

UNM Evaluation Lab Summer Institute Workbook



Observations & Insights

DAY 1

DAY 2

DAY 3

DAY 4

DAY 5



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LEARNING COMMUNITY #1: LOGIC MODELS

The first step in an evaluation is getting a clear idea of your organization. Logic models are best created with someone from every stakeholder group at the table. These different perspectives will result in a more complete and accurate logic model.

If you are alone, or in a group with similar vantage points in the organization, a first step in bringing evaluation into your organization will be to share the logic model with others.

HINT #1: Read through the definitions below so that you have a good idea about what belongs where.

HINT #2: Many logic model creators find that a good place to start is long-term outcomes. This column helps motivate the rest of the logic model, and keeps the focus on the main goal.

HINT #3: Take care with defining outcomes. List outcomes that you are willing to be held accountable for.

HINT #4: Use arrows and color to show how the different boxes are connected. Modify the templates to suit your organization. Illustrate your logic model if that feels right.

HINT #5: After your logic model is filled in, review it for logic. Does your organization make sense? Are the activities likely to lead to the hoped-for outcomes? Are you trying to do too much with too few resources? Go through the checklist to help you “test” your logic model.

Logic Model checklist

	Assumptions are reasonable and evidence-based or evidence-informed.
	Activities are possible given the resources.
	Outcomes flow logically from activities.
	You are willing to be held accountable for outcomes.
	External factors don't get in the way of your activities or outcomes.
	The resources and inputs you need are available.



What is a Logic Model?

A logic model is a one-page description of your program that shows the logical steps from inputs to activities to outputs and outcomes. The logic model can be a chart, illustration or table.

Why is it so great to have a Logic Model?

If developed or reviewed regularly by stakeholders, it literally gets everyone on the same page, and pulling together.

It provides a roadmap for designing evaluation activities that can help you assess your progress and success and inform plans for increasing effectiveness.

Logic Model Definitions:

Resources and Inputs are the things and people that you need to operate your program: gallery space, grants and donations, dedicated staff, training, etc.

Activities are what you are doing when your program is happening: classes, counseling, home visits, events.

Outputs are the observable things that the activities produce: numbers of participants, numbers of events, meals served. Outputs are the evidence that you did what you had planned to do.

Outcomes are changes in participants' behavior, knowledge, skills, level of functioning, outlook, or life trajectories. Outcomes are the evidence that your program is having the hoped-for success in making a difference.

Short-term: What you want to see for a participant on the day he or she completes your program.

Long-term: What you hope participants take with them into the future.

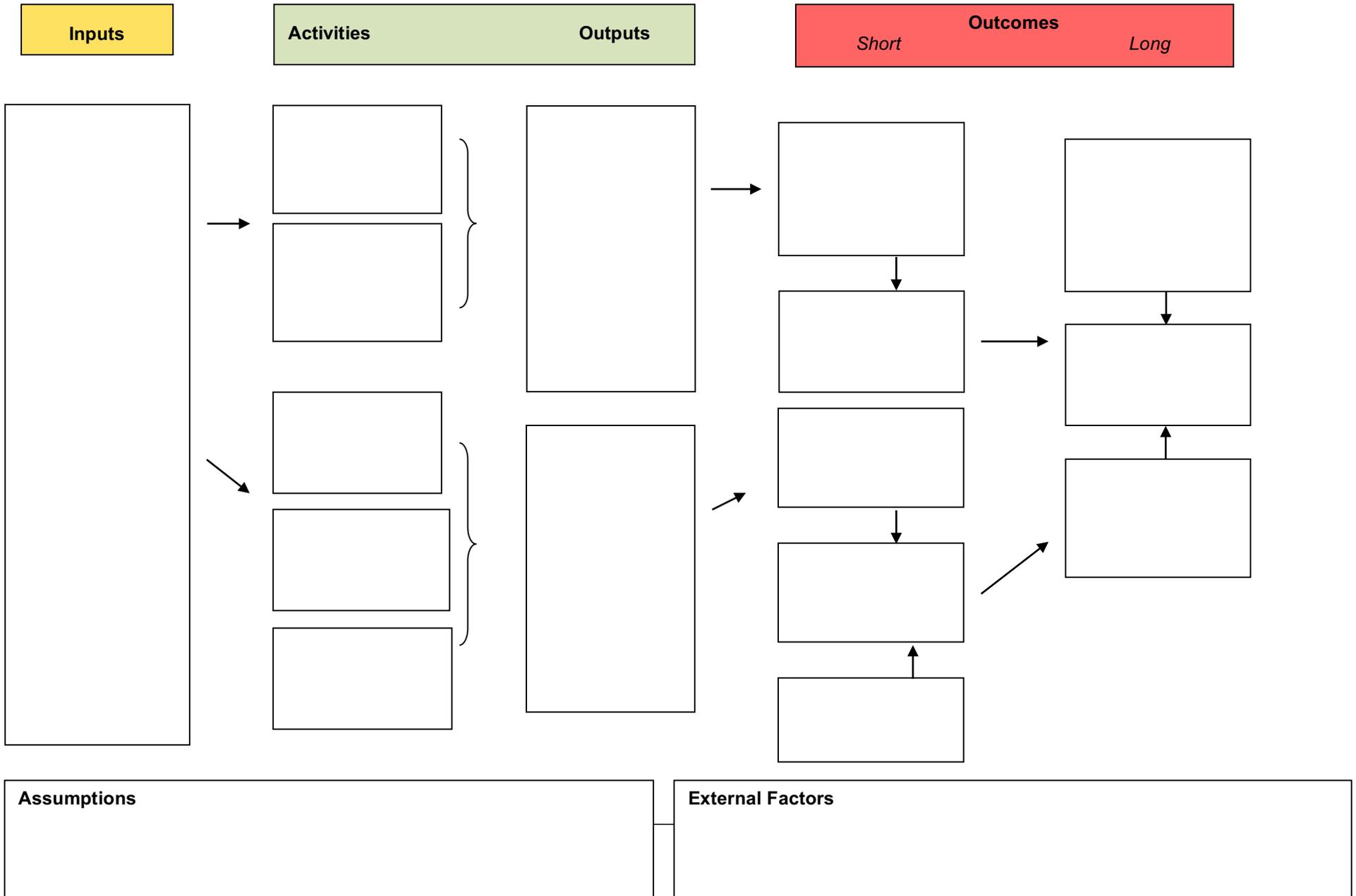
BEWARE outcomes that are out of your sphere of influence.

You need to be willing to be held accountable for the outcomes in your logic model.

Assumptions are anything that needs to be true for your program to work. This is the place to state why you think that your program will lead to the desired outcomes. For example, perhaps your program rests on the assumption that people are capable of change once they recognize their triggers and learn self-regulation skills. Assumptions are strongest when they are backed by evidence in the academic literature.

External Factors comprise the setting in which your program operates. Some external factors may make the hoped-for outcomes more likely. Other external factors may impede your program's success.

Program: _____ (name) _____ Logic Model (uses text boxes: add/change boxes and arrows as needed)



LOGIC MODEL FOR:

Resources/ Inputs	Activities (What you do)	Outputs (Evidence of what you do)	Short-Term Outcomes (How participants benefit at the end of the program)	Long-Term Outcomes (How participants benefit into the future)
Assumptions:			External Factors:	



LEARNING COMMUNITY #2: RUBRICS

Definition: “A matrix that identifies criteria for success and describes levels of performance in relation to those criteria along a spectrum from poor to excellent.” (Grant, D. The Social Profit Handbook: The Essential Guide to Setting Goals, Assessing Outcomes, and Achieving Success for Mission-Driven Organizations 9(215). Vermont: Chelsea Green Publishing (p.45).)

Step 1: Pick one outcome to assess.

Step 2: Choose a descriptive label for each level of achievement towards that outcome. Here are some ideas to get you started:

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Emerging	Developing	Achieving	Extending
Novice	Apprentice	Master	Expert
Failed	Survived	Succeeded	Thrived
Dormant	Activated	Energized	Leader
Beginning	Acceptable	Accomplished	Stellar
Below standard	Developing	At standard	Above standard
Not happening at all	Happening a little	Happening pretty darn good	Awesomely happening
Weak	Decent	Strong	Exemplary

Step 3: describe levels 1-3, based on what you have actually seen. Level 1 is the worst possible scenario you have seen or worry that could happen. Level 3 should be the best you have seen in your organization to date.

Step 4: describe Level 4, which is what going beyond the best you have seen would look like. This should be aspirational.

By developing concrete descriptions, you have a way of recognizing when things need to be improved, when things are going well, and what you want to strive for. You are also painting a realistic picture of possible outcomes. Even if you find that you are at Level 2, at least you know it could be worse. And you also know where you are falling short.

A rubric for one of the Evaluation Lab’s outcomes

Outcome: Organizations collect appropriate data to measure what matters to them.			
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Weak	Decent	Strong	Exemplary
-data reporting is based on impressions (making it up) -data are grossly incomplete (not representative)	-collecting data, but data are not always helpful or representative -data collection is inconsistent -data collection reflects some purpose such as an external grant requirement, but not mission or goals	-data are collected as a routine task in day-to-day operations -data are accurate, representative, complete, and useful -data address many, but not all Logic Model outcomes or evaluation goals	-data are collected as a routine task in day-to-day operations -data are accurate, representative, complete and useful -data address all Logic Model and evaluation goals -data address what really matters

Best Practices for developing a rubric to assess a program in your organization

1. Identify program to assess
2. Decide who will participate in developing the rubric, remembering that the more people who participate the better.
3. Agree on a regularly scheduled time for staff to dedicate MISSION TIME for development of the rubric
4. Review or develop a Logic Model
5. List your program outcomes, start with one outcome and develop criteria for each level
6. When done, consider how to measure

Rubrics take time, dedication and commitment. Time spent developing a rubric increases commitment and ownership by staff.

Your organization:

Add descriptive labels here

Outcome:

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4

Your organization:

Outcome:			
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4



LEARNING COMMUNITY #3: EVALUATION DESIGN & DATA COLLECTION

STEP 1: Answer the question: compared to what?

Your choices are:

<input type="checkbox"/> Compare participants at start and end of program	Drawback: Can't say that program was deciding factor. Advantage: absolutely do-able.	
	Good options:	<input type="checkbox"/> Collect data at start and end of program (pre-post design)
		<input type="checkbox"/> Collect retrospective data at end of program (participant reports how program changed him or her)
<input type="checkbox"/> Compare participants and non-participants.	Drawbacks: Selection bias, meaning that those who participate are different from those who don't (in attitude, responsibility, etc.). Also may be difficult to collect data from non-participants. Advantage: more convincing than option #1 if you have a credible comparison group.	
	Good option:	<input type="checkbox"/> Collect data at start and end of program for both groups
<input type="checkbox"/> Compare people randomly assigned to treatment or control groups (RCT)	Drawbacks: hugely expensive, may be unethical to withhold service. Advantage: positive outcome is evidence that your program works	

Always be on the look-out for non-participants who would want to participate, but can't because of arbitrary geographic or age restrictions. Or for situations that would make an RCT possible.

- Are you expanding? If so, can you randomize your program in the new location?
- Do you have people on a waitlist? If so, they could be the comparison group.
- Do you have to turn people away because of age restrictions (for example, families with children over the age of 3)? If so, they could be the comparison group.

The Laura and John Arnold Foundation <https://www.arnoldfoundation.org> funds RCTs if you have a program you want to test. You will likely be able to find UNM faculty members in Economics, Sociology, Education who are eager to evaluate RCTs.

Ideas for possible comparison groups:

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STEP 2: List all of the short-term outcomes from your logic model and identify if you already have access to data to measure them. If you don't, what data tool could you use to collect the data?

Example for hypothetical early childhood program

Outcomes	Data already collected		Need new data source	
	Identify source	Modification needed?	Type	Notes
Children are more confident	-	-	Drawings in response to a prompt	Could integrate into group time
Children are better-prepared to succeed in school	Literacy assessment	Need to administer at start and end of program (currently given only at end)	-	-
Parents support learning more effectively	-	-	Retrospective survey question	Ask to give example of change in behavior

Your turn:

	Data already collected		Need new data source	
Outcomes	Identify source	Modification needed?	Type	Notes

STEP 3: How can you integrate data collection into routine daily operations? Who will collect data and when?

Data Collection Tool	Who	When & How
Ex. Intake & discharge form	Case manager	Enrollment and discharge meeting, enter directly into data base
Ex. Focus groups	Evaluation coordinator	Week 15 of 16-week program. Provide \$20 gift card?

LEARNING COMMUNITY #4: EMBEDDING EVALUATION

MISSION TIME

How will you carve out time to focus on assessing whether you are achieving your mission?

Can you devote the last 15 minutes of your weekly staff meeting?

Add as a Board agenda item?

How will you incorporate stakeholders into mission time?

NAMING AND SUPPORTING AN EVALUATION COORDINATOR

Who will be your organization's Evaluation Coordinator?

It should be someone who has the authority to make it happen.

How can you make it a primary responsibility so that it really happens.

FEEDBACK LOOP

How, when and where will review of data and program adjustments take place?

Who will be involved?

BRINGING IT BACK TO YOUR ORGANIZATION

Who are the stakeholders who need to be involved?

Plan out timeline for reviewing logic model, creating rubrics, developing new data collection tools and implementation training.



LEARNING COMMUNITY #5: DEVELOP OR REFINE

Refine any of the above, or begin to develop new data collections tools.