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LOGIC MODEL COMPONENTS[1]

Even though programs are diverse, they all share common elements. Programs are developed in response to a situation. Programs have inputs, outputs, outcomes. A logic model displays the relationships among these core elements and brings attention to underlying assumptions set within the program's environment of external factors.

Situation

The originating problem, or issue, set within a complex of sociopolitical, environmental and economic circumstances. The situation is the beginning point of logic model development.

Inputs

What goes into the program: resources and contributions that are invested. Inputs include such elements as staff, money, time, equipment, partnerships, and the research base.

Outputs

What we do and whom we reach: activities, services, events, products and the people reached. Outputs include such elements as workshops, conferences, counseling, products produced and the individuals, clients, groups, families, and organizations targeted to be reached by the activities.

Outcomes

What results: the value or changes for individuals, families, groups, agencies, businesses, communities, and/or systems. Outcomes include short-term benefits such as changes in awareness, knowledge, skills, attitudes, opinions and intent. Outcomes include medium-term benefits such as changes in behaviors, decision-making and actions. Outcomes include long-term benefits (often called impact) such as changes in social, economic, civic, and environmental conditions.

Assumptions

The beliefs we have about: the program, the people involved, and how we think the program will work. Assumptions include our ideas about the problem or situation; the way the program will operate; what the program expects to achieve; how the participants learn and behave, their motivations, etc.; the resources and staff; the external environment; the knowledge base; and the internal environment. Faulty assumptions are often the reason for poor results.

External Factors

Aspects external to the program that influence the way the program operates, and are influenced by the program. Dynamic systems interactions include the cultural milieu, biophysical environment, economic structure, housing patterns, demographic make-up, family circumstances, values, political environment, background and experiences of participants, media, policies and priorities, etc. Elements that effect the program over which there is little control.

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[1] Adapted from Taylor-Powell, E., & Henert, E. (2008) Developing a logic model: Teaching and training guide. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin-Extension, Cooperative Extension, Program Development and Evaluation. http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande

TIPS FOR LOGIC MODELING TEAMS[2]

Embrace the process.

Recognize that developing a logic model is a group process -- and not quick or easy. Disciplined thinking is required for groups to develop a shared vision of the work they are planning, implementing or evaluating. Logic model development should be broken into smaller segments and accomplished over several meetings. Create a "plan" that considers number of meetings, size and composition of the group, responsibilities, timeline, and resources needed.

Clarify the purposes and uses of your model.

What is the purpose of your logic model? Why are you developing a logic model? Who will use it? How?

Involve others.

Who should participate in creating the logic model? Who should facilitate the logic model development process? Work in small, interactive group settings that are collaborative and sensitive. Consider using a mentor or coach for who questions the strengths and weaknesses of the underlying program theory and assumptions.

Set the boundaries for the logic model.

What will the logic model depict: a single, focused endeavor? a comprehensive initiative? a group process? an organizational endeavor? What level of detail is needed? It is important to start with the identification of the long-term desired end result -- or the goal of your program. Recognize that the logic model may be expanded over the course of the program's life.

Understand the situation.

What is the situation -- or problem -- giving rise to this program? After identifying the goal of the program, start with the situational analysis. Situation statements can be informed by community assessments (of needs, assets, readiness, capacity)

Explore the knowledge base.

What research can we find on this problem or these types of programs? What do we know about the problem, the audience, the context? What are the relevant barriers and facilitators?

Two approaches for where to start.

After you have a sense of the end goal and starting situation, you may take one of two general approaches.

- Work backwards: start at the end and identify the chain of outcomes that lead to the final, long term result. Then, move backwards to specify who must participate to achieve the expected outcomes. Then move backwards to specify what activities must be provided, completed, produced so that the identified individuals will achieve the desired outcomes? If necessary, cluster activities into strategies. Move backwards to specify what resources are needed to make sure the activities are accomplished.

- Focus on activities: write down all the activities involved in (or planned for) the program -- workshops, services, products, etc. For each activity, complete one of the following statements, continue repeating and completing the statement until you reach a logical end point. "WE DO _____, SO THAT _____ WILL OCCUR" or "IF WE DO _____, THEN _____ WILL OCCUR." Continue until a chain of connections is created that links program activities to desired end results. Then list the resources needed to ensure the chain of connections is achieved.

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[2] Adapted from Taylor-Powell, E., & Henert, E. (2008) Developing a logic model: Teaching and training guide. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin-Extension, Cooperative Extension, Program Development and Evaluation. http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande

LOGIC MODELING RESOURCES

W.K. Kellogg Foundation

Nonprofits today are being pressed to demonstrate the effectiveness of their program activities by initiating and completing outcome-oriented evaluation of projects. The W.K. Kellogg Foundation Logic Model Development guide was developed to provide practical assistance to nonprofits engaged in this process. In the pages of this guide, we hope to give staff of nonprofits and community members alike sufficient orientation to the underlying principles of "logic modeling" to use this tool to enhance their program planning, implementation, and dissemination activities.

http://www.wkkf.org/knowledge-center/resources/2006/02/wk-kellogg-foundation-logic-model-development-guide.aspx

The University of Wisconsin - Cooperative Extension

The UW-Extension Program Development & Evaluation Unit uses the logic model in planning, implementation, evaluation and communication. While the term “program” is often used, we find a logic model equally useful for describing group work, team work, community-based collaboratives and other complex organizational processes as we seek to promote results-based performance. A variety of resource materials and professional development offerings are available to help faculty, staff and partners understand and use the logic model in planning, implementation, evaluation and communications.

http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/evallogicmodel.html

The Aspen Institute

The Community Builder’s Approach to Theory of Change: A Practical Guide to Theory Development is for planners and evaluators who are going to facilitate a process for creating a theory of change with community-based programs and community change initiatives. It was designed as a “refresher course” for planners, evaluators, and others who have attended one of the Aspen Institute’s Roundtable on Community Change workshops, but we fully expect experienced facilitators will be able to quickly learn and apply the method as described in this guide.

http://www.aspeninstitute.org/sites/default/files/content/docs/rcc/rcccommbuildersapproach.pdf

The Center for Theory of Change/TOCO Software

The Center for Theory of Change is a non-profit organization established to promote quality standards and best practice for the development and implementation of Theory of Change, with a particular focus on its use and application in the areas of international development, sustainability, education, human rights and social change. The Center has been established by ActKnowledge, a leader in the development of Theory of Change, based in New York City. ActKnowledge is supporting the Center through the provision of a range of resources including the provision of guides and free access to Theory of Change on-line (TOCO), a tailor-made software tool designed to facilitate a conceptual understanding of Theory of Change and support the implementation of the approach in planning and evaluation work.

http://www.theoryofchange.org

DoView Visualizing Outcomes

Visual strategic planning and outcomes software. Relatively inexpensive tool with many online resources.

http://doview.com