

AccessEd and Commonwealth Scholarship Commission Leaders in Sustainable Development Programme

Workshop: **Social Entrepreneurship: Impact and Evaluation (Part 2)**

Overarching workshop theme:

This session is a two-part session that focused on theory and practical guidance for impact measurement. It will cover all you need to know as an introduction to impact measurement and impact evaluation.

These sub-themes will be discussed during the live follow-up session:

- What are the different types of data to collection, i.e. qualitative and quantitative tools for impact evaluation?
- When do you plan to implement your impact evaluation?
- How do you plan to implement your impact evaluation?
- What should you do if you have limited time and resources to directly measure or track?
- How can you learn from your impact evaluation data?
- How can you share your impact evaluation data?

Session pre-reading

Read the article below. The article offers further information about programme theories/ theories of change, which you learnt about during Part 1 of the workshop.

Develop programme theory/ theory of change

A programme theory explains how an intervention (a project, a programme, a policy, a strategy) is understood to contribute to a chain of results that produce the intended or actual impacts.

It can include positive impacts (which are beneficial) and negative impacts (which are detrimental). It can also show the other factors which contribute to producing impacts, such as context and other projects and programmes.

Different types of diagrams can be used to represent a programme theory. These are often referred to as logic models, as they show the overall logic of how the intervention is understood to work.

Why is it done?

Programme theory can be used to provide a conceptual framework for monitoring, for evaluation, or for an integrated monitoring and evaluation framework.

A programme theory can be a very useful way of bringing together existing evidence about a programme, and clarifying where there is agreement and disagreement about how the programme is understood to work, and where there are gaps in the evidence.

It can be used for a single evaluation, for planning cluster evaluations of different projects funded under a single program, or to bring together evidence from multiple evaluations and research.

When is it done?

A programme theory is often developed during the planning stage of a new intervention. It can also be developed during implementation and even after a programme has finished. When an evaluation is being planned, it is useful to review the programme theory and revise or elaborate it if necessary.

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How is it developed?

A programme theory can be developed by programme staff, by an external evaluator, by programme designers, or collaboratively with the community.

How is it represented?

The diagrams used to represent a programme theory (usually referred to as logic models) can be drawn in different ways.

Sometimes they are shown as a series of boxes (inputs->processes->outputs->outcomes->impacts), sometimes they are shown in a table, sometimes they are shown as a series of results, with activities occurring alongside them rather than just at the start. These different types are shown as different options on this page (below).

Options

Processes for developing a programme theory

- Articulating mental models: talking individually or in groups with key informants (including programme planners, service implementors and clients) about how they understand an intervention works.
- Backcasting: working backward from a desirable future, to the present in order to determine the feasibility of the idea or project.
- Five Whys: asking questions in order to examine the cause-and-effect relationships that create underlying problems.
- Generic action theories
- Generic change theories – common theories about how change comes about, that can be used in various interventions (for example, deterrence)
- Group model building: building a logic model in a group, often using sticky notes.
- Previous research and evaluation: using the findings from evaluation and research studies that were previously conducted on the same or closely related areas.
- SWOT Analysis: reflecting on and assessing the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of a particular strategy in order to discover how it can best be implemented.

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Ways of representing programme theory in a logic model

- Tiny Tools Results Chain: mapping both positive and negative possible impacts from an intervention
- Logframe: designing, executing and assessing projects by considering the relationships between available resources, planned activities, and desired changes or results.
- Outcomes hierarchy (also known as a theory of change or an outcomes chain): showing a series of outcomes leading up to the final impacts of a project.
- Realist matrix: focusing on one of the steps in an outcomes chain and then identifying the mechanism involved in producing the outcome and the contexts within which this mechanism operates.
- Results chain (also known as a 'pipeline model'): showing a programme as a series of boxes inputs-> activities-> outputs -> outcomes -> impacts
- Triple column: showing an outcomes hierarchy in the central column

Advice

Advice for choosing between options for representing programme theory

Consider the format that will be familiar to the people who will be using the logic model. Many development organisations expect to see a logframe.

- Results chain logic models are most appropriate when all the activities are at the beginning of the process, and less useful when there are a series of activities throughout participants' passage through a programme.
- Logframes have a very restrictive format, with only 4 levels. Doing separate logframes for different components can improve their usefulness.
- Realist matrices only focus on one step in the chain. While they provide better insight into this step, there either need to be a series of them or they need to be used along with other types of logic models to cover the entire process.

Advice for good practice when developing, representing or using programme theory

Advice for choosing between options for representing programme theory

See our [guide](#) to what might be considered inadequate, adequate and good practice.

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Approaches

A number of approaches include recommendations about how to develop a logic model as part of undertaking an evaluation:

- Collaborative Outcomes Reporting: using a collaborative approach to developing a logic model.
- Outcome Mapping: focusing on identifying 'boundary partners' whose work is not under the control of a programme but who are critically important to its success in achieving its objectives.
- Participatory Impact Pathways Approach: focusing particularly on identifying the networks of actors involved and how these networks need to change in order for the objectives to be achieved.
- Realist evaluation: a form of theory-driven evaluation that seeks to understand what works for whom, where and why, taking into account how context makes a difference to programme results

*[Written by Patricia Rogers, Better Evaluation.](#)

Session pre-work

During this session, you will be asked to outline how you plan to approach data collection for the purposes of your project.

As pre-work, reflect on following questions that will inform your approach to data collection:

- What will indicators will you focus on?
- Who will need to contribute?
- What existing data sets will you use?
- What practical issues do you envisage?
- When will you collect/ run your monitoring?