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Medical Research. Practical Action.



PACIFIC ISLANDS
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SPC
Secretariat
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Community

Process 6.
The problem tree.

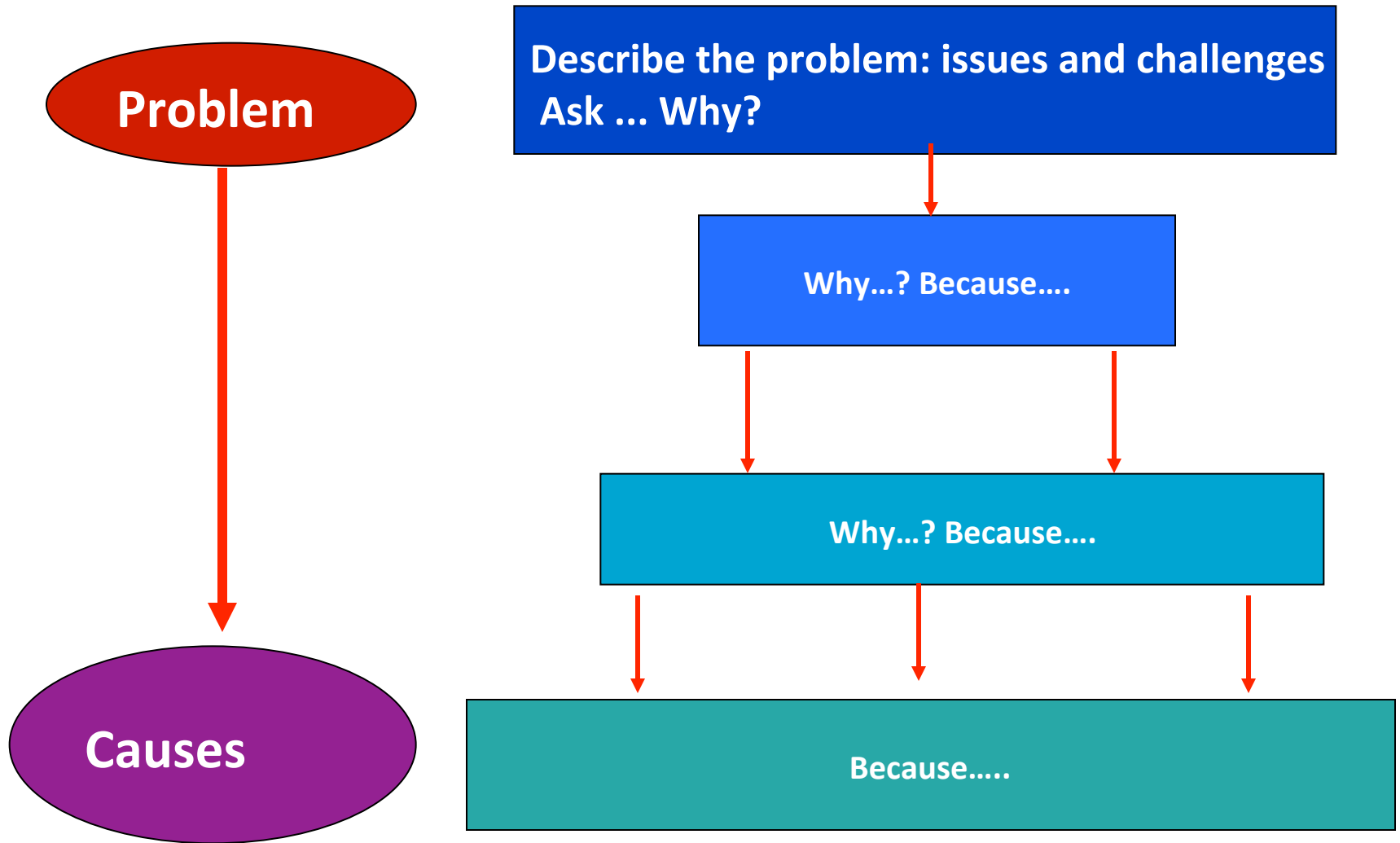
Resources for developing National Strategic Frameworks

Group Activity: Developing the Problem Tree & Objectives Tree

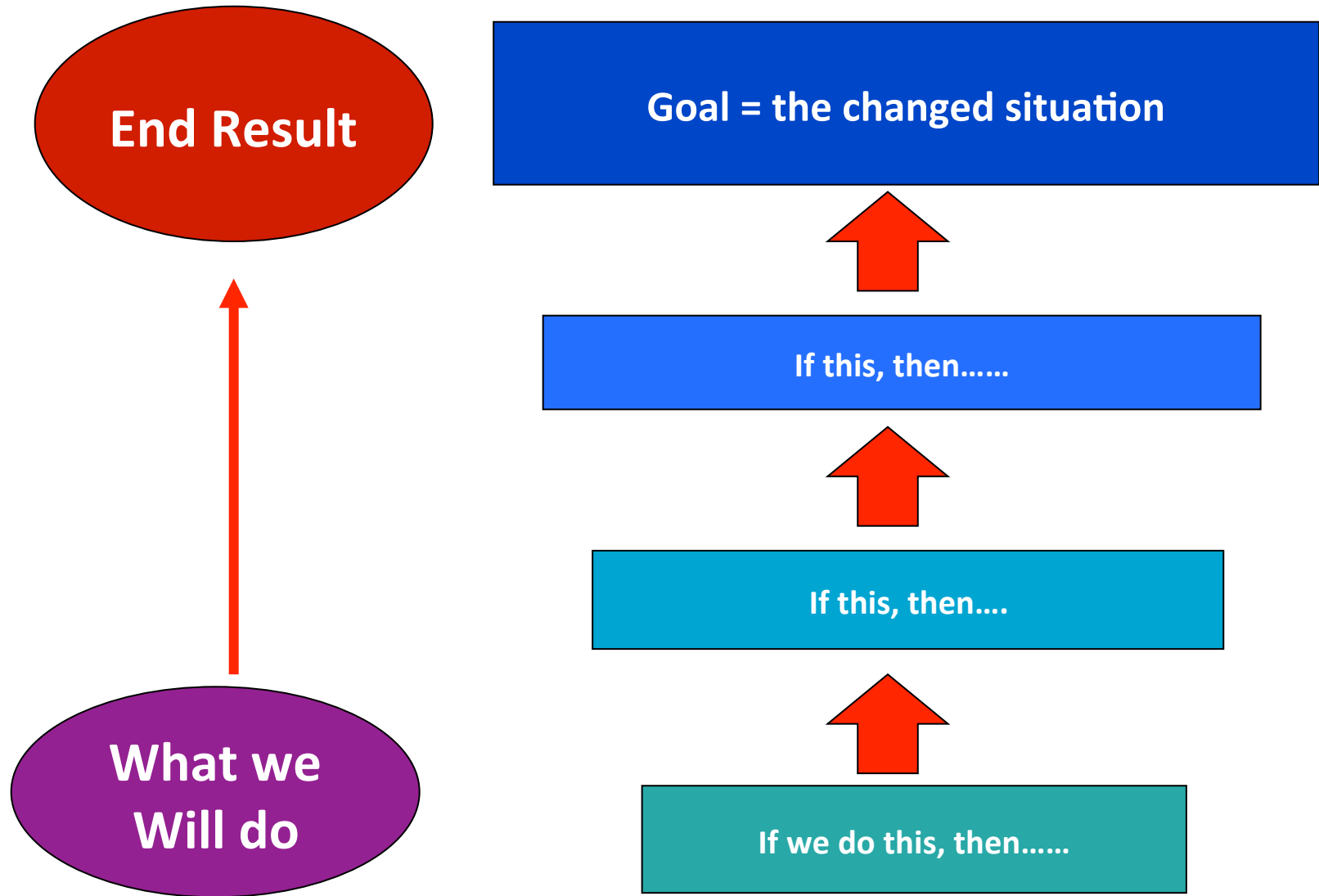
We will do two things in this session of group work:

- **Develop a Problem Tree**
- **Turn our Problem Tree into an Objectives Tree**

The 'Problem Tree' starts with the problem



The Results Matrix turns the 'Problem Tree' about..



Basic rules of 'problem' analysis

- What's the **evidence** say?
- Explore the unknown... **research**....
- Stay **logical** – what leads to this – and therefore to that....?
- Consider **alternatives**.....is there another hypothesis to consider...?
- **Use many ways – or methods - to gather 'evidence':**
 - consulting stakeholders → workshops, FGDs, key informant interviews etc
 - Desktop reviews

Developing the Problem Tree

- 1. Using the focus question or problem statement, and reviewing the stakeholder map, brainstorm a list of “problem statements” (negative statements) about the situation.**
- 2. Agree on the meaning of each problem statement – does it need to be clarified? [If you like, write it on a post it note – so you can move it around.]**
- 3. Arrange the problem statements by “cause” or “effect” – is it a priority?**
- 4. Generate further statements by asking “What leads to that?” or “Why is that present?”**
- 5. Cluster related statements and organise them into a hierarchy according to cause-effect relationships**
- 6. Construct a representation of the relationships between problems using lines**

Writing the objective: digging deeper

- We might need to dig deeper,
- If this is the case, using a tool called the problem tree is useful...
- First we map the stakeholders
- Then, we dig....

Handy Hints for Problem Trees....

- **Remember the 3 WHYs....**
 - **WHY**
 - **WHY**
 - **WHY**
 - **and Because.....**
- **Ask**
 - WHO is affected .. .?
 - Where?
 - When?

Handy Hints for Problem Trees....

Be thoughtful about how you describe the problems:

- Use terms that **describe** the current situation – rather than forecast an answer...
- Use phrases that open up an issue, rather than narrow the perspective.
 - e.g. “Lack of reliable taps” suggests only one solution: taps that work.
 - Instead: “limited access to water” could open up discussion about other ways to answer the problem:
 - Ensure routine maintenance on taps
 - Build workers’ skills to fix taps
 - look for other sources of water, etc.

Stakeholder Mapping – Relationships and Interests

- Who is affected by the issue or problem?
- How are they affected?
- What is their relationship to the issue or problem?
- Who could help address the problem?
- Why is it important to engage those stakeholders?
- What do you know of past success?
- Is participation important?

From Situation Assessment to Problem Analysis: The Problem Tree

AIM:

To use the analysis from your situation assessment to order 'problems' into a hierarchy according to cause and effect

Steps

- 1. Identify problems and "problem-owners"**
- 2. Structure problems and relations between them**
- 3. Develop a shared perception of problems**
- 4. Develop options for which problems to concentrate on**

The 'Problem Tree' hierarchy

Effects

Describe the situation...

High rates of STIs are identified in seafarers – this puts them at risk of HIV and other health problems -

Why are there high rates of STIs? ...?

Why ... Because...

seafarers often 'buy' sex when they travel

seafarers don't use condoms;

Seafarers STIs are not treated;

Seafarers don't know they have STIs

Why do they 'buy' sex ?

Because

they are away from home & earning money;

Why ...?

Because... cant access Condoms

Why don't they get treatment?

Because - no access to health services on board ship or in port

Causes

Why are there no health services?

Because there is no funding... Its not a priority

Analysis with the Problem tree

{We want to respond to} The high rates of STIs in 15-39 year age group identified in an SGS survey (inc testing for HIV & STIs) of seafarers by the local clinic

Focus question or problem

Why...?

Because....high rates suggest lots of seafarers practice unsafe sex behaviors & risk their /partners current & future health

Why...?

Because...seafarers are not treated for STIs - so STIs are passed on to partners

Because.. Seafarers do not use condoms

Because ..Seafarers do not understand how STIs are transmitted

Why...?

Why...?

Because there is no screening service available to seafarers who are mobile

Because...no condoms available & seafarers are not convinced they will feel good

Because...no education programs reach seafarers

Why is there no routine screening... No BCC programs... **Because there is** no staff; staff are not trained; community reluctant to discuss education programs for seafarers....

Some critical questions once you develop your 'problem' tree

- **How will you determine** your priority for the point of intervention?
 - What resources do you have?
 - What areas can you influence – and for what are you responsible?
 - Is this your 'line of control'?
 - Does this reflect how you think change happens - in this context?
 - Would (should) anything else influence your choice of priorities?

Handy Hints for Problem Trees....

Determine your priorities amongst the ‘problem statements’:

- The challenge is to know where to ‘draw the line’, to understand and assess your level of influence or control...

Ask:

- What skills and experience and expertise can we offer to address the ‘problems’?
- What are you able to be responsible for?

Marshall Islands: One small group drew a Problem Octopus, 2011

