured content page

9 Communication / Marketing plan
How to cast the message to the right audience? The aim of communications is to increase the understanding of stakeholder groups and so increase their buy-in.
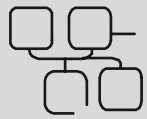
What-templates

The Why

The How

The What

1 Benefit Logic

## Description and Applicability

The **benefit logic** establishes logical links between benefit areas, opportunities and components of the solution.

- The benefit logic defines the benefit areas to reach the ambition set by the stakeholders. It also provides a framework for **linking defined solutions to the benefit areas**. By doing this, it automatically creates **priorities** of activities and states on what activities to focus.

- Different stakeholders might have different priorities and the benefits logic is helpful in identifying those differences. After the possible solution components are identified, **consensus** about the focus can be reached.

Often, a benefit-logic is a facilitated workshop setting with a duration of approximately 3-8h (1/2 – 1 day). The result of this workshop is a clear understanding of how an organization's activities contribute to it's objectives. The Empowering EU-ISACs can facilitate this workshop.

Steps and templates
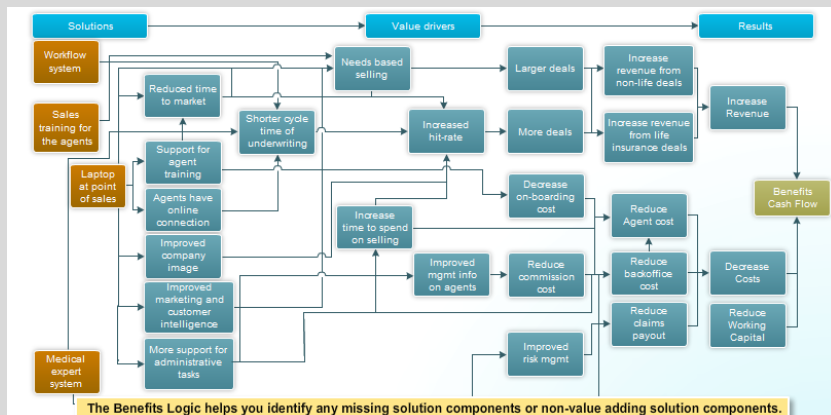
2 SMART Objective setting

S
Specific
What exactly do you want to achieve?

M
Measurable
Establish clear definitions to help you measure if you're reaching your goal

A
Attainable
What steps can you take to reach your goal? Outline the exact steps to accomplish your goals

R
Relevant
How will meeting this goal help you? Does your goal relate to your ISAC's mission?

ST
Time-bound
How long will it take to reach your goal?

With each objective you set, check along the above acronym whether the objectives meet the SMART criteria

3 High Level Governance Workgroup Structure Template

Name the titles in the boxes on the left and appoint names incl. roles on the right

Organisation

Who **Role**

Steering Group

ISAC Board

- X
- X

Working Group

Working group lead

Communications & Change Management | Operations | Benefits Tracking

- X
- X

Specific roles (expertise)

Executive Sponsor	Executive Sponsor	Executive Sponsor
Task Champion	Task Champion	Task Champion
XX	XX	XX

- X
- X

- X
- X

- X
- X
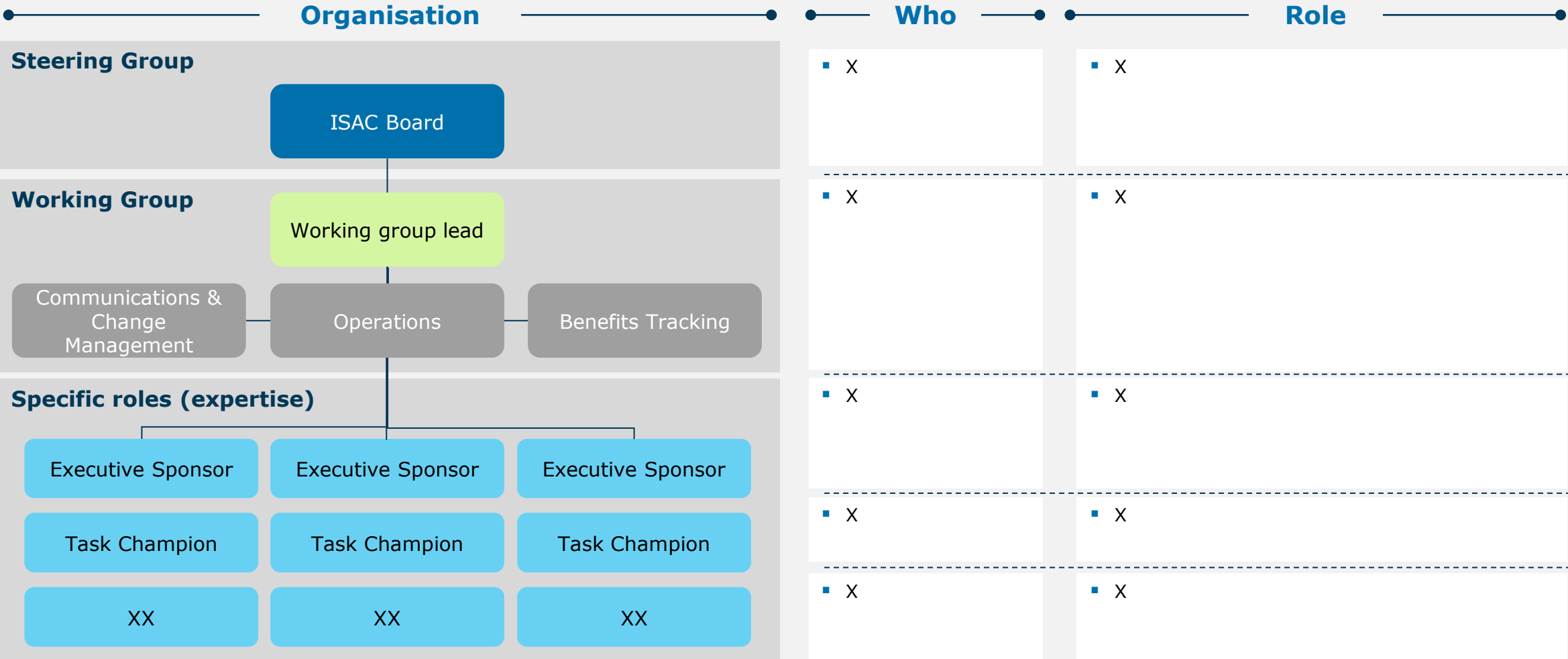
4 RACI

Description and Applicability

A **RACI** (Responsible, Accountable, Consulted and Informed) is a tool that links people to all the activities and streams of a project.

A RACI is really useful in making sure that everyone is aligned. Key activities are linked to people and a differentiation is made between who's responsible, accountable and those who need to be consulted or informed. The overview can then be analyzed to see if there is an **effective arrangement of the roles** of the personnel.

Steps and templates

R = Responsible: those who do the work
A = Accountable: accountable that must sign off (approve) work that responsible provides. There must be only one accountable specified for each task or deliverable
C = Consulted: those whose opinions are sought and discussed with (two-way communications)
I = Informed: those who are kept up-to-date on progress, often only on completion of the task or deliverable; and with whom there is just one-way communication.

Project RACI

Project: xxx **Owner:** xx

Insert project name and owner here

Activities					

Activities go here in the grey cells e.g. build business case

R,A,C,I go here in the white cells
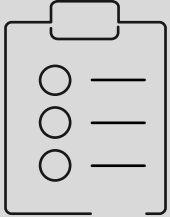
People's Names go here in the red cells

5 Project Charter

Description and Applicability

A **Project Charter** shows the objectives, scope and resources of a project in order to provide focus and direction for the project.

A charter is a powerful communication tool that facilitates that everyone is on the same page regarding a project. It clarifies what is in and out of **scope**, summarizes the key **stream information** and lists specific **deliverables**.
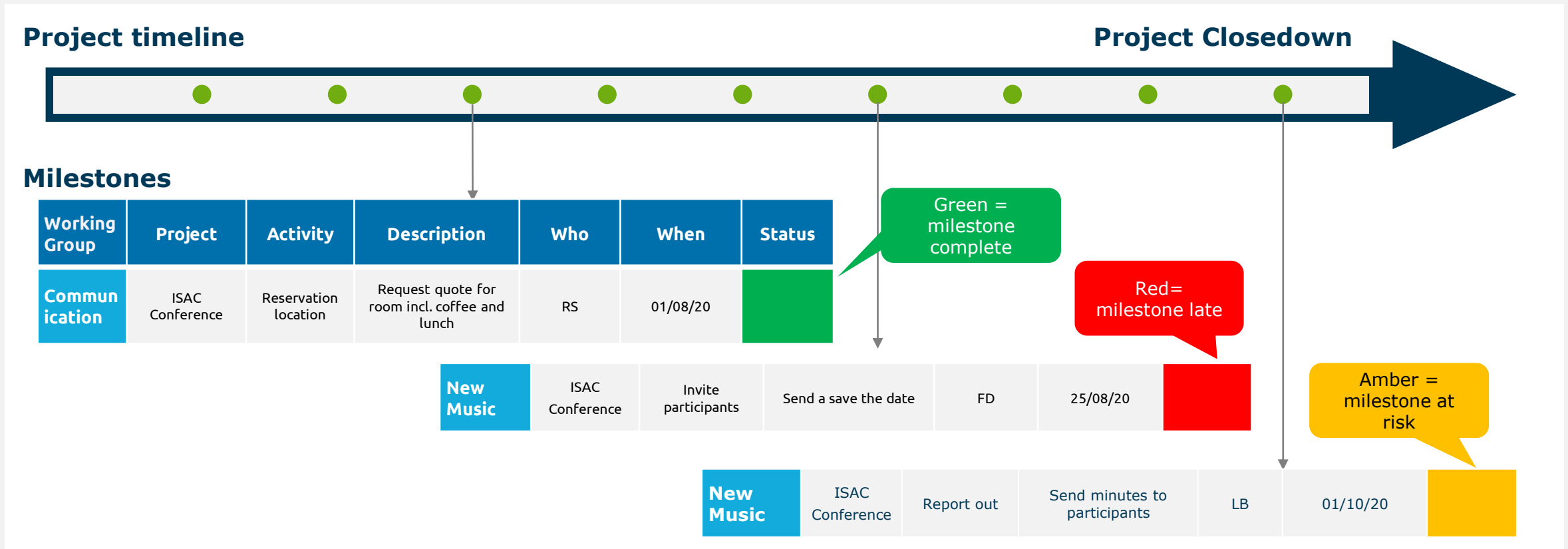
Steps and templates

Workgroup mission	Key activities	Deliverables	Sponsor
- What are the group's aspirations?	- What are major steps needed to undertake to reach the goal?	- What tangible products will the team deliver to accomplish the mission?	- Who will the solution be presented to internally? This person also resolves major issues and provides direction to the group
To-be-state objectives			**Dissemination Strategy**
- What are specific objectives that the team is charged to accomplish? - SMART when possible		**Crucial Success Factors**	- How will the deliverables be communicated?
In scope		- What are elements that need to be fulfilled to be able to present the deliverables? - What are key factors in managing and integrating all the relevant people?	- **Resources**
- What are the boundaries of the project?			- Who are the members of the organisation and which support is needed externally (technology / outsourcing)?
Out of scope			
- What shall not be done?			

6 Milestones

Milestones and completion dates help tracking the progress of a project

Project timeline   **Project Closedown**

Milestones

Working Group	Project	Activity	Description	Who	When	Status
Communication	ISAC Conference	Reservation location	Request quote for room incl. coffee and lunch	RS	01/08/20	

Green = milestone complete

New Music	ISAC Conference	Invite participants	Send a save the date	FD	25/08/20	

Red= milestone late

New Music	ISAC Conference	Report out	Send minutes to participants	LB	01/10/20	

Amber = milestone at risk

By defining milestones for the working group with clear owners and timelines and by reporting on the progress, the activities and status are transparent which will generate trust and buy-in for all involved.

7 Minutes template

Meeting Title		

Date	Meeting Time	Meeting Location

Meeting called by	Name
Type of meeting	Type of meeting
Facilitator	Facilitator name
Note taker	Note taker name
Timekeeper	Timekeeper name
Attendees	Attendees

Agenda Topic:		

Time allotted: 10 min	Presenter		
Discussion	Enter discussion		
Conclusions	Enter conclusions		

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Action item 1	Presenter Name	Date | time
Action item 2	Presenter Name	Date | time
Action Item 3		

General notes:		

8 Template point-of-view

In writing a position paper, follow either one of two stances in the outline.

Position Paper Template

Follow:	If you don't hesitate on your opinion	If you're not sure
When to use	If you fully agree/disagree with a topic or theme	If you agree to some extent (not 100%)
Purpose	Persuade your reader	To show different points-of-view
Introduction	Hook the reader, provide background information, present the topic and formulate the thesis statement	
Body	First reason why you agree/disagree + example, fact or statistics	A point of view from a positive perspective + example, fact or statistic
	Second reason why you agree/disagree + example, fact or statistics	A point of view from a negative perspective + example, fact or statistic
	Third reason why you agree/disagree + example, fact or statistics	A point of view from a neutral perspective + example, fact or statistic
Conclusion	Paraphrase your thesis statement, briefly restate the main points and express your final opinion	

9 Template communication plan

A good communication plan meets the chosen objectives with the right media channels in a timely manner

	Communications Media		
	Electronic **Good for time efficiency**	**Face-to-Face** **Good for complex messages**	**Paper-based** **Good for simple messages**
Awareness	▪ E-mail ▪ Friday Mailer ▪ Mailbox		▪ Notice boards etc. ▪ Kitchen posters

Understanding	▪ Audio ▪ Friday Mailer
	  conferencing ▪ Intranet
	▪ Computer
	  networks
		▪ Roadshows
		▪ Staff meetings
		▪ Away days and
		  conferences
			▪ Letters ▪ Business plans
			▪ Memos ▪ Press releases
			▪ Circulars, leaflets
			▪ Newsletters

Engagement	▪ Telephone
	▪ Video
	  conferencing
	▪ Intranet
	▪ Internet
		▪ Senior ▪ Interviews
		  management ▪ Press conferences
		  visits ▪ Drop-in
		▪ Cross-functional information zones
		  meetings
			▪ Staff attitude
			  survey

Involvement	▪ Intranet ▪ Surveys ▪ Internet ▪ CDs	▪ Training courses ▪ Special seminars ▪ Interviews	▪ Staff suggestion scheme ▪ Articles

Commitment	▪ Intranet
	▪ Internet
	▪ Web-based
	  activity
		▪ Leadership ▪ Senior
		  workshops and management
		  presentations meetings
		▪ Programme team ▪ Workshops / focus
		  meetings groups	

Communications Objective