Evaluation Support Scotland

Support Guide 1.c

Developing a Logic Model

Evaluation can help you to work out what difference you are making through your services or activities. Evaluation Support Guide 1.a Setting Outcomes helps you to clarify your aims, outcomes and activities. **Developing a Logic Model** is a practical guide that focuses on how you put together a basic logic model to help you map the links between your aims, outcomes and activities.

What is a Logic Model?

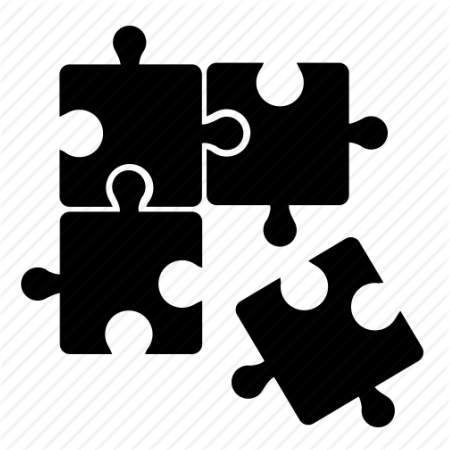
A logic model tells the story of your project or programme in a diagram and a few simple words. It is a model that broadly describes the journey of change you want to make. It **shows the connection** between the **need** you have identified, what you **do to address this need**, and how this makes a **difference** for individuals and communities. Here are two simple examples:

Curing a headache

Resources	Activity	Outcome
Get pills →	Take pills →	Feel better

Logic models can help you to:

- Think about **why** your project or programme **exists**, why you do what you do and why you think that **makes a difference**. They can help you explore and develop a shared understanding about these things.
- **Explain** how your project's activities and outcomes **contribute** to wider organisational outcomes (if you have them) or strategic outcomes (such as those set by local or national government).



- **Clarify** short-, medium- and long-term **outcomes**.
- **Plan a new project**. In fact, logic modelling is really a fancy term for planning. It can help you to think about the **need** for your project and what you will do to address that need. It can be helpful to think about what **needs to change.**
- **Identify** project or programme **risks** and how you might **manage** them.
- **Communicate** your thinking to people who support or benefit from your work.
- Develop your **evaluation plan.** A logic model can help you to identify what you expect to happen, and when. It can therefore provide a **pathway** or road map for **measuring progress**.

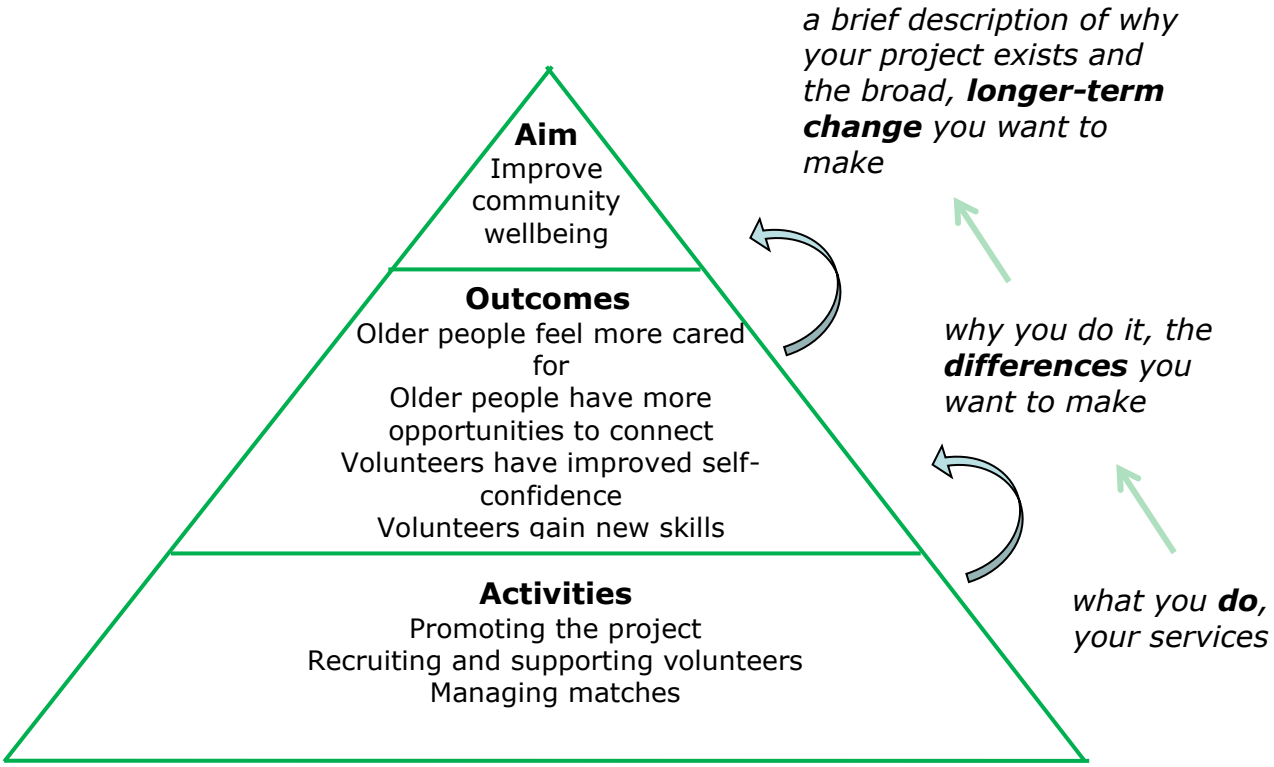
Types of logic models

There are many types of logic models. People use different versions for different purposes. In this guide, we concentrate on the two models that are most frequently used for evaluation. You don't have to follow these templates. You may want to tailor these for your purposes.

The Weaver's Triangle

The simplest version of the logic model is The Weaver's Triangle. This planning and evaluation tool is adapted from the Charities Evaluation Services Planning Triangle developed by Jayne Weaver. You can use this model to help you to clarify your aims and activities (see Support Guide 1.a Setting Outcomes).

Example: Sutherland Companions Befriending Project



Community projects with a limited number of activities and outcomes will probably find the Weaver's Triangle is enough to help them clarify their logic and identify what they need to evaluate.

You can make the triangle more sophisticated by drawing arrows or making numbered connections between the activities and outcomes.

However, it can become a bit untidy and may limit your ability to question some of the underlying assumptions behind your logic. The Weaver's Triangle is not always good at showing the connection between different parts of the model or identifying in what order things happen. So, for more complex organisations or programmes, you might want to use a more in-depth model, such as the Wisconsin Model.

The Wisconsin Model

One of the most common formats for logic modelling is the Wisconsin Model. You might find this model useful if your organisation needs flexibility to:

- illustrate the **connections** between different parts of the model
- demonstrate in what **order** things happen
- specify some of the **underlying assumptions** in your work.

Here are the typical components of this kind of logic model:

<table>
<tr><th rowspan="2">Situation / Need</th><th rowspan="2">Resources</th><th rowspan="2">Activities</th><th colspan="3">Outcomes</th></tr>
<tr><th>Short term</th><th>Medium Term</th><th>Long term</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3"></td><td rowspan="3"></td><td></td><td rowspan="3"></td><td rowspan="3"></td><td rowspan="3"></td></tr>
<tr><td>Participants</td></tr>
<tr><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Assumptions</td><td colspan="3">External Factors</td></tr>
</table>

How to develop a Wisconsin Model

In essence, you fill in the boxes. The order that you do this in and the time you spend on each section is up to you. Here are some questions to guide you filling in each box:

	Questions
Situation / Need	Have we defined the need correctly? What is the problem or issue and for whom? How do we know? Why is this a problem? Who cares if it is resolved? Who else is helping to resolve this issue and how do we fit in? What do we know about the factors causing this issue (from research or experience)?
Resources	What resources do we need or are we using? (staff, volunteers, equipment, technology, money, buildings) Do we have enough resources to deliver the activities?
Activities & Participants	What are we doing / do we need to do? Who are we reaching or targeting?
Outcomes	What change do we expect as a result of these activities? Is it logical that if we deliver these activities it will lead to these outcomes? What will happen immediately (short-term outcomes), what is the longer-term change (long-term outcomes) and what will happen along the way (medium-term outcomes)? What is a typical journey for our beneficiaries or service users?

One of the benefits of logic modelling is that it allows you to question 'your logic' and to identify things that might go wrong.

This is where the **Assumptions** and **External Factors** come in. To help you identify them, here are some questions to ask yourself:

Assumptions	What assumptions underpin your model? What do you take for granted that you might need to explain to others? (this might relate to the *how* and *why* of your work) Why do you need to deliver these activities in this way?
External Factors (this is like a risk analysis)	What or who might help or hinder your work and the difference you make? (Political, economic, social, environmental, demographic, technological, legal). Can you do anything about these factors?

If we return to the example of curing a headache, some assumptions we might make are that the person will know how to take the pills and that these are the correct pills. However, by questioning these assumptions we might learn that the person with the headache needs assistance taking those pills.

If… then…

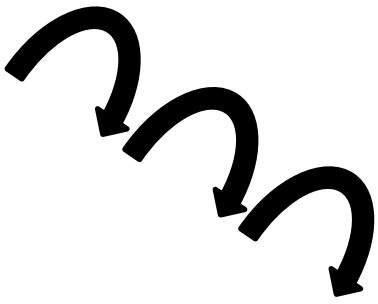
Example: Sutherland Companions Befriending Project

Situation/need	Resources	Activities	Short term outcomes	Medium term outcomes	Long term outcomes
Older people in rural areas are at risk of social isolation. Older people don't have networks in place and do not feel able to ask for help or address issues. This has a negative impact on their physical and mental health.	Project co-ordinator Volunteer time Funding for volunteer training	Promoting the project Recruiting and supporting volunteers Managing matches **Participants** Older people in rural areas who are isolated or at risk of being isolated Volunteer befrienders	Older people feel more cared for Older people have more opportunities to interact Volunteers have improved self-confidence Volunteers gain new skills	Older people are more connected to their community Older people feel more in control of their lives Volunteers are more connected to their community Volunteers are in a better place to seek employment	People are able to look after their own health and wellbeing and live in good health for longer **(National Health and Wellbeing Outcome 1)**

This model allows the Sutherland Companions Befriending Project to show the links between their activities and their outcomes. It also reflects the sequence of outcomes that could lead or contribute to the strategic outcome (in this case National Health and Wellbeing Outcome 1).

The Sutherland Companions project can also start to see what it needs to evaluate and when. They can see which outcomes they need to measure shortly after the activities begin and which will take longer to happen.

Measuring the right outcomes at the right time



The logic model gives you a structure for measuring the right outcomes at the right time. So, for example, Sutherland Companions might measure their outcomes as follows:

- Older people have more opportunities to interact - Short term
- Older people are more connected to their community - Medium term
- People are more able to look after their own health and wellbeing and live in good health for longer (National Health and Wellbeing Outcome) - Long term

It might be unrealistic for some smaller organisations to expect to measure the long-term outcome. However, they could refer to research to say that it is reasonable to assume that if people are more connected to their community and feel more in control of their lives then they will be better able to look after their health and wellbeing.

You can find out more in Support Guide 1b '*Working out what to measure'* (setting indicators for your outcomes) for more support to measure your outcomes.

Using the model to develop a monitoring and evaluation plan

A logic model gives you a pathway of cause and effect. From here you can begin to identify what to measure to find out whether you are making expected progress. The table sets out potential evaluation questions.

	Evaluation questions	Process
Situation/ Need	Is our analysis of the problem correct? Has the problem changed?	Environmental scanning Research
Resources	Are resources available and being used as planned?	Financial, people and resource management
Activities	Are we delivering the activities as planned and to agreed standards?	Recording activities Checking satisfaction Quality checks
Participants	Are we reaching the right people? If not, why not? What factors are affecting take up?	Checking who is participating Asking participants about barriers others might face
Outcomes	Are we making a difference?	Collecting information at the beginning, during and end

We recommend using an evaluation template (Evaluation plan template). Your evaluation can also test out whether your **assumptions** were right and what **external factors** helped or got in the way of your plans. This might be particularly helpful if you want to replicate your project or programme.

Tips

- **There is no 'right way' to write a logic model.** You can start from the left, or the right, or somewhere in the middle. You might also find that you want to go back and forth between the boxes. For example, you might question whether a particular activity can really deliver a particular outcome and decide to change either the outcome or the activity. This means that you are exploring the assumptions behind your activities and questioning the theory about how you make a difference. That's what this process is all about!

- If you are **working in a group**, take a large piece of paper and write the headings of the model ('situation', 'resources', 'activities' and so on). It is a good idea to write your activities and outcomes on sticky notes so that you can add, remove, and move them around. There is also a variety of **digital boards** you can use to work with your team remotely (such as Google Jamboards).

- You may identify **lots of outcomes**, but you don't have to include them all in

the model. This is not your operational plan. It is a model that broadly describes the **journey of change** you believe you can make. But it's not the detail of your day-to-day work. Also, logic models are linear, but life is not!

- One of the most useful aspects of logic modelling is **involving people** (staff, volunteers, partners and other stakeholders) in the process. Often the process of creating the logic model is more useful than the diagram produced at the end. For more information about involving participants in your evaluation you can find our '*Why bother involving people in evaluation? – Beyond Feedback'* here.

- **Logic models are never perfect.** Don't spend too much time refining your model. Get it to a 'good enough' point and then get on with the work! But **revisit** your model so that you can **modify** it to reflect any major changes in your understanding about the logic and assumptions of your programme.

Further resources:

The Weaver's Triangle blank template can be found here.

The **Wisconsin Logic Model Template** can be found here.

Check out our **Introduction to Logic Modelling Online Learning** here.

Evaluation Support Scotland Logic Model 2019-23 here.

More help

Check the ESS website for definitions of **evaluation terms** and an introduction to the **self-evaluation pathway.**

Our training workshop ***Getting Started: Outcomes and Indicators*** is a good starting point. To book a place visit the workshops page of our website. We also provide tailored evaluation support.

What next?

Now that you know how to use logic models to clarify aims, outcomes and activities, you are ready to think about your indicators. You can find out more in Support Guide 1b *Working out what to measure (setting indicators for your outcomes).*

You can download all our **Evaluation Support Guides** free from our website.

For evaluation help and advice please get in touch.

info@evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk *www.evaluationsupportcotland.org.uk*

@EvalSupScot *0131 243 2770* *Scottish Charity SC036529*