A theoretical framework for planning and evaluating projects

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Objectives of this session

• Provide an overview of the Project Management Cycle

• Introduce the key ideas in program theory and logic models

• Help participants understand how program theory and logic models assist in planning and evaluating development projects
What is project management? Why is it important?

“Project management is more than just implementing activities, it includes the management of limited resources to ensure that the project meets its objectives within the expected quality, timeframe, and budget; and, at the same time, meet the expectations of its stakeholders” (PM4Dev, 2009)
Project Management Cycle

A word of caution: the cycle is not as linear as the diagram suggests
Program theory

“Between good intentions and great results lies a program theory”


Program Theory is “A statement of the assumptions about why the intervention should affect the intended outcomes. The theory includes hypothesized links between (a) the program requirements and activities, and (b) the expected outcomes; it is depicted in the logic model.”

http://www.evaluationtoolkit.org/glossary
Why is developing your program theory important?

1. How the customer explained it
2. How the Project Leader understood it
3. How the Analyst designed it
4. How the Programmer wrote it
5. How the Business Consultant described it
6. How the project was documented
7. What operations installed
8. How the customer was billed
9. How it was supported
10. What the customer really needed
What’s in a name

- Chain of Objectives 1967
- Causal Map 2006
- Causal chain 1971
- Intervention Framework 2002
- Logical Framework 1979
- Logic Model 2004
- Outcome Hierarchy 1987
- Program Logic 1987
- Result Chain
- Impact Pathway 2003
- Theory of Action 1997
- Theory of Change 1998
- Causal chain
- Chain of Objectives
- Results
- Chain
The Program Theory can be represented graphically in the form of a logic model:

A logic model is…..
• A depiction of a program based on “causation” showing what the program will do and what it is to accomplish

Source: Taylor-Powel E, Jones L, Henert E. Enhancing program performance with logic models. 2008
Everyday example

Situation
INPUT
OUTPUT
OUTCOME

Source: Taylor-Powel E, Jones L, Henert E. Enhancing program performance with logic models. 2008
Underlying a logic model is a series of ‘if-then’ relationships that express the program’s **theory of change**

Tutoring Program Example – 

- **IF** We invest time and money
- **then** We can provide tutoring 3 hrs/week for 1 school year to 50 children
- **IF** Students struggling academically can be tutored
- **then** They will learn and improve their skills
- **IF** They will get better grades
- **then** They will move to next grade level on time

Source: Taylor-Powel E, Jones L, Henert E. Enhancing program performance with logic models. 2008
Program theory: Logical chain of connections showing what the program is to accomplish

- **INPUTS**
  - Program investments

- **OUTPUTS**
  - Activities
  - Participation

- **CHAIN OF OUTCOMES**
  - Short
  - Medium
  - Long-term

What we invest  What we do  Who we reach  What results

Source: Taylor-Powell E, Jones L, Neer E. Enhancing program performance with logic models. 2008
INPUTS are the resources that go into the program

Source: Taylor-Powel E, Jones L, Henert E. Enhancing program performance with logic models. 2008
## OUTPUTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What we do</th>
<th>Who we reach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACTIVITIES</strong></td>
<td><strong>PARTICIPATION</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Train, teach</td>
<td>• Participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Deliver services</td>
<td>• Communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop products and resources</td>
<td>• Clients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Network with others</td>
<td>• Organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Build partnerships</td>
<td>• Decision makers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Assess</td>
<td>• Policy makers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Facilitate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OUTPUTS are the product of the activities a program undertakes.

Source: Taylor-Powel E, Jones L, Henert E. Enhancing program performance with logic models. 2008
## OUTCOMES

What results for individuals, families, communities...

### SHORT

**Learning**

Changes in
- Awareness
- Knowledge
- Attitudes
- Skills
- Aspirations
- Motivation
- Behavioral intent

### MEDIUM

**Action**

Changes in
- Behavior
- Decision-making
- Policies
- Social action

### LONG-TERM

**Conditions**

Changes in
- Conditions
- Social (well-being)
- Health
- Economic
- Civic
- Environmental

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OUTCOMES are the changes that result from our program activities.

Source: Taylor-Powel E, Jones L, Henert E. Enhancing program performance with logic models. 2008
Outputs vs. Outcomes

Example: “Community Health Initiative”

• Number of patients discharged from the hospital is an output.

• % discharged who are capable of living independently is an outcome

Not how many worms the bird feeds its young, but how well the fledgling flies

(United Way of America, 1999)

Source: Taylor-Powel E, Jones L, Henert E. Enhancing program performance with logic models. 2008
**Parent Education Program – Logic model**

**SITUATION:** During a county needs assessment, majority of parents reported that they were having difficulty parenting and felt stressed as a result.

**INPUTS**
- Staff
- Money
- Partners
- Research

**OUTPUTS**
- Assess parent ed programs
- Design-deliver evidence-based program of 8 sessions
- Facilitate support groups

**OUTCOMES**
- Parents increase knowledge of child dev
- Parents identify appropriate actions to take
- Parents better understanding their own parenting style
- Parents use effective parenting practices
- Parents gain skills in new ways to parent
- Parents gain confidence in their abilities
- Reduced stress
- Improved child-parent relations

Source: Taylor-Powel E, Jones L, Henert E. Enhancing program performance with logic models. 2008
Arrows and feedback loops depict the underlying causal connections.

Source: Taylor-Powel E, Jones L, Henert E. Enhancing program performance with logic models. 2008
Logic model in monitoring and evaluation

What do you want to know? How will you know it?

Source: Taylor-Powel E, Jones L, Henert E. Enhancing program performance with logic models. 2008
Logic Model helps with M&E

Provides the program description that guides our M&E process
• Helps us match M&E to the program
• Helps us know what and when to measure
  • Are you interested in process and/or outcomes?
• Helps us focus on key, important information
  • Prioritize: where will we spend our limited M&E resources?
  • What do we really need to know??

Source: Taylor-Powel E, Jones L, Henert E. Enhancing program performance with logic models. 2008
Types of Evaluation

**INPUTS**
- Program investments

**OUTPUTS**
- Activities
- Participation

**OUTCOME – IMPACT**
- Short
- Medium
- Long-term

**Process evaluation:**
measures program content, quality and reach *(relates to Activities and Outputs)*

**Outcome evaluation:**
measures short to medium term effects of program *(relates to Goal/Purpose)*

**Impact evaluation:**
measures longer-term effects of program *(relates to Goal/Purpose)*

Source: Taylor-Powell E, Jones L, Benert E. Enhancing program performance with logic models. 2008
Indicators

• Indicators represent evidence that the program goal and outcomes and activities have been achieved
• How will we know change (+ and -) or successful implementation when we see it?
• What are the specific indicators that will be measured?
• We can’t measure everything so what are the priority indicators?

"Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted."
Connecting up the dots

• The program logic can help us as project managers by giving a picture of the whole program and show us how (or not?) our activities are contributing towards the program’s theory of change.

• The program logic can also help us design an effective and efficient M&E system.
Designing a Program Logic Model

1. Start with - What are the desired outcomes?
   • Ultimate outcome (or goal)
   • medium and short term outcomes

2. Who must participate - who should achieve the outcomes?

3. What is needed to achieve the outcomes?
   • Inputs?
   • Activities?
   • Participants?
   (May need to narrow your scope and adjust your outcomes accordingly depending on time, resources and budget – decide where you will seek to make a contribution. You can’t do it all!)

4. Test your logic model
   • Do your if – then relationships make sense? What assumptions have you made?
   • How will you measure success? What will you choose to measure and what are the appropriate indicators?
Some challenges:

- M&E: Systems work best when in place before the program begins. Can be risky to rely on partner systems so creative solutions required.

- Building Capacity: Significant input required to support partners to manage well.

- Contractual relationships: Clear roles and accountabilities. Financial stewardship/governance.

- Building relationships: Double the time you think this might take, and then double again (and then...). Recognise local capabilities (as well as constraints).

- Identifying partners: Ensure that partners (local and int'l) are committed to the process and share values. Identify potential partners, as a University entity, we often play a niche role on a larger project.

- Tracking: Be proactive, by the time the tender is released it is often too late. Know your donors and stakeholders.
Recommended Readings


• Taylor-Powel E, Jones L, Henert E Enhancing program performance with logic models. (2008) Available at http://www.uwex.edu/ces/lmcourse/#
Thank you