

Further explanation of Logic Modelling

A complete logic model provides a graphic representation of a programme showing the intended relationships between a series of organized activities and resources aimed to help people make improvements in their lives. Logic models are most useful for graphically expressing the essential elements in any systematic attempt to organise resources around achieving particular goals and objectives. They provide a summary and overview of these elements. LDC's may feel that a logic model can provide a tool to graphically represent the strategic planning process and first year annual plan in a simplified way. The model can be used internally, for example as a tool for monitoring the work, and externally as a way of summarising the overall purpose and associated activities to outsiders. The logic model can also be a useful document in discussions with funders and others commissioning the work. Key elements in a logic model are described in the Table 1 below.

Table 1. Key elements in a logic model

Element Description

Assumptions - The suppositions made about a range of contingent factors (likelihood of success, stability of the situation, possibility of support, theory of change) influencing planning. Assumptions are the basis on which the logic model is developed and are identified in the needs analysis and planning stages of intervention.

Baseline statements - Information about the trend, situation or condition prior to a programme or intervention. These can be both quantitative and qualitative and identify the 'starting point' for work.

Inputs - Resources that go into a programme of work including staff time, materials, money, equipment, facilities, volunteer time.

Activities – Are what are delivered by way of actions, services or products including 'process' functions

Outputs – The direct effects from the actions that can be specified and monitored. Outputs are what the activity results in that can be measured (more or less immediately)

Outcomes - Results or changes from the programme such as changes in knowledge, behaviour, practice, decision-making, policies, social action, condition, or status. Outcomes may be intended or unintended, and positive and negative. Outcomes fall along a continuum from immediate (initial; short-term) to intermediate (medium-term) to final outcomes (long-term), often synonymous with impact.

Impact - The long-term social, economic, civic and/or environmental consequences associated with the goals of the programme. Impacts may be positive, negative, or neutral, intended or unintended.

Indicator - A set of measurements of a specific variable over time (and or location). Indicators are an expression of outcome in the form of evidence that the outcome has or is being achieved.

Measure - Either quantitative (data in numerical format) or qualitative (data in a narrative or text format) information that expresses the phenomenon under study (such as an indicator).

Evaluation - The systematic collection of information about activities, characteristics and outcomes of programmes used to make judgments, improve effectiveness, add to knowledge, and/or inform decisions about the work, and be accountable for positive and equitable results and resources invested.

Monitoring - The ongoing monitoring and reporting of work, particularly progress towards achievement of output targets and outcomes.

Logic models are not reality, and should be understood as a way of representing best intentions, and as a guide to activities. Neither are they straightjackets, and practitioners must also be free to take up unforeseen opportunities where these enhance the original goals of the Programme. In short, the realities of practice are never neat. Nevertheless, the difference between intention and actuality should be cause for discussion and learning.