

Using the Logic Model for Program Planning

Many tools can help you do a good job of planning, documenting, and evaluating your projects. One of these tools is the “Logic Model.” Developed primarily as an evaluation tool, it is also a wonderful tool to guide project planning, documentation, and reporting, as well as program implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. It is an excellent “fit” with the Technology Initiative Grant (TIG) Evaluation Plan Framework.

The rest of this section explains what a Logic Model is and how you can use it for program planning. The basic descriptive information comes directly from *The Logic Model Development Guide*, prepared for the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. (To order a free copy of the Guide or to download it in PDF format, go to the Foundation’s website at <http://www.wkcf.org>, and click on “Evaluation” under “Toolkits” on the right side of the home page, or go to <http://www.wkcf.org/Pubs/Tools/Evaluation/Pub3669.pdf>.) Mosaica has added some examples and references that relate the Logic Model to your TIG project plans; those additions are in *Italics*.

Understanding the Logic Model¹

The introduction to the *Logic Model Development Guide* defines the Logic Model concept and explains some of its benefits:

The program Logic Model is defined as a picture of how your organization [or project] does its work – the theory and assumptions underlying the program. A program Logic Model links outcomes (both short- and long-term) with program activities/ processes and the theoretical assumptions/ principles of the program.

The *W.K. Kellogg Foundation Logic Model Development Guide*, a companion publication to the *Evaluation Handbook*,² focuses on the development and use of the program Logic Model. We have found the Logic Model and its processes facilitate thinking, planning, and communications about program objectives and actual accomplishments. Through this guide, we hope to provide an orientation to the underlying principles and language of the program Logic Model so it can be effectively used in program planning, implementation, and dissemination of results....

Learning and using tools like Logic Models can serve to increase the practitioner’s voice in the domains of planning, design, implementation, analysis, and knowledge generation. The process of developing the model is an opportunity to chart the course. It is a conscious process that creates an explicit understanding of the challenges ahead, the resources available, and the timetable in which to hit the target. In addition, it helps keep a balanced focus on the big picture as well as the component parts.

In general, Logic Modeling can greatly enhance the participatory role and usefulness of evaluation as a management and learning tool. Developing and using Logic Models is an

¹ The information in this subsection comes directly from the *Logic Model Development Guide*, and was excerpted by Mosaica with permission from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

² This guide is available on the same website as the *Logic Model Development Guide*, www.wkcf.org.

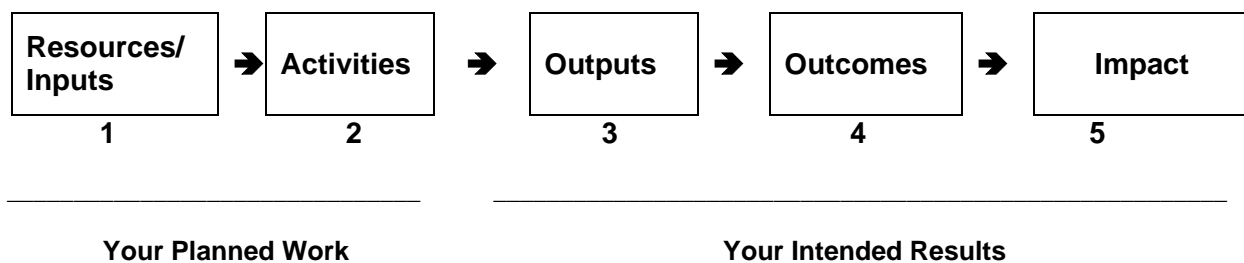
important step in building community capacity and strengthening community voice. The ability to identify outcomes and anticipate ways to measure them provides all program participants with a clear map of the road ahead. Map in hand, participants are more confident of their place in the scheme of things, and hence, more likely to actively engage and less likely to stray from the course – and when they do, to do so consciously and intentionally. Because it is particularly amenable to visual depictions, program Logic Modeling can be a strong tool in communicating with diverse audiences – those who have varying world views and different levels of experience with program development and evaluation....

The *What* and *Why* of the Logic Model

The *WHAT*: Logic Model Definition

Basically, a Logic Model is a systematic and visual way to present and share your understanding of the relationships among the resources you have to operate your program, the activities you plan to do, and the changes or results you hope to achieve.

Figure 1. The Basic Logic Model.



The most basic Logic Model is a picture of how you believe your program will work. It uses words and/or pictures to describe the sequence of activities thought to bring about change and how these activities are linked to the results the program is expected to achieve.

The Basic Logic Model components shown in Figure 1 above are defined below. These components illustrate the connection between *your planned work* and *your intended results*. They are depicted numerically by steps 1 through 5.

YOUR PLANNED WORK describes what resources you think you need to implement your program and what you intend to do.

1. Resources include the human, financial, organizational, and community resources a program has available to direct toward doing the work. Sometimes this component is referred to as ***Inputs***.

2. Program Activities are what the program does with the resources. **Activities** are the processes, tools, events, technology, and actions that are an intentional part of the program implementation. These interventions are used to bring about the intended program changes or results.

YOUR INTENDED RESULTS include all of the program’s desired results (outputs, outcomes, and impact).

3. Outputs are the direct products of program activities and may include types, levels and targets of services to be delivered by the program. *[In a TIG project, your outputs are statements of your “process” objectives, the measures used to show that you have completed the activities you have identified as necessary to achieve your goals.]*

4. Outcomes are the specific changes in program participants’ behavior, knowledge, skills, status and level of functioning. Short-term outcomes should be attainable within 1-3 years, while longer-term outcomes should be achievable within a 4-6 year timeframe. The logical progression from short-term to long-term outcomes should be reflected in impact occurring within about 7-10 years. *[The short-term and medium-term outcomes are your project objectives – in the TIG Evaluation Framework, they are often included as bullets below your broad project goal.]*

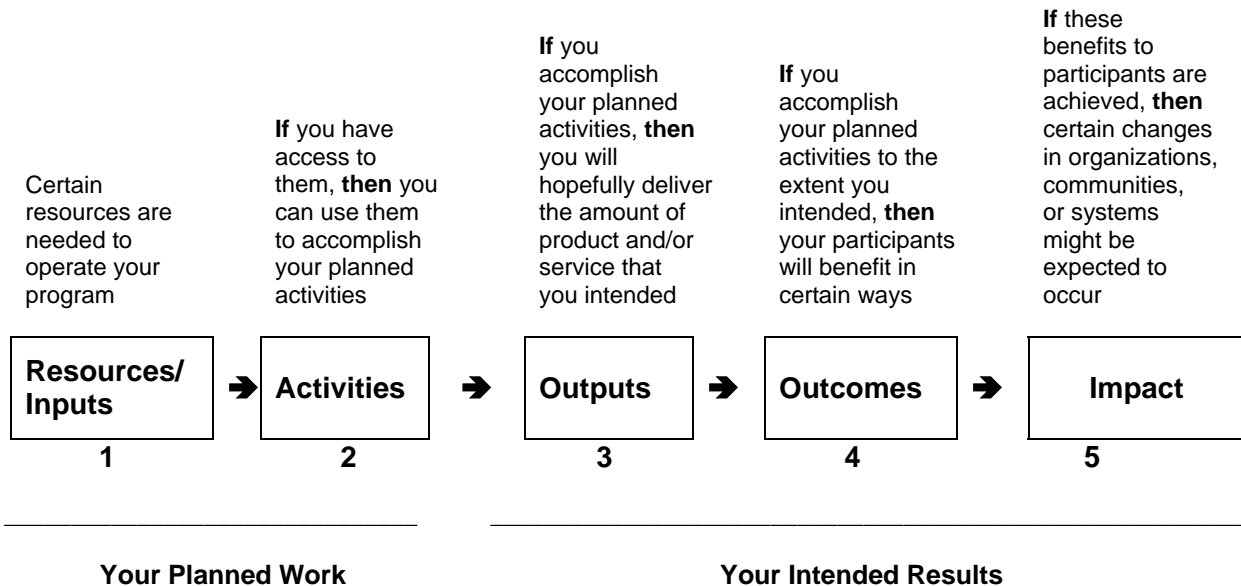
5. Impact is the fundamental intended or unintended change occurring in organizations, communities or systems as a result of program activities within 7-10 years. In the current model of WKKF grantmaking and evaluation, impact often occurs after the conclusion of project funding. *[The desired impact is your project’s goals].*

The term *Logic Model* is frequently used interchangeably with the term *program theory* in the evaluation field. Logic models can alternatively be referred to as *theory* because they describe how a program works and to what end.

The What: How to “Read” a Logic Model

When “read” from left to right, Logic Models describe program basics over time from planning through results. Reading a Logic Model means following the chain of reasoning or “*If...then...*” statements which connect the program’s parts. The figure below shows how the basic Logic Model is read.

Figure 2. How to Read a Logic Model.



The *WHY*: Logic Model Purpose and Practical Application

The purpose of a Logic Model is to provide stakeholders with a road map describing the sequence of related events connecting the need for the planned program with the program's desired results. Mapping a proposed program helps you visualize and understand how human and financial investments can contribute to achieving your intended program goals and can lead to program improvements. A Logic Model brings program concepts and dreams to life. It lets stakeholders try an idea on for size and apply theories to a model or picture of how the program would function....

Why Use a Logic Model?

...Logic models are useful tools in many ways. Because they are pictorial in nature, they require systematic thinking and planning to better describe programs. The visual representation of the master plan in a Logic Model is flexible, points out areas of strength and/or weakness, and allows stakeholders to run through many possible scenarios to find the best. In a Logic Model, you can adjust approaches and change courses as program plans are developed. Ongoing assessment, review, and corrections can produce better program design and a system to strategically monitor, manage, and report program outcomes throughout development and implementation.

Effective evaluation and program success rely on the fundamentals of clear stakeholder assumptions and expectations about how and why program will solve a particular problem, generate new possibilities, and make the most of valuable assets. The Logic Model approach helps create shared understanding of and focus on program goals and methodology, relating activities to projected outcomes.

Logic Models Better Position Programs For Success

Many evaluation experts agree that use of the Logic Model is an effective way to ensure program success. Using a Logic Model throughout your program helps organize and systematize program planning, management, and evaluation functions.

1. In ***Program Design and Planning***, a Logic Model serves as a planning tool to develop program strategy and enhance your ability to clearly explain and illustrate program concepts and approach for key stakeholders, including funders.

Logic models can help craft structure and organization for program design and build in self-evaluation based on shared understanding of what is to take place. During the planning phase, developing a Logic Model requires stakeholders to examine best practice research and practitioner experience in light of the strategies and activities selected to achieve results.

2. In ***Program Implementation***, a Logic Model forms the core for a focused management plan that helps you identify and collect the data needed to monitor and improve programming.

Using the Logic Model during program implementation and management requires you to focus energies on achieving and documenting results. Logic models help you to consider and prioritize the program aspects most critical for tracking and reporting and make adjustments as necessary.

3. For ***Program Evaluation and Strategic Reporting***, a Logic Model presents program information and progress toward goals in ways that inform, advocate for a particular program approach, and teach program stakeholders.

We all know the importance of reporting results to funders and to community stakeholders alike. Communication is a key component of a program’s success and sustainability. Logic models can help strategic marketing efforts in three primary ways:

- ***Describing programs*** in language clear and specific enough to be understood and evaluated.
- ***Focusing attention and resources*** on priority program operations and key results for the purposes of learning and program improvement.
- ***Developing targeted communication*** and marketing strategies.

The Table below describes the relationship between a successful program and the benefits derived from the use of Logic Models.

How Logic Models Better Position Programs Toward Success.

Program Elements	Criteria for Program Success³	Benefits of Program Logic Models⁴
Planning & Design Program	Program goals and objectives, and important side effects are well defined ahead of time.	Finds “gaps” in the theory or logic of a program and work to resolve them.
	Program goals and objectives are both plausible and possible.	Builds a shared understanding of what the program is all about and how the parts work together.
Implementation & Management	Relevant, credible, and useful performance data can be obtained.	Focuses attention of management on the most important connections between action and results.
Evaluation, Communication, & Marketing	The intended users of the evaluation results have agreed on how they will use the information.	Provides a way to involve and engage stakeholders in the design, processes, and use of evaluation.

[This ends the material excerpted from the *Logic Model Development Guide*.]

³ Wholey, J. S., Hatry, H. P., & Newcomer, K. E. (Eds.). (1994). *Handbook of Practical Program Evaluation*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

⁴ Barley, Z., Phillips, C., & Jenness, M. (1998). *Decoding Program Logic Models*. Workshop presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Evaluation Association, Chicago, IL, November, 1998.

Using the Logic Model for Project Planning and Proposal Development

Developing a logic model can help you plan a project and prepare a sound proposal. When you are planning a project, bring together key partners and use a logic model format to describe your project. Doing this as a team can help ensure a shared understanding of desired short- and longer-term outcomes, and the tasks and activities and resources needed to reach them. United Way of America has encouraged the use of logic models among local United Way service agencies for nearly a decade.

There are many formats and approaches to logic models. The basic logic model format, as presented above, is based on a set of “if...then” assumptions that emphasize how the different cells in a logic model relate to each other. The *Guide* describes them as follows:

IF...THEN Assumptions from the Logic Model Development Guide:

- Certain resources are needed to operate your program.
- ***If*** you have access to them, ***then*** you can use them to accomplish your planned activities.
- ***If*** you accomplish your planned activities, ***then*** you will hopefully deliver the amount of product and/or service that you intended.
- ***If*** you accomplish your planned activities to the extent intended, ***then*** your participants will benefit in specific ways.
- ***If*** these benefits to participants are achieved, ***then*** certain changes in organizations, communities, or systems might occur under specified conditions.

Perhaps the most commonly used logic model format is the one presented in the Introduction, which connects resources and activities with desired outputs and outcomes. In preparing a Logic Model, you can start at either end. Rather than going left to right, you can begin at the right. For example, perhaps you know what you want to achieve in the long run. Start by describing the long-term impact you seek, and move to the left. You can identify the shorter-term outcomes that will measure progress towards that impact. Then you can decide on the activities and outputs that will help you reach these outcomes. Finally, you can decide what cash and non-cash (“in-kind”) resources you will need in order to carry out the program.

You may find additional formats useful. For example, before completing the logic model format presented here, you may want to use a “Planning Template” that helps you identify and examine the following:

- The **problem(s) or issues** your project needs to address
- The **needs or assets** of your community – such as the client barriers that prevent access to justice
- The **results** you expect to achieve – outcomes, outcomes, and impact – for your clients, organization, and the community
- **Factors** you believe will influence change in your organization and community

- **Promising strategies** or “best practices” that have helped other legal services programs to achieve the kinds of results you are hoping to accomplish
- **Assumptions** behind how and why you believe those strategies will work in your organization or community

There are many logic model approaches and no one approach is best. Try using the logic model, download the *Logic Model Development Guide* for examples, and guidance, and decide what approach works best for your organization and your specific project. The two formats described here are attached to this document.

A Sample Completed Logic Model

Following is a Logic Model that describes a mythical *pro se* program for low-income individuals in Rural-State, USA.

Sample Logic Model for the Mythical Rural-State *Pro Se* Project

Resources/ Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
<p>X% of salaries of staff attorney Y% of salary of paralegal Z% of salary of secretary W% of salary for technology director \$Y for consultant help in developing forms and packets</p> <p>Purchase of computers, related hardware, and software</p> <p>Communications costs In-state travel costs Training expenses Operating costs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Train and prepare attorneys and paralegals for <i>pro se</i> assistance to clients ▪ Develop simplified court forms and packets for common civil legal problems ▪ Provide client tutorials, training, and individual assistance on use of forms ▪ Develop community computer access ▪ Develop on-line access to materials and <i>pro se</i> assistance ▪ Work with court system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ X number of attorneys and Y number of paralegals trained ▪ Development of X number of simplified court forms and packets covering common legal problems related to the following civil areas: public entitlements, housing, consumer rights, and employment ▪ Completion of training/tutorials to X number of clients ▪ Community computer access arranged in 15 locations throughout the state ▪ Technology selected to make possible on-line access 	<p>Short-term (by end of project):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A <i>pro se</i> project will be established at the Low-Income Legal Clinic to assist low-income individuals in representing themselves in court for various civil legal matters ▪ Simplified court forms and packets will be available on-line for the most common legal problems, including rights to public entitlements, housing, consumer rights, & employment ▪ Low-income clients will have the computer skills to access and use simplified court forms and packets ▪ Low-income clients will be familiar with civil court processes <p>Longer-term (within 5 years):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Courts will have written guidelines on court protocol for clients acting <i>pro se</i> to assist them with court appearances ▪ Low-income clients will feel empowered to represent themselves in various civil matters ▪ The number of low-income individuals who choose to represent themselves in selected civil matters will have increased by X% per year 	<p>Long-term (within 7-10 years):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low-income people will commonly and successfully represent themselves in court on simple civil matters ▪ Courts will have systems and protocols in place to support <i>pro se</i> representation ▪ A system will be in place to ensure that each <i>pro se</i> case receives on-line support from paralegals and attorneys from initial request through satisfactory resolution and record keeping

Logic Model Format

Resources/ Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
<i>In order to accomplish desired activities, we need the following resources:</i>	<i>In order to address the identified problem and reach desired outcomes, we will need to carry out the following activities</i>	<i>By accomplishing the stated activities, we will produce the following outputs:</i>	<i>Accomplishing these activities will lead to the following changes in the short term (1-3 years) and in the longer term (4-6 years):</i>	<i>Accomplishing these activities will lead to the following changes in the long term (perhaps 7-10 years):</i>

Resources/ Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
<i>In order to accomplish desired activities, we need the following resources:</i>	<i>In order to address the identified problem and reach desired outcomes, we will need to carry out the following activities</i>	<i>By accomplishing the stated activities, we will produce the following outputs:</i>	<i>Accomplishing these activities will lead to the following changes in the short term (1-3 years) and in the longer term (4-6 years):</i>	<i>Accomplishing these activities will lead to the following changes in the long term (perhaps 7-10 years):</i>

Planning Template

PROBLEM OR ISSUE		
COMMUNITY NEEDS/ASSETS		
DESIRED RESULTS:		
Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
INFLUENTIAL FACTORS		
STRATEGIES OR BEST PRACTICES		
ASSUMPTIONS		