


**SACHRU** . . . .  
 South Australian Community Health Research Unit

Tri State Primary Health Care Research Evaluation  
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**Primary Health Care Evaluation**

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### What is evaluation?

- Systematic assessment of the relevance, adequacy, progress, efficiency, effectiveness, and impact of a (health) program/project
- Involves collection, analysis, interpretation and reporting of information and (hopefully) its use in decision making

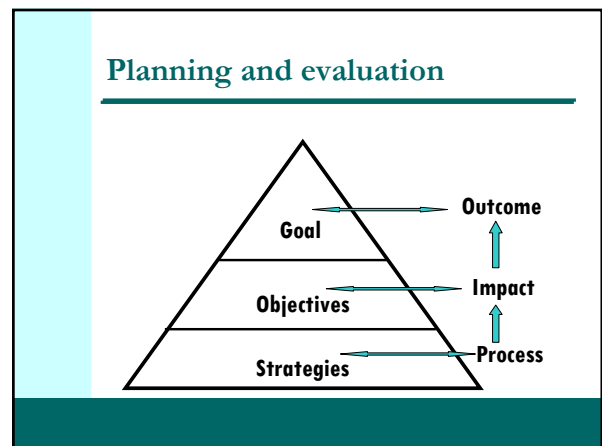
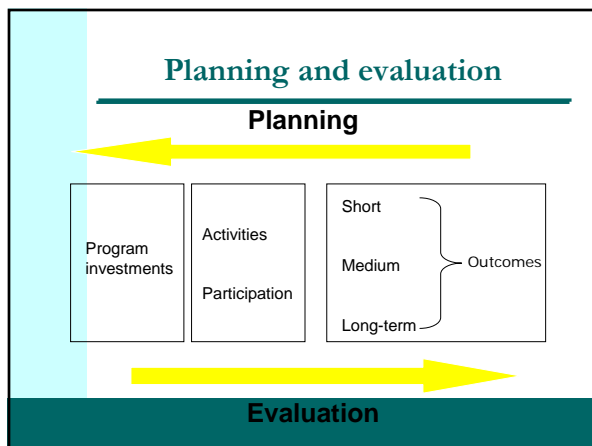


### Why evaluate?

- Three main reasons why evaluation is important:
  - to foster critical reflection and improve practice
  - to provide accountability to funders and stakeholders
  - to build the evidence base for ongoing PHC/health promotion investment

### Who is the evaluation for?

- Program participants
- Funding bodies
- Auspicing organisation
- Steering or advisory group
- Health promotion/PHC practitioners
- Health promotion/PHC researchers
- Politicians and policy makers
- Other community based groups and organisations



## Example: Safe playgrounds

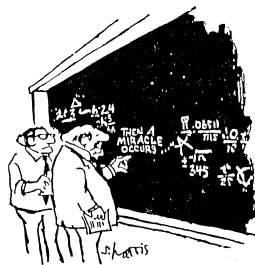
- **Goal:** Reduction in child injury rates from playground equipment
- **Objective:** To increase knowledge in parents and children of how to use equipment safely
- **Strategy:** Produce information brochure for parents, teachers and playground leaders

## Challenges in community-based evaluation

- Situated in social, political and cultural contexts
- Many internal and external factors affect health and health behavior
- Often long term, developmental initiatives
- Health promotion outcomes may take decades
- Complexity
- Assigning causality
- Ethically and practically difficult to set up control communities
- Lack of resources and skills for evaluation

## Theory of change

"I think you should be more explicit here in Step Two."

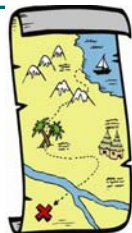


## So what can we do?

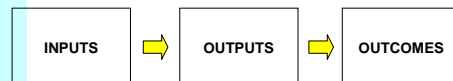
- Aim for contribution, rather than attribution
- Important to have an evaluation framework and evidence for your approach & why you believe short term impacts will contribute to longer term outcomes
- Triangulation of methods, data sources, researchers
- Models and evidence can be drawn from academic and other literature, practice knowledge, key informants

## Logic models

- 'a plausible and sensible model of how a program is supposed to work' (Bickman, 1987, p. 5).
- Develops a picture of:
  - how your program does its work
  - why it does it in particular ways
  - what you expect to achieve
- Allows evaluation to report on the likelihood of causal attribution, even in a complex setting.



## Simple logic model



A series of "if-then" relationships that, if implemented as intended, lead to the desired outcomes

## Outputs vs. outcomes

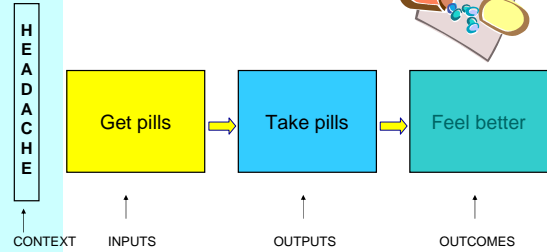
Number of patients discharged from state mental hospital is an **output**.  
 Percentage of discharged who are capable of living independently is an **outcome**.



*Not how many worms  
 the bird feeds its young,  
 but how well the fledgling flies*  
 (United Way of America, 1999)

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## Everyday example

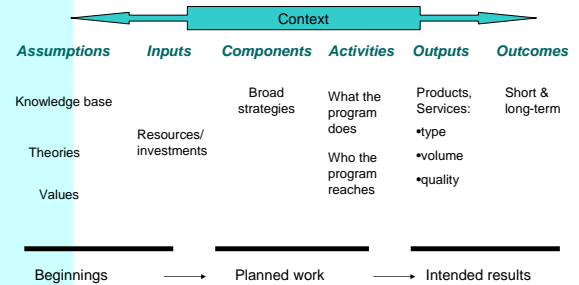


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## Logic Model Template



## Developing a program logic



## Assumptions

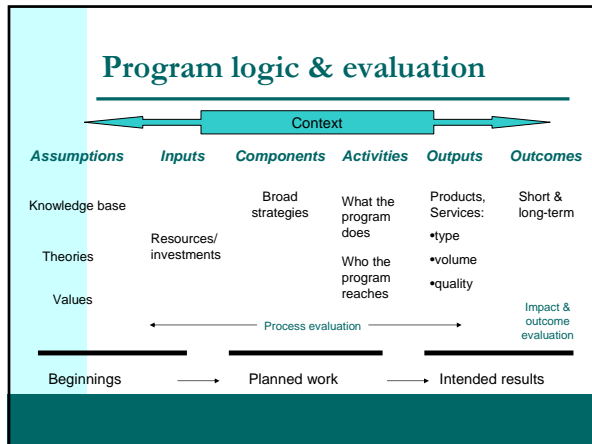
The beliefs we have about the program, the participants, and how the program will work. Includes ideas about:

- the problem or existing context
- program operations
- expected outcomes and benefits
- the participants and how they learn, behave, their motivations
- resources
- staff
- external environment: influences
- the knowledge base
- theories underpinning the program
- values

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## Why use program logic?

- Articulates what is expected to happen and why
- Explains logic of approach taken
- Promotes shared understanding of program and expectations
- Describes assumptions and context – critical for assessing community based programs
- Assists in development of evaluation questions



## Evaluation questions

**Evaluation questions:**

What questions do you want to answer?

Who wants to know?

**Indicators:**

What evidence do you need to answer your questions?

## Choice of methods

Choice of methods is influenced by:

- Methodological approach
- Nature of research topic
- Relevance to research question
- Type of data that will answer your question
- Advantages and limitations
- Resources and skills
- Pragmatic decisions

## Methods

- Project/service documentation
- (Participant) observation
- Face-to face interviews
- Phone interviews
- Self-complete surveys
- Focus groups
- Case studies
- Creative

## Multiple methods

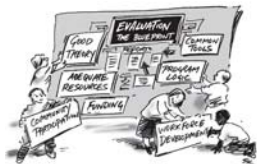
- Often more appropriate to use multiple methods and data sources
- Can increase perception of validity
- Caters to variety of audiences
- Methods can build on each other

## Triangulation

- Methods
- Data sources
- Researchers

## Managing and resourcing the evaluation

- Ethics approval
- Community participation
- Role of reference group & other stakeholders
- Internal v external evaluator
- 10% of budget?



## Presenting findings

- Written evaluation reports, newsletters, annual reports
- Posters
- Oral presentations
- Conferences
- Journals
- Web-sites

## Increasing use and dissemination

- Identify audiences before the evaluation begins and tailor dissemination to suit
- Involve key stakeholders in evaluation and keep them informed of progress
- Plan for utilisation at the same time as the evaluation is planned

## Resources

- Planning & Evaluation Wizard (PEW):  
<http://som.flinders.edu.au/FUSA/SACHRU/pew.htm>
- Are you writing an evaluation report?
- <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/evallogicmodel.html>
- Practice brief: Evaluating your project  
[http://som.flinders.edu.au/FUSA/SACHRU/pp\\_brief.htm](http://som.flinders.edu.au/FUSA/SACHRU/pp_brief.htm)

## Further Reading

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