



WELCOME to

*Stronger by Design: An ECHO for Practical  
Strategies to Evaluate and Amplify Impact*

*Session 1, The Power of Evaluation for Strengthening Communities,  
October 9, 2025*

## Series Learning Objectives

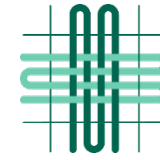
1. Creating a program logic model linking key goals and outcomes to program strategies as a roadmap for designing an evaluation to monitor progress and program success
2. Identifying the highest value-to-effort questions to answer through evaluation methods
3. Identifying the highest value data for your program and options for gathering data from existing sources or new methods (e.g., surveys, focus groups)
4. Making sense of data using basic methods and tools (e.g., Excel) and create data visualizations and written summaries for reports
5. Feeling more confident working with data and evaluation principles while recognizing when it may be more efficient and effective to work with evaluation experts to support data needs

## Series Sessions

| Date       | Session Title                                                                |
|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 10/9/2025  | <a href="#"><u>The Power of Evaluation for Strengthening Communities</u></a> |
| 10/23/2025 | <a href="#"><u>Creating a Roadmap to Measure Success</u></a>                 |
| 11/6/2025  | From Theory to Practice: Hands-on Evaluation Planning Workshop               |
| 11/20/2025 | Gathering Data and Information about your Program                            |
| 12/4/2025  | Making Sense of Program Data to Help Others See your Value                   |
| 12/18/2025 | From Theory to Practice: Building your Evaluation Tools and Strategy         |



**Center for Program Design & Evaluation**  
CPDE | Dartmouth College



Dartmouth  
Health



# Session 1: The Power of Evaluation for Strengthening Communities

*Dr. Jennifer Wenner*

*10.9.2025*

# Today's Plan

Making Evaluation work *for* you and *with* you

Making sense of the terms

Effort to Impact – a little can go a long way

Seeing your program's 'data' everywhere

Reviewing and sharing data with your community

# Common Questions

Are the people using my program getting what they **really need**?

Are we reaching the **people we intended**? What is **getting in the way** of people using the program?

Is our program being implemented as **efficiently/effectively** as possible? What can we **do better**?

Should we continue to invest in these activities? **Are we having the impact we think we are**?

# Myths that can get in the way

“We know our people need X, Y, Z. We’re the experts at designing those kinds of programs and activities.”

“I’ll get some testimonials from the moms who really like our program.”

“We know some people have trouble getting into our program but there’s nothing we can do about that.”

“We’ve been doing this work for decades, it must be working. Look at all the people we serve.”

“We don’t have the time/money to evaluate our programs”

“No one on our team has the training to analyze data.”

# What is Program Evaluation?

“the **systematic collection** of information about the **activities, characteristics, and outcomes** of programs to **make judgments** about the program, **improve** program effectiveness, and/or **inform decisions** about future program development.”

(Patton, 1997)



# What is Program Evaluation?

“the **systematic collection** of information about the activities, characteristics, and outcomes of programs to make judgments about the program, improve program effectiveness, and/or inform decisions about future program development.”

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(Patton, 1997)

# The Power of Evaluation

## Provides us with ‘real’ information

- Learn and adjust to what constituents need and want
- Reveal processes that no longer work (e.g., a costly marketing campaign that isn’t reaching target audience) and where things are working well
- Data to justify more staff or services
- Results that demonstrate our program impact to people, our communities and partners

# Other Reasons to Evaluate

**Monitoring program utilization** (who, how many, when; *equitable* access)

**Resource allocation** (do we need all our staff at that event; how many XX did we give out to whom; is this the best use of funding)

**Implementation fidelity** (do we deliver the program consistently; are refreshers needed)

**Knowledge generation** (what is our most popular program; why do people come back to us)

**Accountability** (showing funders / board / community we are doing what we say we are)

**Outcome & Impact Assessment** (are we succeeding at our mission; are people better because of what we do)

| Some Common Evaluation Terms | Meaning and Use                                                                                                             |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Indicator/Leading Indicator  | What we need to see/measure to <i>know if we've met a goal</i>                                                              |
| KPIs                         | Key performance indicators – usually our <i>priority indicators</i>                                                         |
| Milestones                   | Another way to describe an indicator of success: <i>what we want to see or achieve</i> with program activities              |
| Metrics (or Measures)        | <i>Things we can count</i> , observe, listen for, track, & describe to know if we have met a goal; our indicators use these |
| Data                         | The <i>information</i> we have counted, observed, heard                                                                     |
| Methods                      | The way we collect the data/information on our program                                                                      |
| Goal                         | Broad statement about what the <i>program is trying to accomplish</i>                                                       |
| Objective                    | <i>A specific result or interim step</i> the program is trying to achieve on the way to meeting a goal                      |

## The Three Steps of Nonprofit Measurement, Evaluation, and Learning

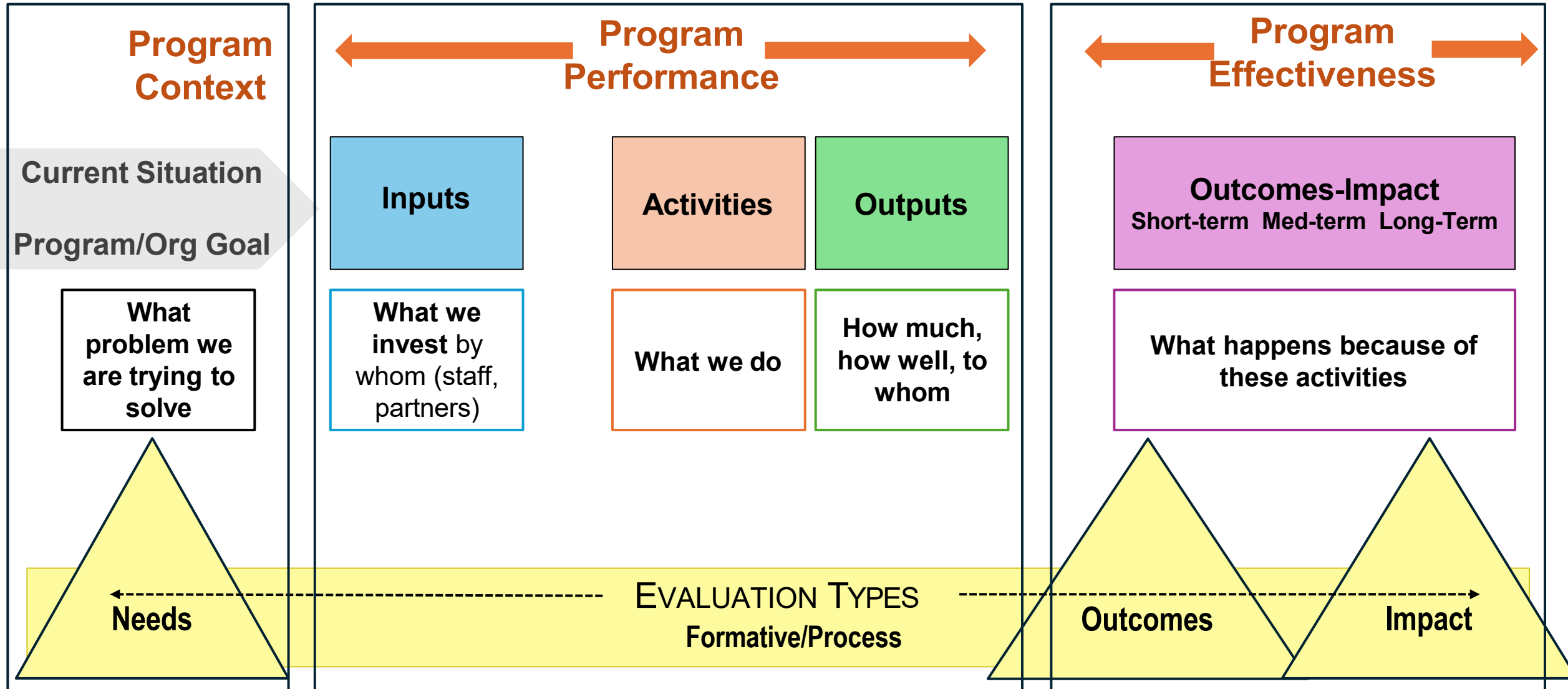


## The Three Steps of Nonprofit Measurement, Evaluation, and Learning





# Evaluation Types for Your Program Road Map



# Benefits of a Road Map

Engage program partners

Ensure logical connections

Support strategic planning

Program marketing/website

Inform decision-making and  
resource prioritization

# Effort to Impact

Critical to identify what is most important to learn

What are the most vital outcomes

Short → Medium → Long-term

Then what is most feasible to collect/assess



# The Three Steps of Nonprofit Measurement, Evaluation, and Learning





# Data is Everywhere

Data is information – information that is going to tell you something of importance about your program

Quantitative – what can be counted

Qualitative – things people say or that you observe

Primary data – the information *you (your program)* collect

Secondary data – information about your program or users that *others* have collected

## The Three Steps of Nonprofit Measurement, Evaluation, and Learning



# Using your data to learn and improve

Review data regularly

Data-driven decision-making

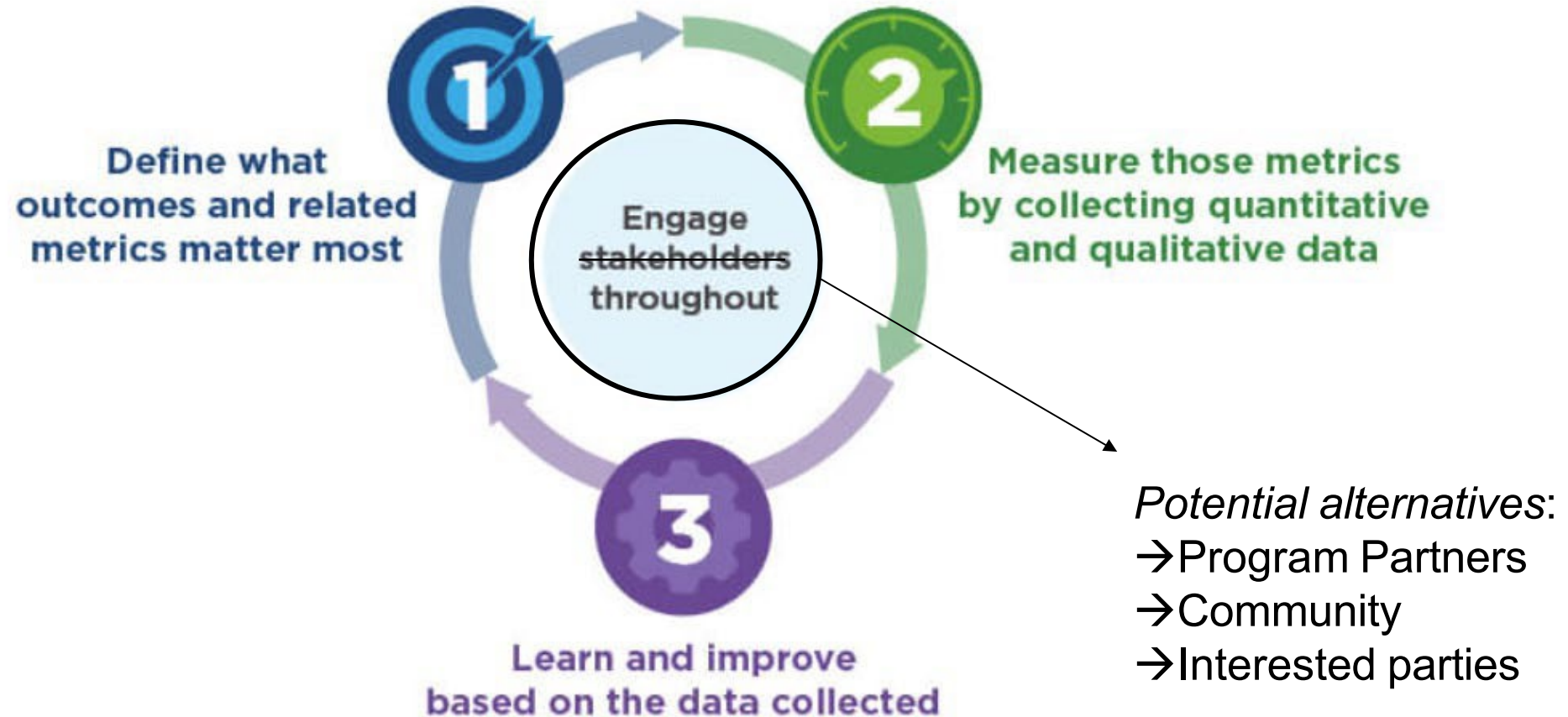
Share results with community



skynesher/Getty Images



## The Three Steps of Nonprofit Measurement, Evaluation, and Learning





# Engaging your community

Not only when collecting data and sharing results, but also when *planning* data collection processes

With each step of evaluation, think about:

- Who should be consulted?
- Who will use the results and what is most useful to know?
- Who will be impacted by the results?

# Questions & Discussion

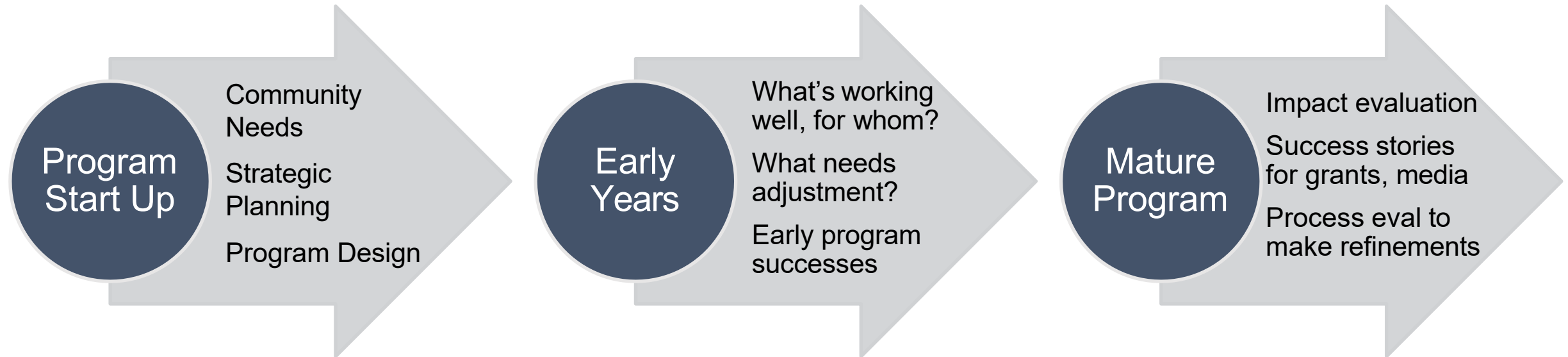
Any questions?

Challenges and successes  
that anyone would like to  
share/discuss?



# Case Discussion

Program Maturity ↔ Evaluation Needs



# Programs at an Early Stage

Is anyone at this stage?

What are the most important things you need to guide your program/services now?

What are the challenges you face where evaluation might help (but also feel hard to fit in)?

# Mature Programs

Is anyone at this stage?

What are the most important things you need from evaluation right now?

# Case Example – Mature Program

High Jump – educational program for academically advanced middle school students with socioeconomic needs to help launch them into better high schools and beyond

- Formative Youth experience assessments at program end points

  - Used staff input to create the experience assessments

  - Reviewed results with program team to assess what's working well and where improvements are needed

- Family Surveys to bring in additional input



# References

Patton, M. Q. (1997). *Utilization-focused evaluation: The new century text* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications, Inc.

Eval Academy: <https://www.evalacademy.com/resources/p/10-reasons-to-evaluate-infographic>

The Bridgespan group: <https://www.bridgespan.org/insights/nonprofit-organizational-effectiveness/a-practical-guide-to-nonprofit-measurement-evaluation-and-learning>

Bitesize Learning: <https://www.bitesizelearning.co.uk/resources/impact-vs-effort-matrix-explanation-template>



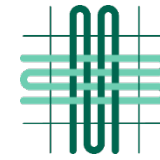
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*Stronger by Design: An ECHO for Practical  
Strategies to Evaluate and Amplify Impact*

*Session 2, Creating a Roadmap to Measure Success,  
October 23, 2025*



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Health



# Session 2: Creating a Roadmap to Measure Success

*Catherine Denial, M.S.*

*Sidney May, Ph.D.*

*Nancy Boyer, Ph.D.*

*October 23, 2025*

# Today's Plan

Definition & importance of a logic model

Components of a logic model

Theory of change vs logic model

Using logic models in evaluation

Case study

Discussion



# What is a logic model?

A **visual roadmap** of how your organization/program is supposed to work

A powerful **tool** for planning, implementing, managing, and evaluating an organization/program

Terms you might come across around logic models

Theory of change

Causal pathway

Program roadmap

Program model

Conceptual framework



# The power of a logic model

**Clarifies** how and why your organization/program is supposed to work

**Provides** a common language and shared understanding of purpose

**Identifies** what needs to be monitored and evaluated

**Facilitates** learning and **supports** evidence-based decision-making

**Supports** fundraising and grant writing



# Your program roadmap (the logic model)

**Program Context**

**Program Performance**

**Program Effectiveness**

Current Situation

Program/Org Goal

**Inputs**

**Activities**

**Outputs**

**Outcomes-Impact**  
Short-term Med-term Long-Term

**What problem we are trying to solve?**

**What we invest by whom (staff, partners)**

**What we do**

**How much, how well, to whom**

**What happens because of these activities**

**Needs**

**EVALUATION TYPES**  
Formative/Process

**Outcomes**

**Impact**



# Inputs: What we invest

## Inputs

Staff, trained supervisors (incl. local staff)

Funding

Volunteers

Beneficiaries

Logistical tools (e.g., walkie talkies, internet access, vehicles)

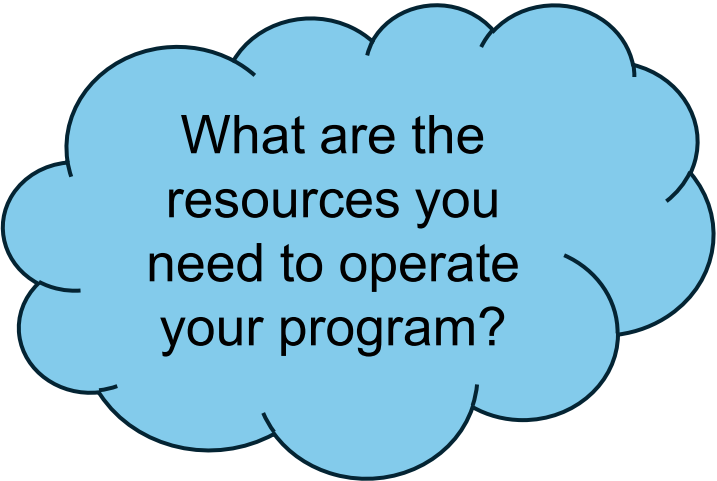
Building materials (e.g., cement, wood, nails, drywall, mud, paint) and tools

Understanding of local disaster impact and community need

The resources a program has available to invest in the work

Include personnel, finances, technology, facilities, supplies

Consider contextual factors (structural or regulatory) that may impact inputs

A light blue, cloud-like thought bubble with a black outline, containing the text "What are the resources you need to operate your program?".

What are the resources you need to operate your program?



# Activities: What we do

## Activities

Train volunteers in disaster-resilient construction techniques

Repair/Build homes (e.g., install foundation, build walls, frame roof, hang drywall, mud drywall, paint, install doors and trim, install flooring)

Monitor volunteer safety

Coordinate between beneficiary and organization

Document work

Participate in long-term response committees

What the program does with the resources

Includes processes, events, actions needed for program implementation

Might be considered the interventions or program strategies that are used to bring about the desired changes or results



What are your strategies or activities?



# Outputs: How much, how well, and who you reach

## Outputs

# beneficiaries with safe, sanitary, and secure lodgings

# houses built

# volunteers trained

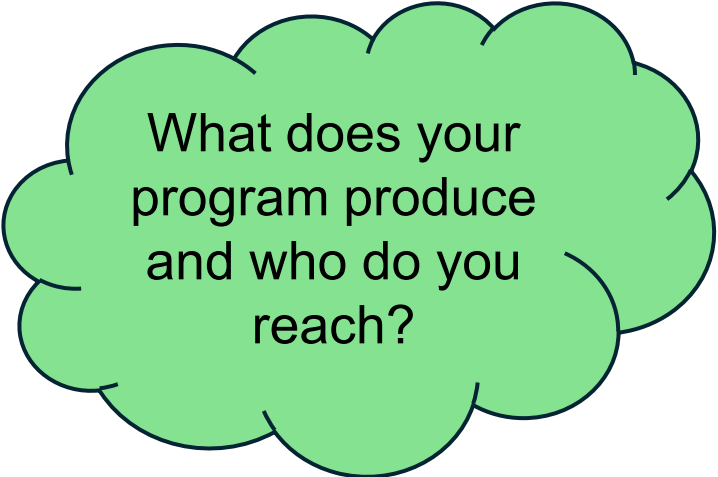
Rebuilt % of homes in XYZ neighborhood

Served XYZ types of beneficiaries

Direct products of program activities

Includes types, levels, and targets of services to be delivered

Tangible or observable manifestations of the intervention or program activities



What does your program produce and who do you reach?



# Outcomes: What happens because of the activities

## Outcomes

### Short-term:

- Beneficiaries move back into home
- Volunteers gain practical skills in building/construction

### Medium-term:

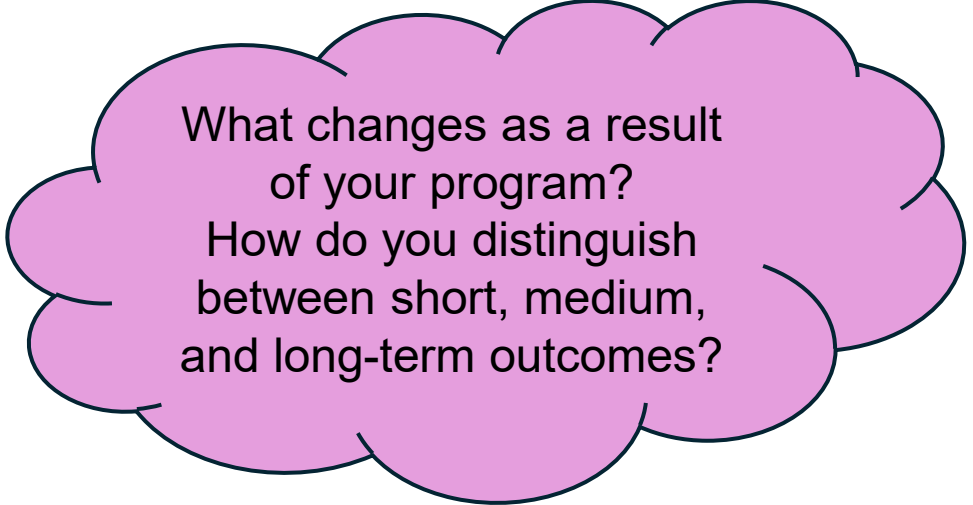
- Beneficiaries feel safe and secure in their home
- Reduction in housing costs (no longer pay for mortgage and rent)
- Volunteers recommend program to others & donate

### Long-term:

- Housing security (fewer unhoused or temporary housing)
- Damage from future disasters is mitigated

Specific changes in program participants' behavior, knowledge, skills, status, and/or level of functioning

Can be broken down into short-term, medium-term, and long-term outcomes

A light purple thought bubble with a black outline, containing text about distinguishing outcomes.

What changes as a result of your program?  
How do you distinguish between short, medium, and long-term outcomes?



# Theory of Change

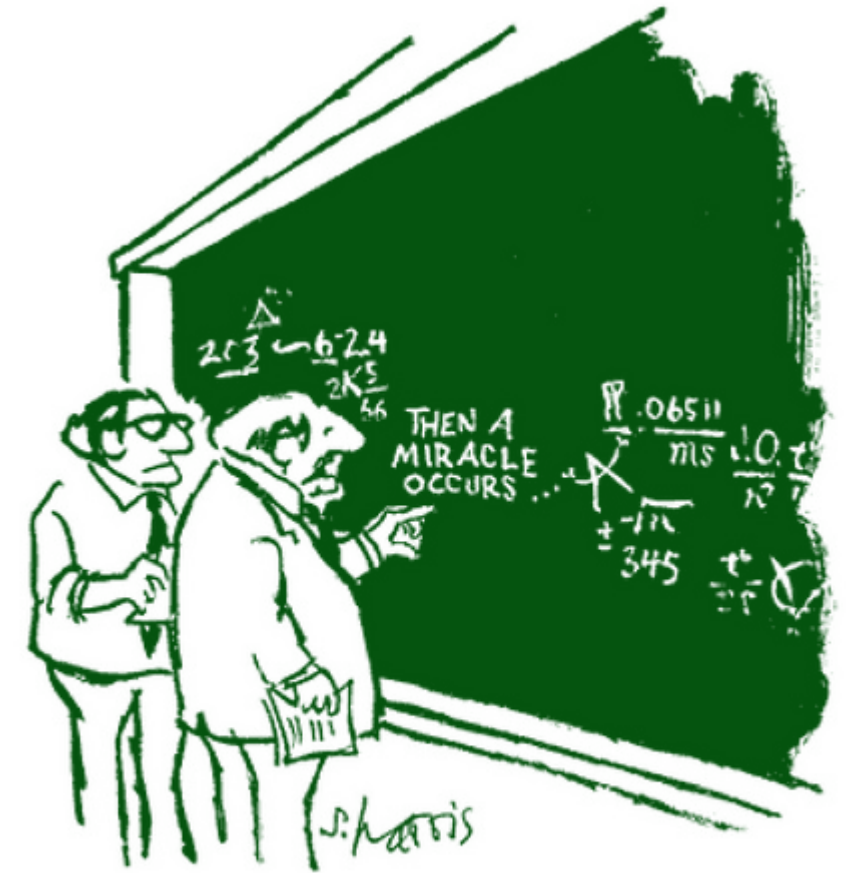
The logic model which provides the “**what**” and “**how**” of a program

The theory of change provides the “**why**” the program or activities work to achieve the outcomes

Explains **why we expect the changes to occur** - connecting why certain activities result in certain outcomes

Underlying assumptions of how your program works that can be tested and measured

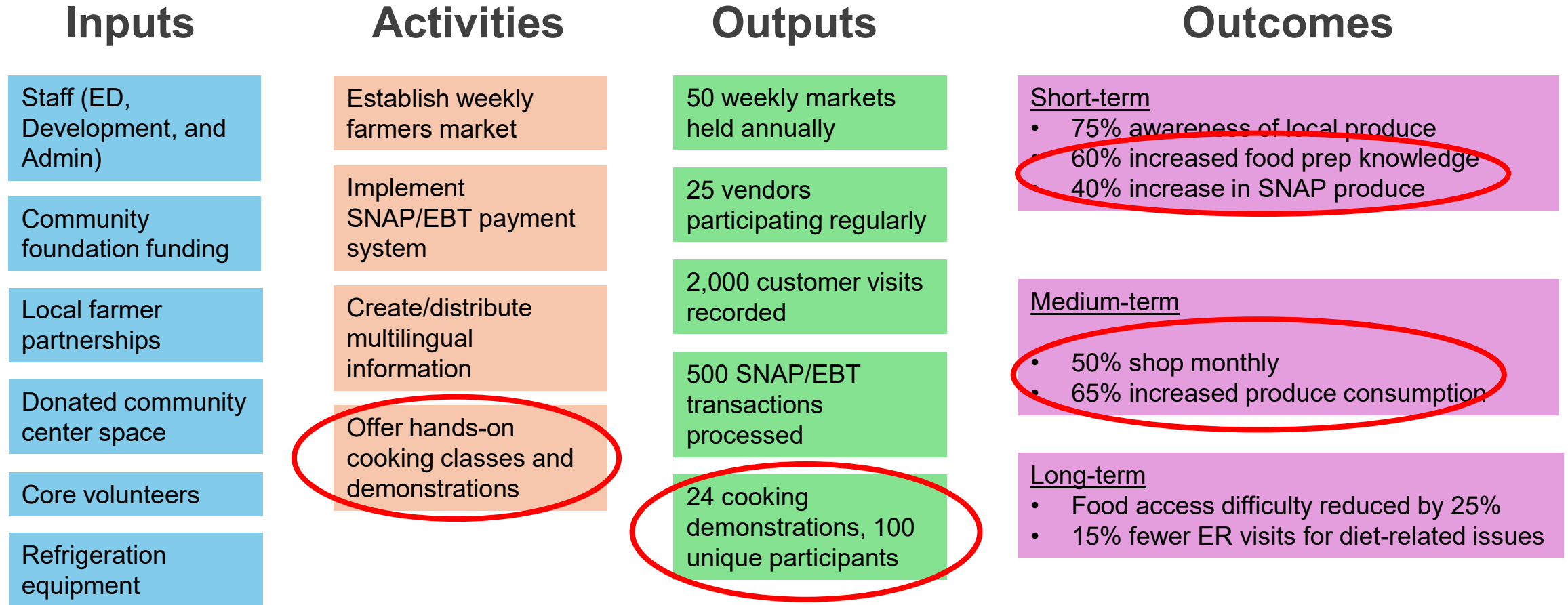
Developed from prior research or evaluation on similar programs, expert opinion, perspectives of staff, managers, partners and community members about how the intervention works, and research-based theories



"I think you should be more explicit here in step two."

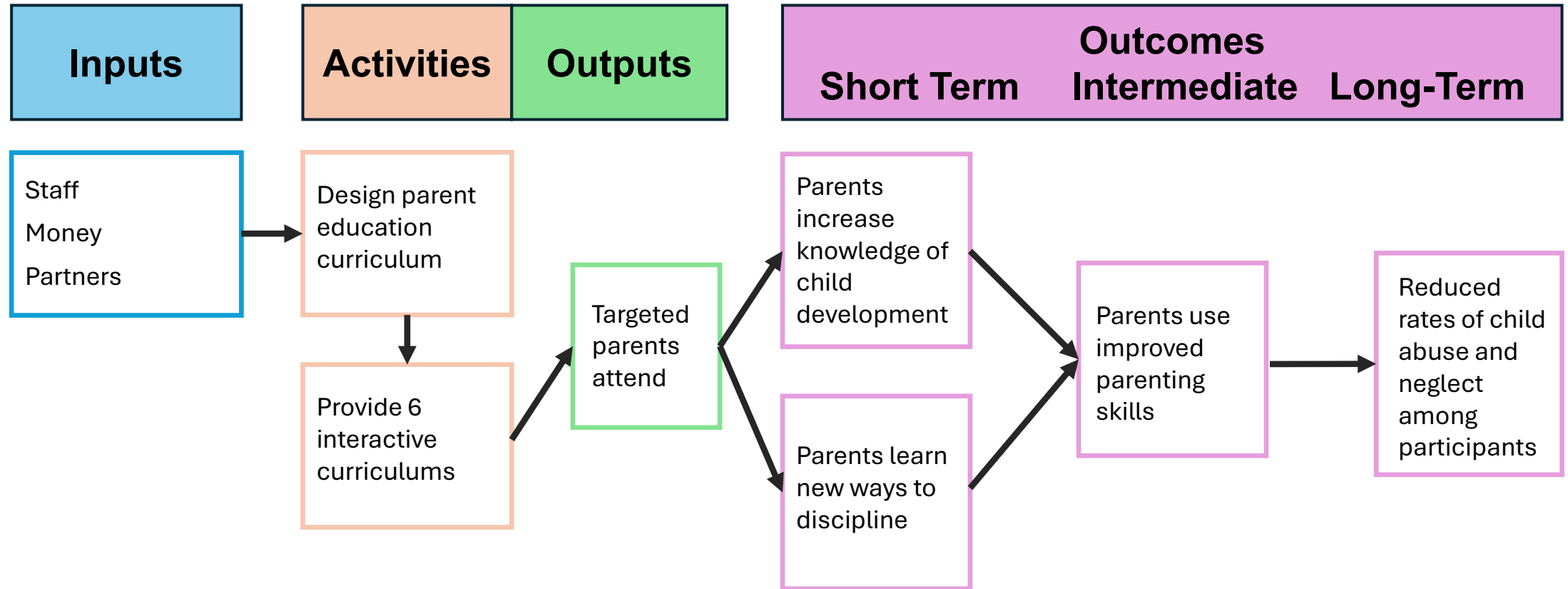


# Example: Community Food Access Program



**Goal** Improved food security, nutrition, and health outcomes through sustainable, community-driven food systems change

# Example 2: Parent Education





## Sample logic model

Izzi Early Education Logic Model

Izzi Early Education provides comprehensive child development support and services to families in the San Francisco Bay Area

<https://www.jbassoc.com/resource/izzi-early-education-logic-models/>

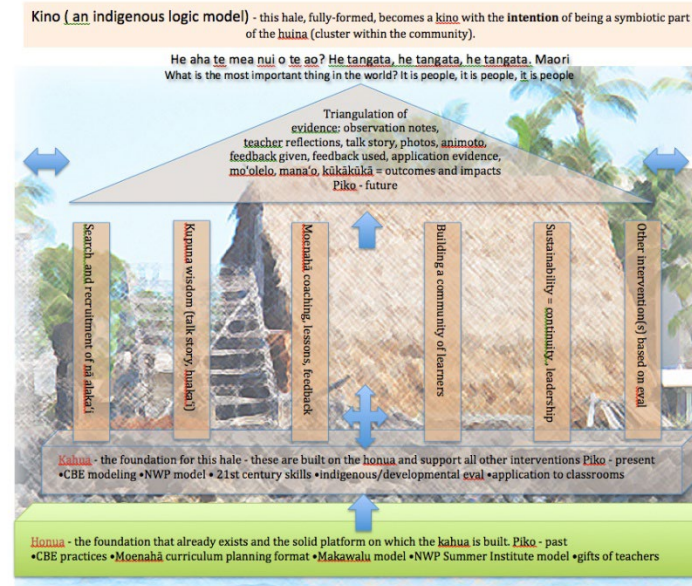
# Head Start Center-Based Logic Model



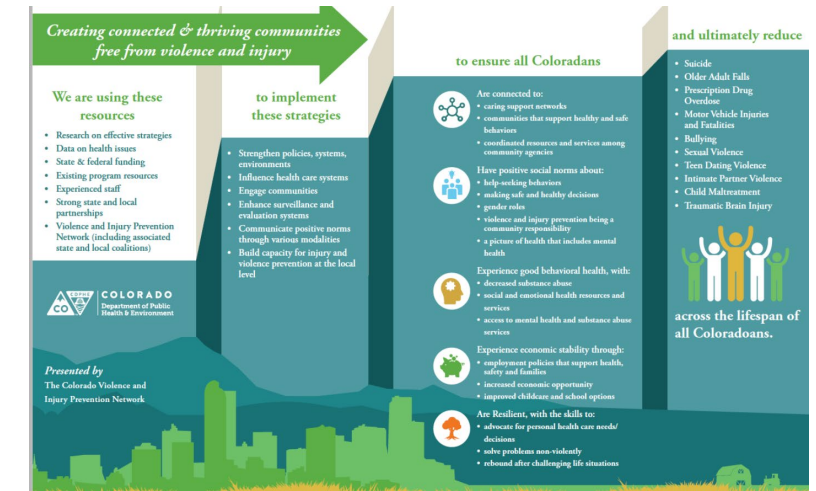


# Alternate Formats

- Edit based on the unique needs of your audience
- Maintain the same basic building blocks (e.g., inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes)
- Formats can adapt to different understandings of theory and logic



<http://puremanao.blogspot.com/2012/07/kino-indigenous-logic-model-post-1-of-4.html>



Colorado Violence and Injury Prevention Network  
[ciac.colorado.gov/files/D2DF/CO%20Violence%20and%20Injury%20Prevention%20-%20Mental%20Health%20Promotion%20Strategic%20Plan%2002016-2020\\_CDPHE.pdf](http://ciac.colorado.gov/files/D2DF/CO%20Violence%20and%20Injury%20Prevention%20-%20Mental%20Health%20Promotion%20Strategic%20Plan%2002016-2020_CDPHE.pdf)

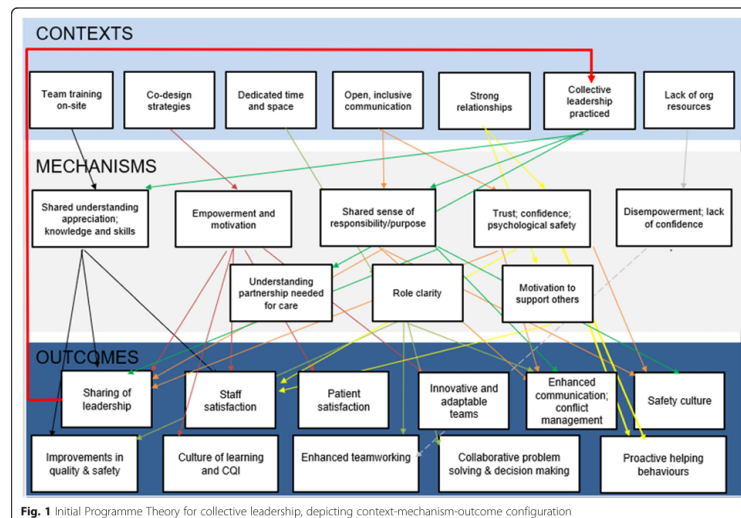
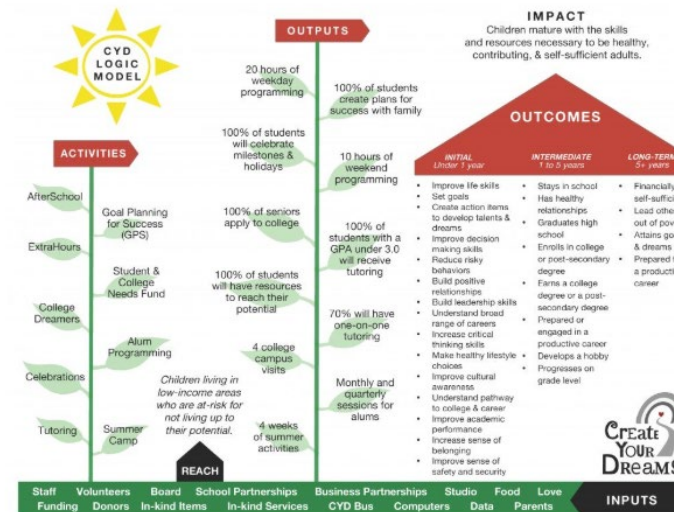
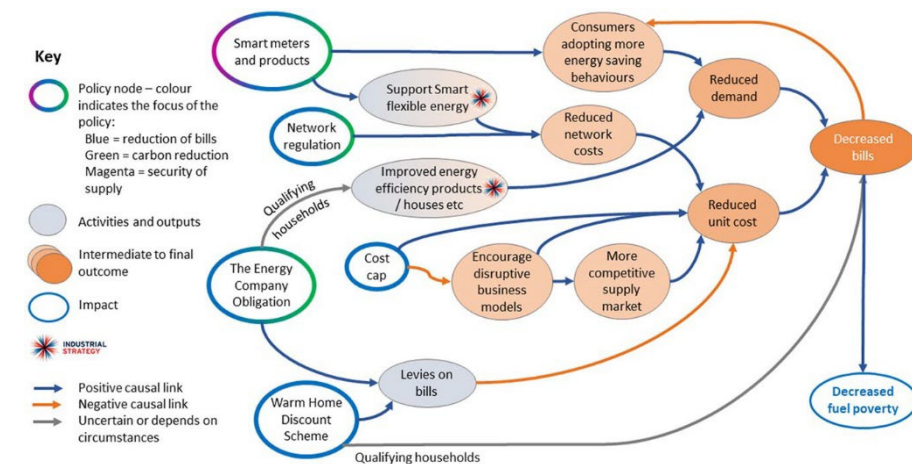


Fig. 1 Initial Programme Theory for collective leadership, depicting context-mechanism-outcome configuration

<https://bmchealthservres.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12913-020-05129-1>

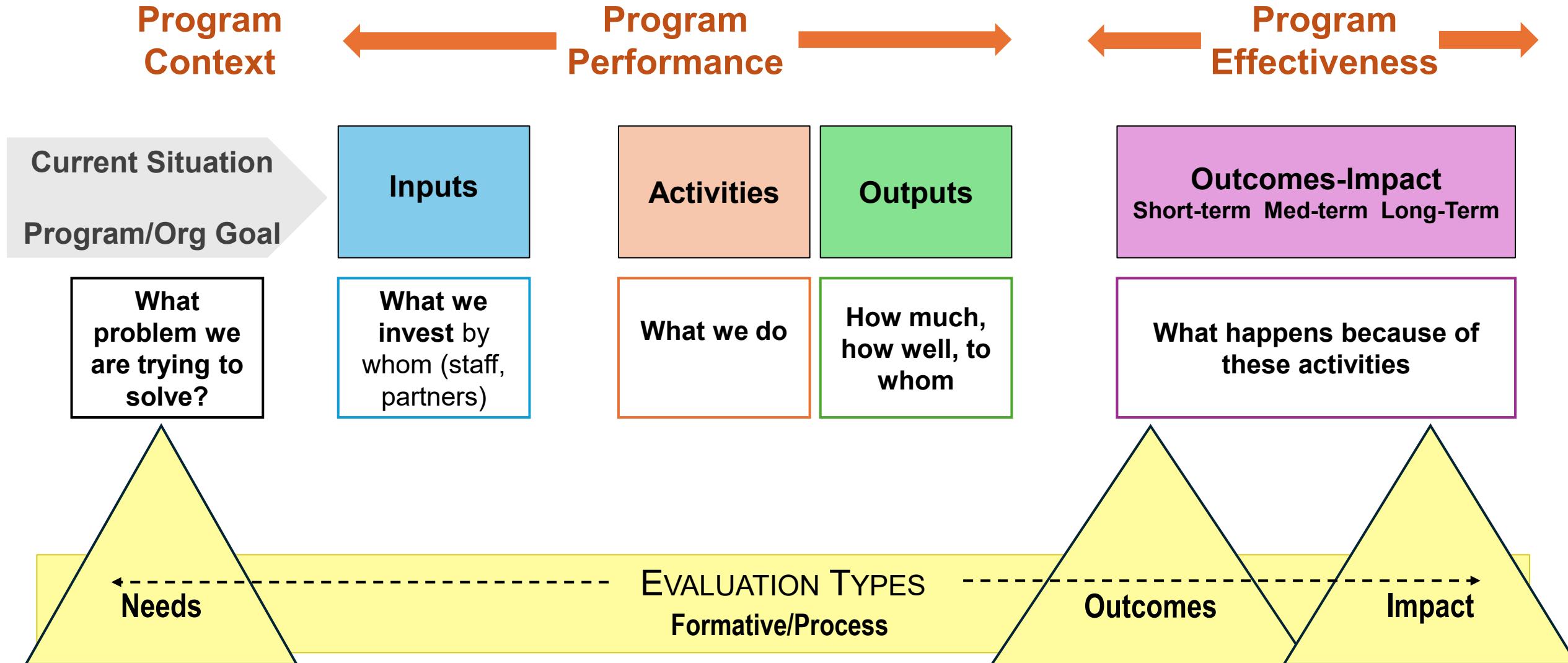


<https://www.bonterra.tech.com/blog/logic-models-and-fundraising>



Wilkinson, H., Hills, D., Penn, A., & Barbrook-Johnson, P. (2021). Building a system-based Theory of Change using Participatory Systems Mapping. *Evaluation*, 27(1), 80–101. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1356389020980493>

# Evaluation is part of your program roadmap



# Using logic models in evaluation

## The Three Steps of Nonprofit Measurement, Evaluation, and Learning

What evaluation questions are you trying to answer?

Your logic model will provide the key areas to measure in an evaluation.



See ECHO Session 4 for “Gathering Data and Information about Your Program”

The outcome of the evaluation may confirm the logic model or suggest changes. **Evaluation is ongoing.**

See ECHO Session 5 for “Making Sense of Data”



# Case Study



# Case Study (see handout)



Blue Sky Works (BSW) is a small nonprofit located in Manchester, NH

Their mission is ensuring that young adults have the skills, experiences, and support to achieve their full potential in their careers. The organization **aims to increase the career stability of low-income young adults** by providing them with **hands-on skill development in technology, career coaching, and job placement**.

The program has a **budget of \$400,000, 5 full time staff, 10 part time volunteers**, and serves **150 low-income young adults age 18-25 annually**. The organization receives **in-kind donations** and multiple small-moderate size **grants from local businesses and foundations**.

BSW started in 2018 and is well-respected in the local community. **Referrals** to the program come from local high schools, city and state agencies, social service agencies, and word of mouth.

The leaders of BSWs know they do good work, but they don't know how to demonstrate it. They rely on **exit surveys** that provide little useful feedback, are often incomplete and have low response rates. They rely on anecdotes **and enrollment numbers** to show "impact".

The organization wants to apply for more substantial funding to grow their program and reach more participants, moving from local to state-wide and multi state access. In their attempt to go after larger funding opportunities they find it difficult to provide strong answers to questions covering the organization goals, reach, outcomes, measurement of outcomes, results, and how they use results to inform program improvement.

The board of directors is getting impatient with the staff not being able to bring in more funds and increase their reach and expand their programs. Staff are frustrated because they see the impact they are making but cannot articulate it in a way to get funders to pay attention.

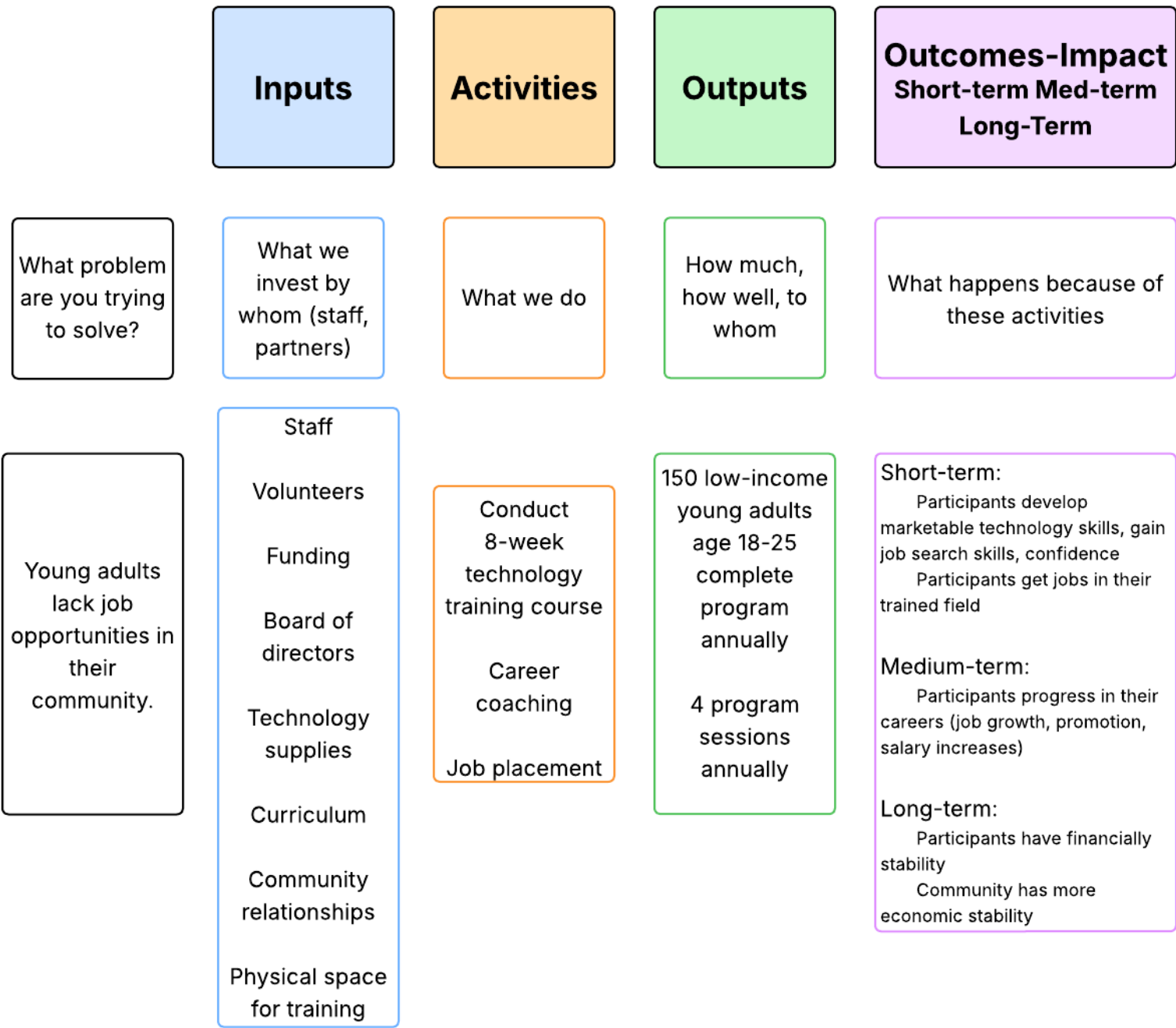
**Where do they start?**





# Example:

Goal: The organization aims to increase career stability for low-income young adults.





# Discussion and Questions



# References



James Bell Associates. (2007). *Evaluation Brief: Developing a Logic Model*. Arlington, VA. August 2007

Kellogg Foundation Logic Model Development Guide: [https://www.naccho.org/uploads/downloadable-resources/Programs/Public-Health-Infrastructure/KelloggLogicModelGuide\\_161122\\_162808.pdf](https://www.naccho.org/uploads/downloadable-resources/Programs/Public-Health-Infrastructure/KelloggLogicModelGuide_161122_162808.pdf)

University of Wisconsin – Cooperative Extension: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/evallogicmodel.html>

Better Evaluation: <https://www.betterevaluation.org/blog/using-logic-models-theories-change-better-evaluation>

CDC: Evaluation framework: <https://www.cdc.gov/evaluation/php/evaluation-framework-action-guide/index.html>  
and logic model: <https://www.cdc.gov/evaluation/php/evaluation-framework-action-guide/step-2-describe-the-program.html>





## Up Next

- Next session: November 6<sup>th</sup>, From Theory to Practice: Hands-on Evaluation Planning Workshop
- Please submit your cases/questions and view course resources at the: [DH iECHO site](https://www.dartmouth-hitchcock.org/project-echo/enduring-echo-materials)
- Recordings will be posted on the D-H ECHO website <https://www.dartmouth-hitchcock.org/project-echo/enduring-echo-materials>

# **Appendix**

## **Additional Information and Examples**



# Situation, goals, & assumptions

**Situation/problem:** Before creating your logic model, you should write a “problem statement” or summary of the situation or problem your program is trying to address. Consider:

- What is known about the problem and solutions?
- Who is affected?
- What can be changed?
- Why does the problem exist?

**Goal(s):** Next, articulate the goals of the program (or organization, intervention). A goal is a broad, high-level statement that describes the long-term change you aim to achieve in response to the problem. Goals are directly informed by the problem statement and **serve as the foundation for identifying desired outcomes and ultimate impact.**

**Assumptions:** Beliefs we have about the program, participants, how the program will work. They include:

- Our definition of the existing problem and solution
- How the program will operate
- What we expect to see for outcomes
- What we know or think about participants including behavior and motivations
- External environment and context and how it influences the program and outcomes



# Outcomes: What happens because of the activities

Specific changes (short, medium, long term) in program participants' behavior, knowledge, skills, status, and/or level of functioning.

Here is one option for thinking about the difference between short-, intermediate, and long-term outcomes:

| OUTCOMES                                                                                     |                                                        |                                                                                 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Short-Term                                                                                   | Medium                                                 | Long-Term                                                                       |
| Changes in awareness, knowledge, attitudes, skills, opinions, motivations, behavioral intent | Changes in behavior, decision making, policies, action | Changes in conditions, social, health, economic, environmental, community level |
| Parental awareness of health requirements                                                    | Parent/child completes well-child visits annually      | Access to health care<br>Improved health outcomes                               |



# Theory of Change

The logic model which provides the “what” and “how” of a program

A theory of change provides the “why” the program or activities work to achieve the outcomes

Explains how the change will occur – connecting why certain activities result in certain outcomes

Underlying assumptions of how your program works that can be tested and measured

The theory of change can be developed from prior research or evaluation on similar programs, expert opinion, perspectives of staff, managers, partners and community members about how the intervention works, and research-based theories

## Example: Simple Theory of Change

Our Build It! robotics program is designed to increase student interest in science, technology, engineering and math and give students experiences to build their confidence, problem solving and critical thinking skills. It is a 10 week after school robotics program.

| Strategies used in our program...                                                                 | That research indicates...                                                                                                                                                      | Leads to these outcomes                     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Students learn about programming, design, and engineering by building a robot from a kit of parts | Learning by doing through hands-on projects that are relevant and meaningful drive interest                                                                                     | Interest in STEM                            |
| Students work on teams to design and build their robot, guided by mentors                         | When adults serve as mentors but let students try and fail on their own, students build confidence; working on teams supports problem solving, collaboration, critical thinking | Increase confidence                         |
| Teams showcase their robots at a competition                                                      | Activities that end in a project where they interact with peers doing similar work, compete, or showcase supports confidence and interest                                       | Increase problem solving, critical thinking |





# Logic Model Template

Program Goals:  
Assumptions:

Inputs

Activities

Outputs

Outcomes-Impact

Short-term Med-term Long-Term

What problem are you trying to solve?

What we invest by whom (staff, partners)

What we do

How much, how well, to whom

What happens because of these activities



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