

# Integration of Sustainability in Project Management

Student: Nicole Copani

Industry / Practice Partner: XYZ Multinational Provider of Engineering and Consulting Services in Southernmost Canton of Switzerland

## 1. Background, Challenge & Objectives

### Background / Context

XYZ recognizes the significance of sustainability in today's business landscape and has set its sights on embracing a sustainable project management approach. By doing so, XYZ aims to align its project management practices with the broader sustainability targets of the company. The integration of sustainability into project management services is a key objective for XYZ, as it seeks to ensure that every project undertaken not only achieves its immediate goals but also contributes to long-term environmental, social, and economic objectives.

### Challenge / Research Questions

(1) What are the effective methods and indicators for measuring sustainability within the realm of project management?

(2) Which Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are most relevant and suitable for evaluating and measuring the impact of XYZ's project management activities on sustainability goals?

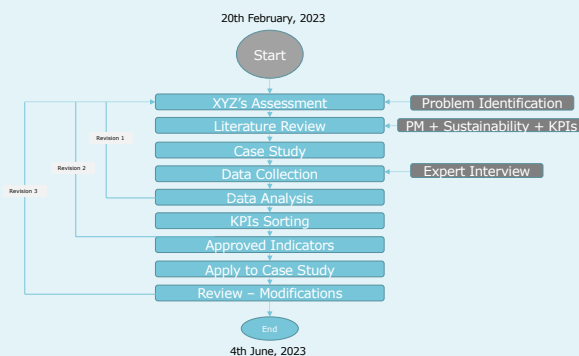
### Objectives

1. Formulating a comprehensive and actionable sustainability framework specifically tailored for the project management domain, ensuring its alignment with XYZ's overarching goals and objectives.
2. Conducting a thorough analysis to identify the key challenges and barriers involved in integrating sustainability practices within project management, while concurrently proposing practical and effective solutions to address these issues.

## 2. Methodology / Materials

### Methodology

The methodology employed in this thesis involved a combination approach, which merges theory and empirical findings to gain a comprehensive understanding of sustainability integration in XYZ's initiatives. Data collection included a literature review, semi-structured interviews, and a case study focused on XYZ. The interviews provided qualitative insights into KPI's measurement feasibility, sustainability strategies, and challenges while participant observation allowed for an immersive understanding of the daily operations and interactions of XYZ. The literature review played a crucial role in shaping the research by providing a solid foundation of existing knowledge. The methodology used in this study facilitated the development of a comprehensive theoretical framework and informed recommendations for XYZ's sustainability efforts.



## 3. Results / Solution / Recommendations

### Literature Review Results

The literature offers a plethora of methods for measuring sustainability in project management, providing organizations with a range of options to evaluate and monitor their sustainable practices. These methods encompass various aspects of sustainability, including environmental, social, and economic dimensions, allowing for a comprehensive assessment of project performance. 50 sustainability indicators classified by the TBL dimensions were selected from the literature.



### Interview Results

After reviewing the presented sustainability framework, 27 Indicators were selected for XYZ's project management activities, and it was acknowledged that quantifying Social Sustainability Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) poses significant challenges due to various limitations.

### Case Study Results

The case study findings revealed that a modular sustainability framework demonstrated its efficiency across the different projects of XYZ. This approach allowed for the customization and adaptation of sustainability practices to suit the unique characteristics and requirements of each project.

### Recommendation

Defining sustainability objectives in PM activities and establishing baseline metrics for comparison are recommendations for future research aiming to test the framework. These baseline metrics will serve as a benchmark for evaluating the impact of the sustainability initiatives.

## 4. Discussion, Conclusions & Outlook

### Conclusions

- The literature provided different methods and KPI's for measuring sustainability in project management.
- A modular sustainability framework was proved most efficient for the different projects of XYZ.
- Social Sustainability KPIs are the most difficult to quantify due to different limitations of the project manager.

### Literature

- Gilbert Silvius, A. J., Kampinga, M., Paniagua, S., & Mooi, H. (2017). Considering sustainability in project management decision making; An investigation using Q-methodology. *International Journal of Project Management*, 35(6), 1133-1150. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijproman.2017.01.011>
- Correia, M. S. (2019). Sustainability. *International Journal of Strategic Engineering*, 2(1), 29-38. <https://doi.org/10.4018/IJOSE.2019010103>