

Project Design

What are the key elements needed to design a great project?



Evaluation
Division

BUREAU OF EDUCATIONAL
AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

Problem Definition



- What problematic condition exists that demands a programmatic response?
 - Four “W” Questions:
 - What? This is the project itself
 - Who? These are the project’s beneficiaries and partners
 - Where? Geographic areas
 - When? Period of performance; activity length
 - ...the ‘how?’ comes later...

What?



- Should align with the solicitation
- All elements of the project should inform each other
 - We'll talk about the Logic Model in a few...
- Problem Statement
 - Based on:
 - Research – backing up your statement with data, statistics, etc. helps make your case
 - Experience
 - Clearly stated

Who?



- Beneficiaries – We want specificity
 - Who is the target population?
 - Women? Minorities? Men? Disabled?
 - How many?
 - How will these beneficiaries be selected?
 - Need strong selection criteria that is as objective as possible. Should know how you will measure
 - How many sets of beneficiaries will there be? How will those groups be selected?
 - Think about: “do no harm” and unintended consequences
- Always go back to the Problem Statement. Does the “who?” match the problem the grantee is trying to solve?

Example



- **Project Description:** Train 120 women farmers on entrepreneurship and business administration to improve their ability to manage projects and become leaders
- **Selection Criteria:** 1) Woman; 2) owner of an agri-business; 3) Motivated
- **Selection Criteria #2:** The grantee will select 25 women from the 120 to participate in training of trainers event according to 1) their performance and 2) trainer's recommendations

Who?



- Partners – Work Together!
 - Many grant opportunities are for organizations or teams, rather than individuals. This includes MEPI Local Grants and State Department Alumni Innovation Fund Grants.
 - The number of MEPI alumni increases every year, but our budget does not!
 - You are more likely to be funded if you work within an existing organization or join forces with other individuals.
- In your proposal, outline who is working in a similar area to you and why your project is needed. Show that you are aware of what is already out there and explain how your project fits into or complements those efforts.

Where?



- Which geographic areas?
- Why did you select these geographic areas?
 - Does it link back to the ‘what’?
 - Does it link back to the ‘who’?
 - Other areas to be considered based on your expertise?
- Always go back to the Problem Statement. Does the “where?” match the problem you are trying to solve?

Example



- **Project Description:** Encourage women to participate in entrepreneurial activities
- **Background:** In Muscat, there is no culture of entrepreneurship, and barriers exist for women to work. We will conduct multiple trainings in Muscat to introduce them to the concept of entrepreneurship as well as to build their skills in handicrafts or computers

When?



- Both Timeframe of Activities **AND** the Period of Performance
- Does the timeline make sense?
 - Link inputs to outcomes – can you achieve this (or even get close) in the amount of time proposed?
- Always go back to the Problem Statement. Does the “when?” match the problem you are trying to solve?

Example



- **Project Description:** Encourage women to participate in entrepreneurial activities
- **Background:** In Muscat, there is no culture of entrepreneurship and barriers exist for women to work. We will conduct multiple trainings in Muscat **over a period of 9 months** to introduce them to the concept of entrepreneurship as well as to skill-building in handicrafts or computers
- **Activities:**
 - 1) 5 groups of 20 women will receive a 4-day training on entrepreneurship concepts
 - 2) Skill-building courses will be held two days per week for 3 weeks (total of 6 classes/48 hours)

How?



- Once 4 'W' Questions answered, let's think about actual implementation:
 - Training?
 - Plays?
 - Internships?
 - Mentorships?
- Will the “how” get us to the “what”?

Example



- **Project Description:** Train and educate community about ending gender-based violence and promote long-term social and cultural change
- **Activities:**
 - 1) Conduct two gender violence prevention trainings to 40 NGOs
 - 2) Train internal staff on reviewing best practices
 - 3) Train 25 women leaders on lobbying tactics

Example 2



- **Project Description:** Project will provide members of 12 CSOs with training to build their capacity surrounding civic engagement
- **Activities:**
 - 1) Training on networking
 - 2) Training on civic engagement
 - 3) Work with local community to identify and implement 6 local community projects

Logic Models



- A series of “if-then” relationships that, if implemented as intended, lead to the desired outcomes
 - A road map
- Provides the program description that guides your monitoring and evaluation (mostly, monitoring) process
- It helps:
 - match monitoring to the program
 - know when and where to measure
 - focus on key information
 - tell us what we need to know

Logic Models and Monitoring



INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	IMPACT
<p>The financial & human resources needed to operate the program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff• Funding• Board• Clients• Materials	<p>How resources are used</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teach students language skills and confidence	<p>Units of service resulting from activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• # of students taught• Hours of instruction	<p>Changed conditions for program participants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Higher high school grad rates• Higher college enrollment• Higher test scores	<p>Changes in organizations, communities, or systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lower crime rates• Less poverty• Less strain on social safety net



<p>Problem Statement: What changes are you trying to cause where you are working?</p>	<p>Activities: What will you do to cause these changes?</p>	<p>Training: How many people can you train in one session, so they are able to effectively learn something?</p> <p>Advocacy: How many campaigns do you need to conduct to create changes where <i>you're</i> working?</p> <p>Documentation: How many documentation initiatives do you need to conduct, and with which groups, to create change?</p> <p>Service provision: <i>To how many individuals, communities or families can you provide services, for them to feel a difference in their lives?</i></p>	<p>Training: What will participants learn from your training? What actions will they take after attending your training?</p> <p>Advocacy: Whose minds are you trying to change? What will they do after?</p> <p>Documentation: How will your documentation project change the lives of those you work with?</p> <p>Services: If you provide direct services, how will it make the lives of those people better?</p>
<p>Inputs: What do you need to complete your project?</p>	<p><i>*Note: think about quality. Planning more is not always better. This also applies to the next columns.</i></p>		

Focus on Results

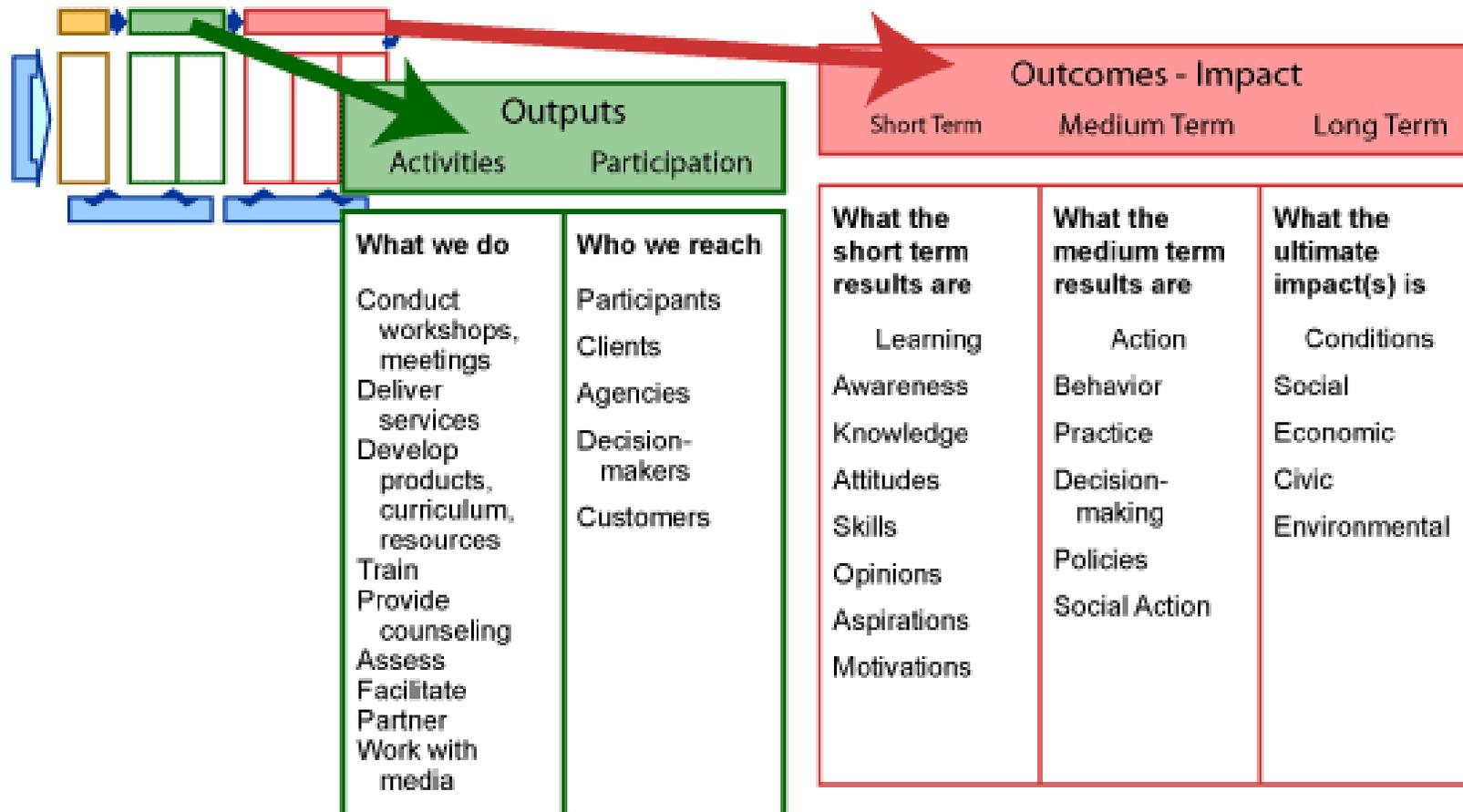


- Many proposals stop at outputs (for example, # of trainings held).
- However, how will those trainings be used? What effect will they have?
- Your proposal will be stronger if you can show the intended **results** of the activities. Ex. # of women starting home businesses after receiving entrepreneurship trainings.
- Show that beneficiaries are applying / using what they gained from the project.

Logic Models and Monitoring



Focus on Outputs and Outcomes/Impact



How Will You Measure the Results?



Objective: Media defend the public interest

Outputs

Outcomes



M&E Questions

How many sessions were delivered?

Did all journalists participate as intended? Did they attend all sessions?

To what extent did knowledge and skills increase? For whom? Why? What else happened?

To what extent did behaviors change? For whom? Why? What else happened?

To what extent is there better reporting and coverage of the targeted issues?

Possible Indicators

Number of training workshops held

Number of journalists attending (disag.)

Number and percent of journalists who increased knowledge (disag.)

Number and percent of journalists who practice new techniques (disag.)

Percent increase in media items promoting targeted issue

Information & Resources



For a complete listing of ongoing evaluation projects, an archive of completed reports, and resources for conducting evaluations, visit the **ECA Evaluation Division website**:

<https://eca.state.gov/impact/eca-evaluation-division>

If you would like additional information or have any questions, please contact us at

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