# Integrating evaluation & design roles: Innovations in recent NGO projects

Robert Drake – SmartSteps

Vanessa Hood – Rooftop Social

# WORKSHOP PLAN

Intro: Planning evaluation AND reviewing program design

Three phases in how we use Program Logic:

1. Build basic program logic

2. Probe theory of change

3. Explore key evaluation points

Lessons learned

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# Program logic headings

**Inputs**

**Outputs/ Activities**

Reach / Audience

**Outcomes**

Short, Medium, Long term:

- Knowledge/Skills

- Attitudes/Confidence

- Behavior

**Assumptions**

**External environment**

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# Demo of program logic exercise

Program logic is a core tool that most evaluators use.

In this session, we will do a practical program logic exercise to share:
- how we do it
- the benefit it can have for the project
- what makes an appropriate context

This exercise uses a hypothetical financial literacy program.

The key to the exercise is the QUESTIONS you ask in each phase.

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# Step 1: Questions to build the program logic

Activities
- What are the activities you will do?
- What are the physical things or events that you will produce?

Reach
- Who is the audience?
- How many people do you hope to reach?

Outcomes
- What changes do you hope the program will influence in participants' lives?
    - Knowledge and skills
    - Attitudes ( eg confidence, motivation)
    - Behaviour  - How will participant's lives be different 6 months later?
                 - What will they be DOING different?

# Step 2: Questions to probe the theory of change

Outcomes

- How does your program help sustain behavior change over time?
  (eg  good intentions become action, or action becomes a habit)

Reach

- Will it work better for some segments of participants, but less well for others?

- Does the program need to be different for some segments?
  Or be confined to some segments?

How well does it work as a model?

- If you 'walk' the theory of change as a story, is it sufficient to get the outcomes you desire? Or do some extra things need to happen?
  Walk it forwards (inputs → outcomes), then backwards (outcomes → inputs).

- Is success dependent on some external circumstances?  (ie external environment, assumptions)

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# Step 3: Questions to build evaluation plan

Arrows

- Look at the arrows where the program logic says:
  "*If we do THIS, then we will influence THAT*".

- Which are the **important links** that you are <u>least confident</u> about happening in practice?

Reach

- Are there situations where you might not get the **number or type of participants** desired?

Learnings

- If changing one part of the program might give a better long term outcome, what would that change be?  Do you want to **test that in this evaluation**?

Part-way through the program logic exercise.

# Thoughts of using program logic exercise

**It's the process**

- It is the participatory <u>process</u> that gives the benefit, not perfection in the program logic product.
- Get people to handwrite the elements & put them in place. Physical engagement makes a difference.

**Informal, on the floor**

- Do it on the floor or on a big board table.
- Easy to move pieces around; makes people more willing to add and change bits.

**Questions and diplomacy**

- The key to success is the facilitator's skill is in asking questions the right way.
- Judge the balance of probing / diplomacy that is right for the situation.
- The process has the biggest impact when the participants are making the suggestions, not the facilitator.

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# Benefits of program logic exercise

Program design

- Identify issues at the beginning, not in the evaluation report a year later.
- Improve the program's chances of success, or more realistic objectives.
- More stakeholder buy-in for changes, as it was their idea.
- Get more funding if needed.

Evaluation planning

- Easy to see key evaluation questions; greater buy-in.
- Easy to see what data needs to be collected

Communication among stakeholders

- Common understanding of what the program is, and clearer understanding of its strengths and weaknesses
- Greater engagement, if people are active in building the program logic.

# When can you combine evaluation planning AND program design?

Timing

- Early in program life cycle.
  - Preparing for funding bid.
  - Before implementation starts

Encouragement

- Funder requires a program logic; encourages innovation
- Outcome oriented KPIs.

Openness

- Open to constructive questioning
- Willing to revise program design

Funding

- Better if the funder is part of the discussion

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# Robert Drake – SmartSteps

rdrake@smartsteps.biz

# Vanessa Hood – Rooftop Social

vanessa@rooftopsocial.com