Toolkit:Developing a Framework or Model of Change

This toolkit helps in developing a picture of the pathway from activities to intended outcomes.

Outline

1. **Describe the intended uses of your framework or model of change:**
   a. To convey the purpose and direction of your initiative or effort (i.e., the outcomes sought and how you will get there)
   b. To show how multiple factors interact to influence the problem or goal
   c. To identify actions and interventions more likely to lead to the desired result

   How will your organization or effort use its framework or model of change?

   Related resources:
   Developing a Logic Model or Theory of Change

2. **Outline your initiative or program's vision and mission:**
   a. Vision - summarize your statement of your initiative's dream for the future. It should be:
      i. Easy to communicate
      ii. Uplifting/inspiring to those involved in the effort
      iii. A reflection of the perspectives of the community it represents

What's your group's vision for the effort?

b. Mission - provide your group's mission statement. It should communicate:
   i. What the group is going to do (e.g., "...by connecting and supporting children and caring adults.")
   ii. What is going to do it (e.g., "Promote caring relationships...")

What's your group's mission for the effort?

Related resources:
Proclaiming Your Dream: Developing Vision and Mission Statements

3. **State the objectives of your initiative or effort:**
   a. Summarize all of the specific measurable results of your initiative or program that you anticipate. These should include behavioral changes and related community-level outcomes.
   b. **State your assumptions and hypotheses regarding the personal and environmental factors contributing to the problem or goal.** Discover these using multiple strategies:
      i. Forward logic (But why?) - ask why you this problem exists. What brought it about? What maintains it?
      ii. Reverse logic (But how?) - ask how this problem might be solved or goal accomplished?
      iii. Identify what personal factors (e.g., knowledge, belief, skills) contribute to the problem or goal
      iv. Identify the environmental factors (e.g., supports and services; access, barriers, and opportunities; consequences of efforts; policies and broader conditions) that contribute to the problem or goal.

      Related resources:
      Creating Objectives
      Gathering and Using Community-Level Indicators
      Community-Level Indicators: Some Examples
      Analyzing Root Problems of Problems: The "But Why?" Technique
      Defining and Analyzing the Problem

4. **Describe the appropriate scope or level of your framework or model of change:**
   a. The overall initiative - may include all strategies and relationships used to affect change and bring about improvement for the overall problem or goal (e.g., reduce violence; promote caring relationships)
   b. A particular initiative or program - may include only the components and elements of a specific aspect of the overall effort (e.g., education programs; policy change)
   c. A specific work plan for an action or model for cooperation among stakeholders or participating agencies

Which level will your model of change describe?

> **Related resources:**
> Identifying Action Steps in Bringing About Community and System Change

5. **Identify ALL components to include in the logic model or model of change.** Include:
   a. Purpose or mission - What the group is going to do and why?
   b. Context and conditions under which the problem or goal exists and which may affect the outcome (e.g., history of the effort, broad cultural and environmental factors, political situation, economic conditions).
   c. Inputs: Resources and barriers - include both resources and supports available and constraints or barriers to meeting the initiative's objectives
   d. Activities or interventions - what the initiative or program does to bring about change and improvement (e.g., enhancing support, modifying access)
   e. Outputs - direct results or products of the group's activities (e.g., number of people trained or activities conducted)
   f. Effects - more broadly measured outcomes or results (may include immediate, intermediate, and longer-term effects)

   > **Related resources:**
   > Generating and Choosing Solutions
   > Understanding Risk and Protective Factors: Their Use in Selecting Potential Targets and Promising Strategies for Interventions
   > Proclaiming Your Dream: Developing Vision and Mission Statements
   > Understanding and Describing the Community
   > Defining and Analyzing the Problem
   > Identifying Community Assets and Resources
   > Identifying Action Steps in Bringing About Community and System Change
   > Gathering and Using Community-Level Indicators
   > Community-Level Indicators: Some Examples

6. **Using the components, draft a picture of the framework or model of change.** Include:
   a. An expected time sequence (what occurs before what) to arrange the components and elements of the framework or model.
   b. Arrows or other methods to communicate directions of influence and sequences of events. Some arrows may point in both directions to show and interaction or mutual influence.

   > **Related resources:**
   > Developing a Logic Model or Theory of Change

7. **Check for the completeness of your logic model.**
   a. Select a case situation (real or hypothetical) in which you can obtain feedback about your logic model
   b. Check for the usefulness of the elements of the model (e.g., Was it understandable?)

    c. Check for the completeness of the model (e.g., What was missing?)
    d. Revise and add to make it more complete.

    After testing the usefulness of the model with a case situation, what revisions did you make?

    Related resources:
    Developing a Logic Model or Theory of Change

8. **Once all current components and elements are identified and incorporated into the framework or logic model, put it to use.** Uses may include:
    a. Orienting those doing and supporting the work - use to explain how the elements of the initiative or program work together, where contributors fit in, and what they need to be able to make it work.
    b. Planning - use to clarify your initiative or program's strategies, identify targets and outcomes, prepare a grant proposal, identify necessary partnerships, and estimate timelines and needed resources for the effort.
    c. Implementation - use to determine what elements you have and don't have in your initiative or program, develop a management plan, and make mid-course adjustments.
    d. Communication and advocacy - use to justify to others why the initiative/program will work and to explain how investments will be used.
    e. Evaluation - use to document accomplishments, identify differences between the ideal program and the currently operating one, determine which indicators will be used to measure success and frame questions about attribution (of cause and effect) and contribution of the program/initiative to the mission.

    How might you put your model of change to work within your organization or community now? In the future?

    Related resources:
    Providing Staff Orientation Programs
    Providing Volunteer Orientation Programs
    Providing Support for Staff and Volunteers

9. **Revise the model (as needed) to adapt the elements and incorporate newly emerging ones.**
  Using the model and seeing the interconnectedness of its components will allow you to:
    a. Link the path of activities to intended effects or outcomes
    b. Plan expansion of activities to reach your goals
    c. Understand the boundaries of your program or initiative
    d. Adjust course to allow for unanticipated changes
    e. Develop a new framework for an extended effort or new initiative