

Enhancing Program Performance Through Logic Modelling

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January 23, 2013
NOAA Evaluation Brown Bag Series



Brown Bag Outline

- Logic Models: Capabilities, Limitations, Misconceptions
- Walkthrough an Example Logic Model
- Answer Your Questions



Logic models are like exercise equipment...

...you have accumulated a bunch over time and you know how to use them, but you haven't looked at them in years.

The important part is engagement in the logic modelling process not just fact that you have the product.



Capabilities of Logic Models

What can you get out of them? They can help you:

- Detect inefficiencies and ineffectiveness of program operations (process improvement)
- Identify mismatches between resources and activities
- Identify best practices
- Communicate to others how the program operates.
- Identify performance measures



Limitations of Logic Models

- Best for a single program, single implementation.
- It can identify a problem but can't fix it.
- Best for single intervention with linear, cause-effect relationship.
- Difficult when modelling multiple partnerships and diverse portfolios (e.g. agency-level strategic plans).



Misconceptions of Logic Models

- "I need to hire an evaluator to do this for us."
- "Everyone (managers, staff and participants) had the same perspective of the program."
- "A spreadsheet is the tool of choice for building a logic model."
- "If it's not in the logic model, we can't do that."

Logic Model Geniuses

#NoSuchThing

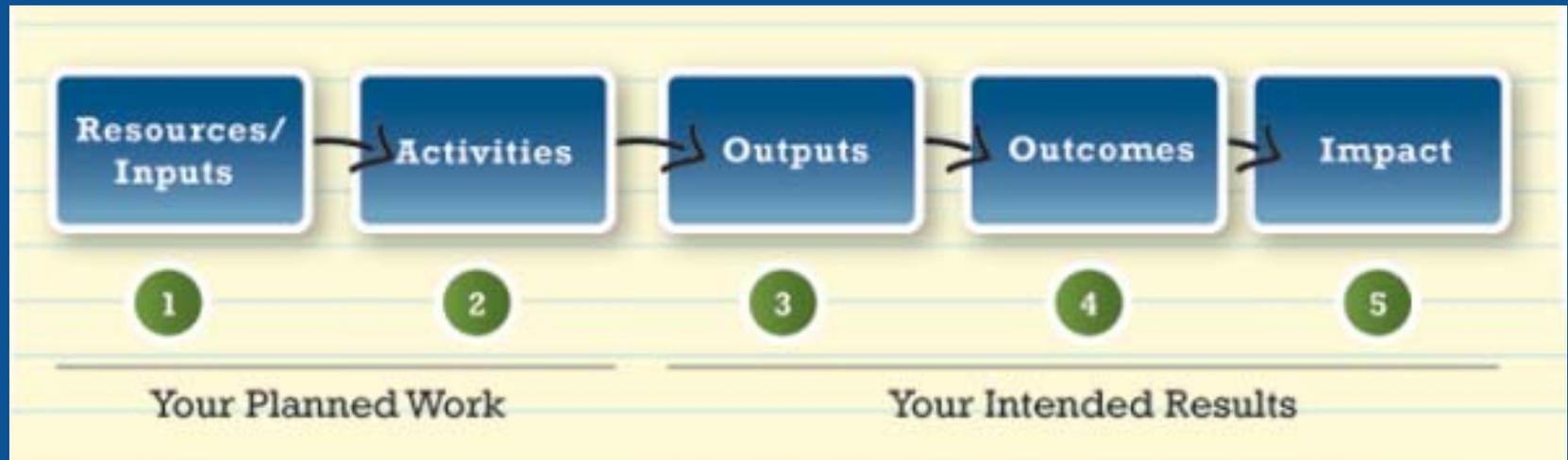
You just need someone who is willing to:

- Develop a basic understanding of the program.
- Think in an open-minded way about your program.
- Spend time with a range of program actors.
 - If there are not some disagreements, then you are not trying hard enough.
 - The activities creates an opportunity to resolve them.

Someone external to the program is helpful because they will help reveal assumptions, bias and steps you take for granted.



This is a logic model.



Symptoms of Poor Logic Models

- There are no linkages.
- Descriptions are too broad and general.



Identify Symptoms in this Example Logic Model

INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	IMPACTS
<p>Contract with local university faculty to teach storm preparedness.</p> <p>Lists of local leaders and emergency managers</p>	<p>Prepare training course materials for courses in storm readiness.</p> <p>Recruit local leaders and emergency managers to attend training.</p> <p>Deliver training to local leadership and emergency managers on readiness for coastal storms.</p> <p>Administer a post-training “quiz” to assess learning.</p>	<p>Local leaders and emergency managers receive instruction on basics of storm readiness.</p> <p>Local emergency managers develop state-wide network of contacts</p>	<p>Local leaders and emergency managers learn basic storm readiness skills.</p> <p>Local leaders recommend training to others</p> <p>Local leaders alert the community to dangers of oil and other toxic spills that could harm the environment.</p>	<p>Local leaders and emergency managers train their staffs in skills they have learned.</p> <p>Overall community preparedness improves.</p>

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Defined Length of Time (e.g. 2 yrs)



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Defined Period of Time (e.g. by 2020)



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Discuss how Program Performance can be enhanced for this example.

- Clarify goals
- Focus efforts
- Informs planning



Learn More

- Coming soon. Online course about logic models on the Commerce Learning Center (CLC).
- EPA Online Logic Model Training:
 - <http://www.epa.gov/evaluate/lm-training/index.htm>



Thank You

Contact me anytime at john.baek@noaa.gov

- <http://goo.gl/Ovnzq>



Backup Slides



Abstract

In this brown bag, Laurie Ekstrand and John Baek describe how program staff can use logic modelling (graphically illustrating the relationship between a programs' resources, activities, outputs and outcomes) to support program planning, design and continuous improvement. They will provide examples to illustrate key concepts, common barriers, and misconceptions.



Logic Model Assessment

Questions: Inputs

- Are inputs --equipment, databases, software, materials-- available?
- Are all inputs clearly committed to the program, or is there uncertainty as to availability?
- Are other programs, entities providing a portion of the inputs?



Logic Model Assessment

Questions: Activities

- Were activities set in relation to available funding, staffing, and expertise?
- Were activities set in relation to skills and time of available staff?
- Are activity processes within time frames for achieving results (is measurable change likely within a year)?
- If multiple sites, are activities uniform across sites? Is there fidelity in implementation of activities?
- Are outside partners--for example state and local governments--willing and able to participate in planned activities?
- Was data collection/analysis considered as an activity?
- What impediments are there to achieving goals and how will they be dealt with?
- Have activities been mapped--in sequence and in relation to organizations involved? Does the activity map make sense?
- Has timing of activities been assessed?



Logic Model Assessment

Questions: Outputs

- Are outputs direct products of activities?
- Are there activities that do not link to an output?
- Are outputs quantifiable?
- Do outputs reflect the full range of activities?
- Do selected outputs emphasize some activities at the expense of others?
- Are processes in place to collect output data on a timely basis?
- Are outputs well defined? (for example, are you measuring program enrollment or program completion?, project starts or project ends?)
- If there are multiple outputs, are they all given equal weight in considering results? Should they be weighted to reflect relative value?
- Are outputs straightforward and understandable?

Logic Model Assessment

Questions: Outcomes (intermediate

Outcomes)

- If outcomes are not feasible as a performance measure is the rationale for not using them reasonable?
- Is the linkage between outputs and outcomes well defined?
- Are other factors that affect outcomes identified, and their contribution specified?
- Are outcomes expressed as something of value to the American people?
- Are outcomes feasible to measure (in time and resource constraints)?
- Are outcome measures reliable and valid?
- Are outcome measures straightforward and understandable?
- Is the rate of change in outcome measures amenable to showing year-to-year change?
- Were undesirable outcomes considered when thinking through outcomes?
- Are undesirable outcomes measured?

Logic Model Assessment

Questions: Impact (long-term

● outcomes)

- Can the chain of events that leads from outputs to intermediate outcomes to impact be explained?
- If impact is not feasible to measure, is the reason for this explained?
- Is there a rough estimate of how long it will take for program actions to result in or contribute to impacts?
- Are factors that may augment or impede impact considered and discussed (such as other ongoing programs, demographic or economic trends)?
- Are there factors that would render the impact irrelevant (such as a Katrina-level natural disaster, likely funding shortages in out years, massive civil unrest)?

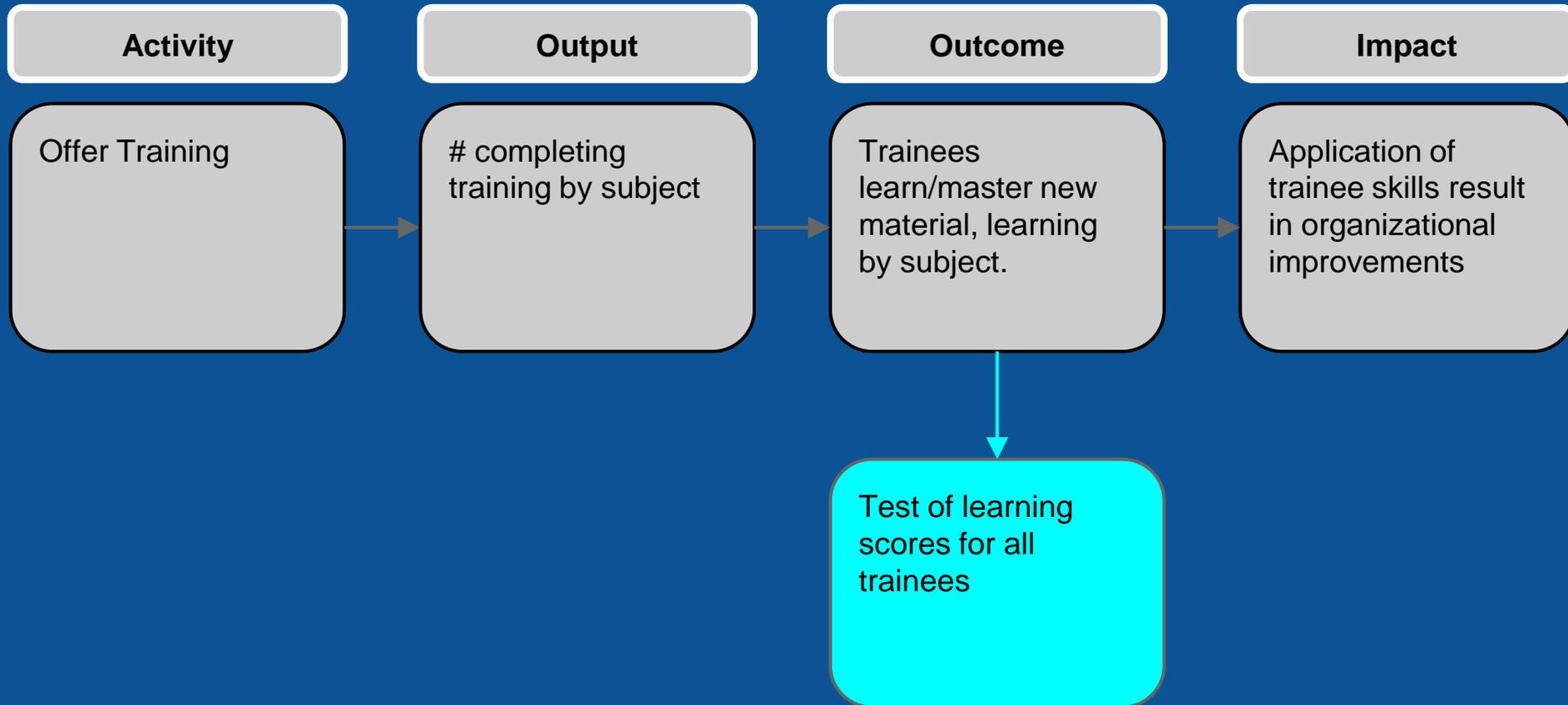
Logic Model Assessment

Questions: Setting Context

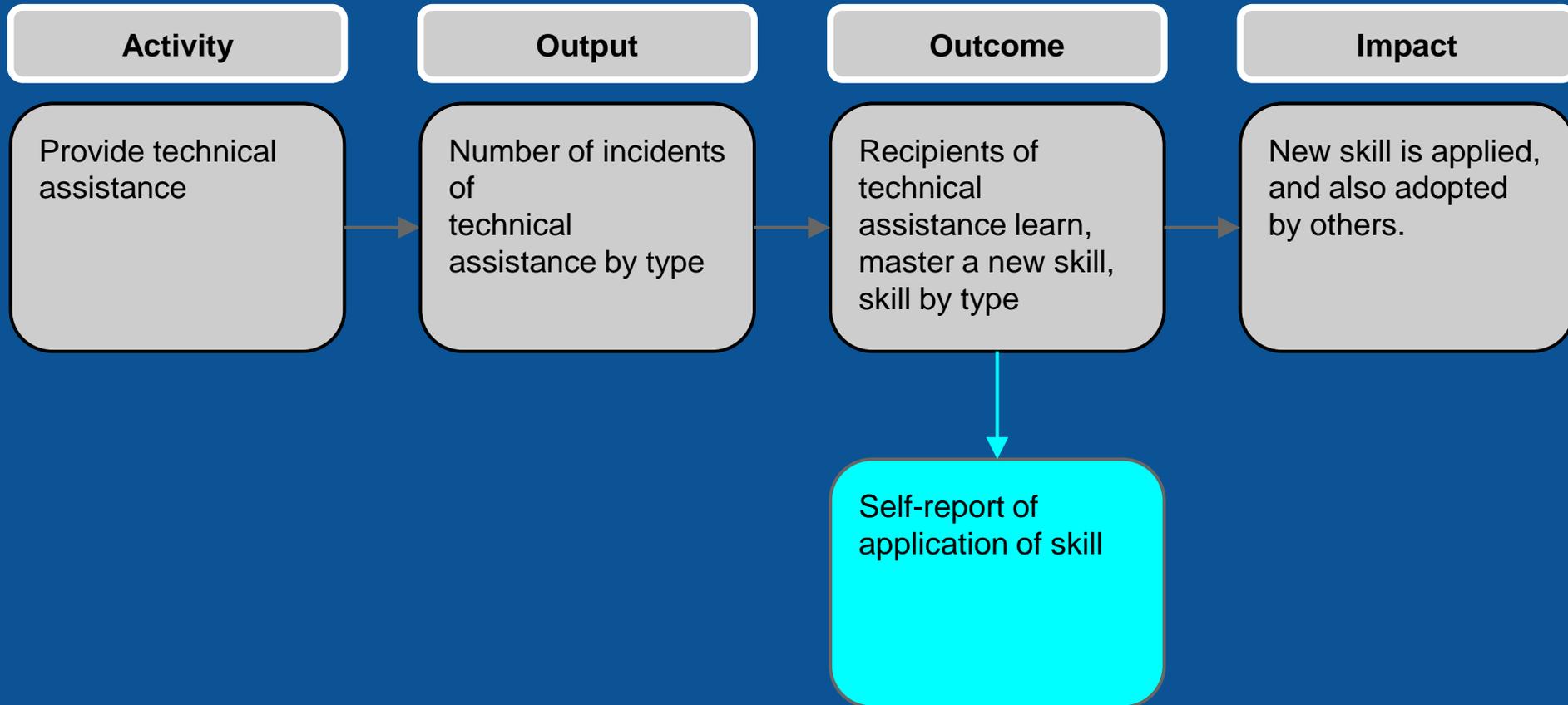
- Was past performance considered?
- Were stakeholders/partners from other related programs brought into the development process?
- Were expected budget and/or staffing changes considered?
- Was availability of data for measuring activities, output and outcomes considered?
- Was the reliability and validity of these data considered?



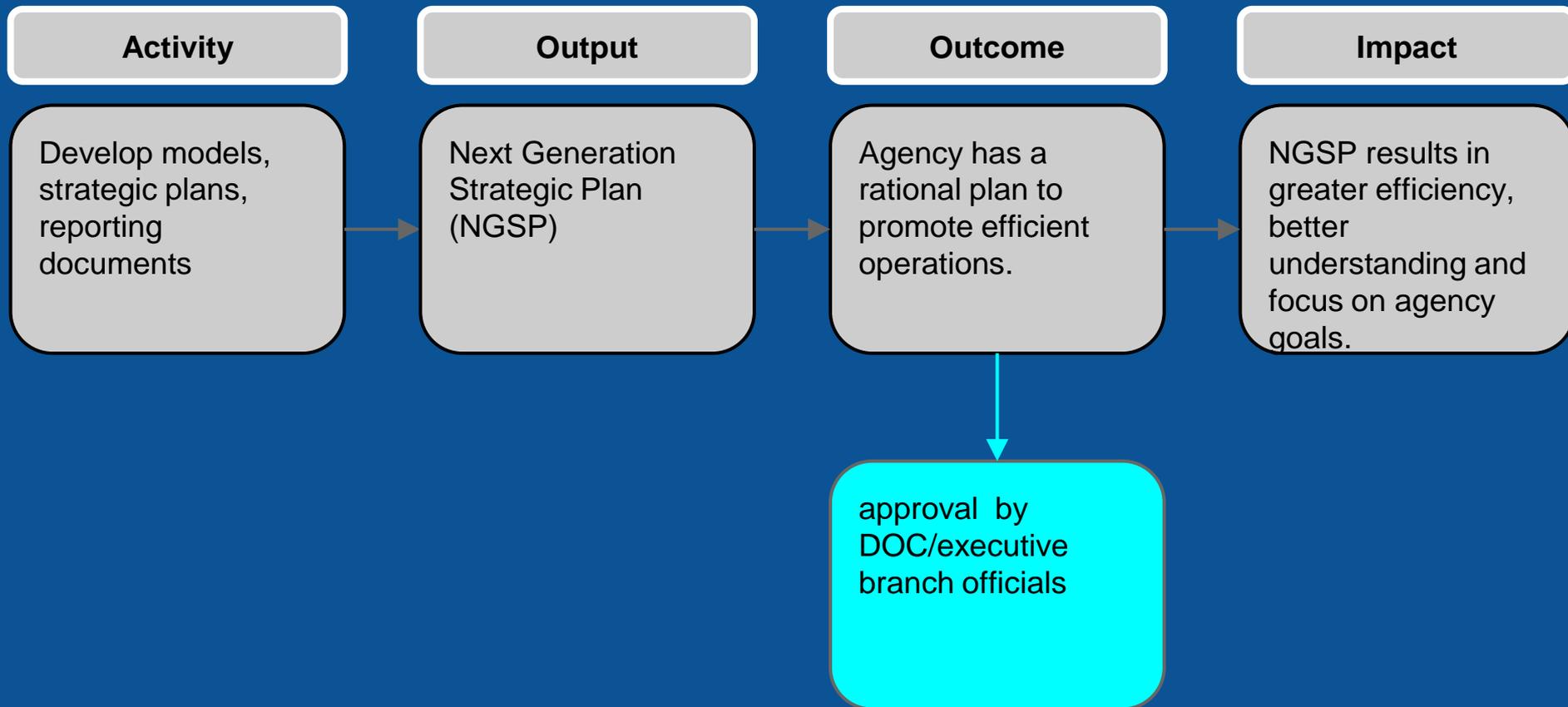
Example linkages



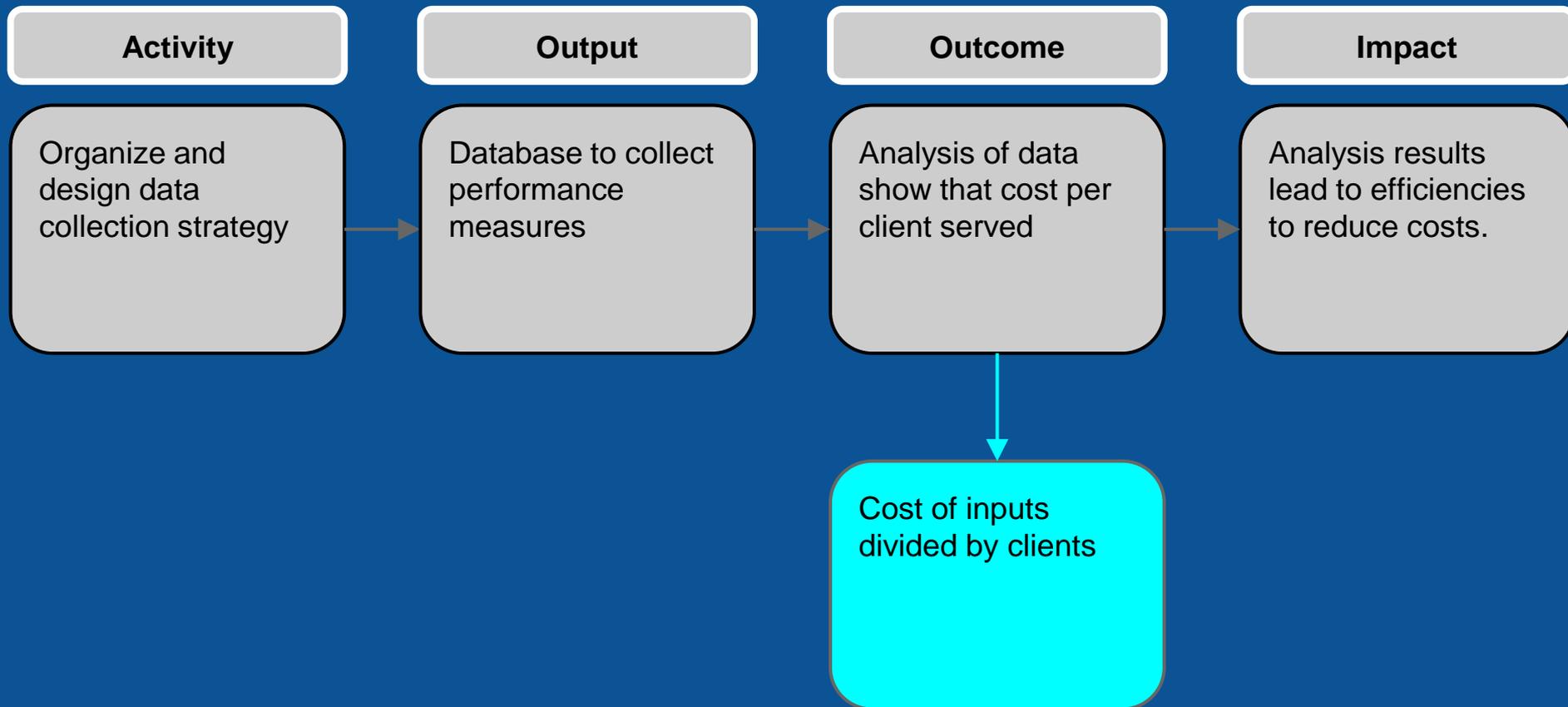
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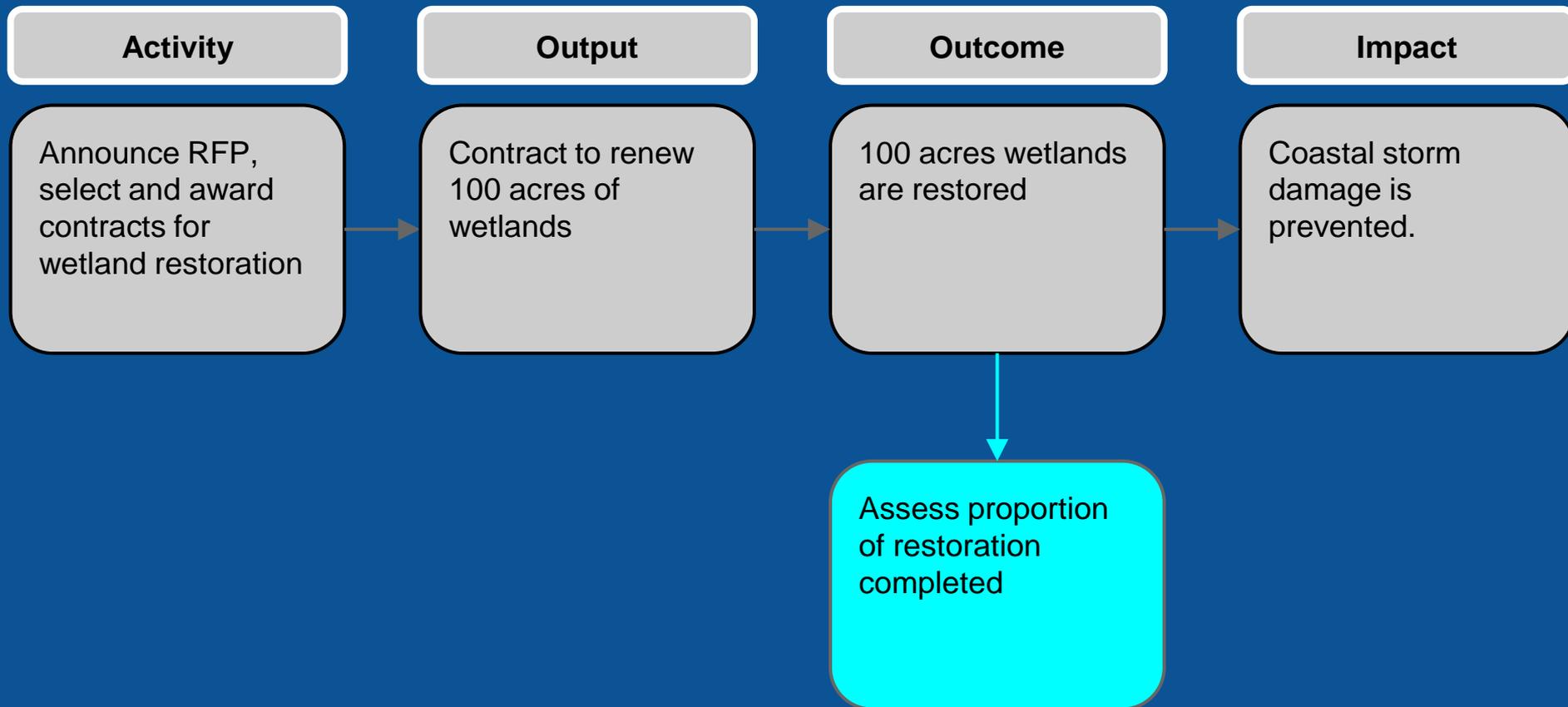
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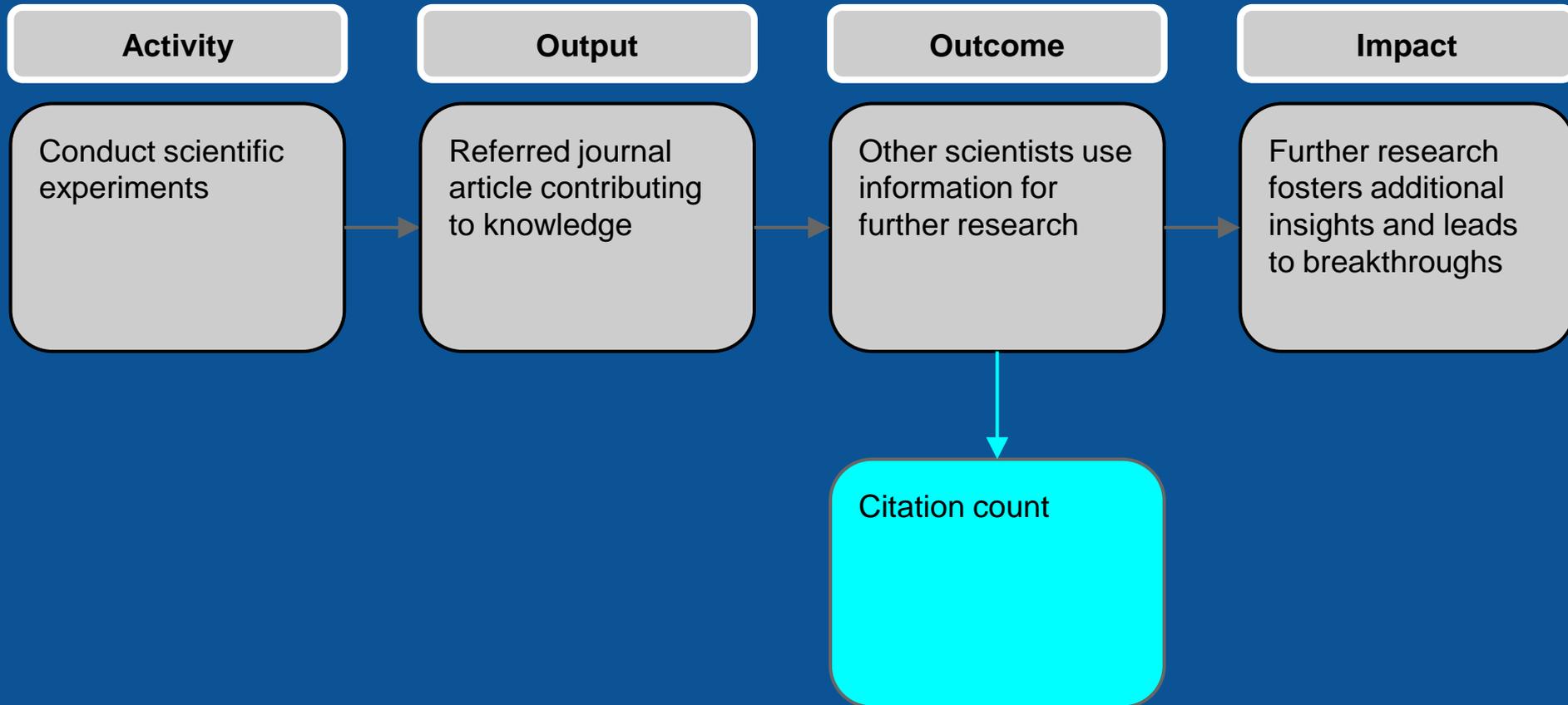
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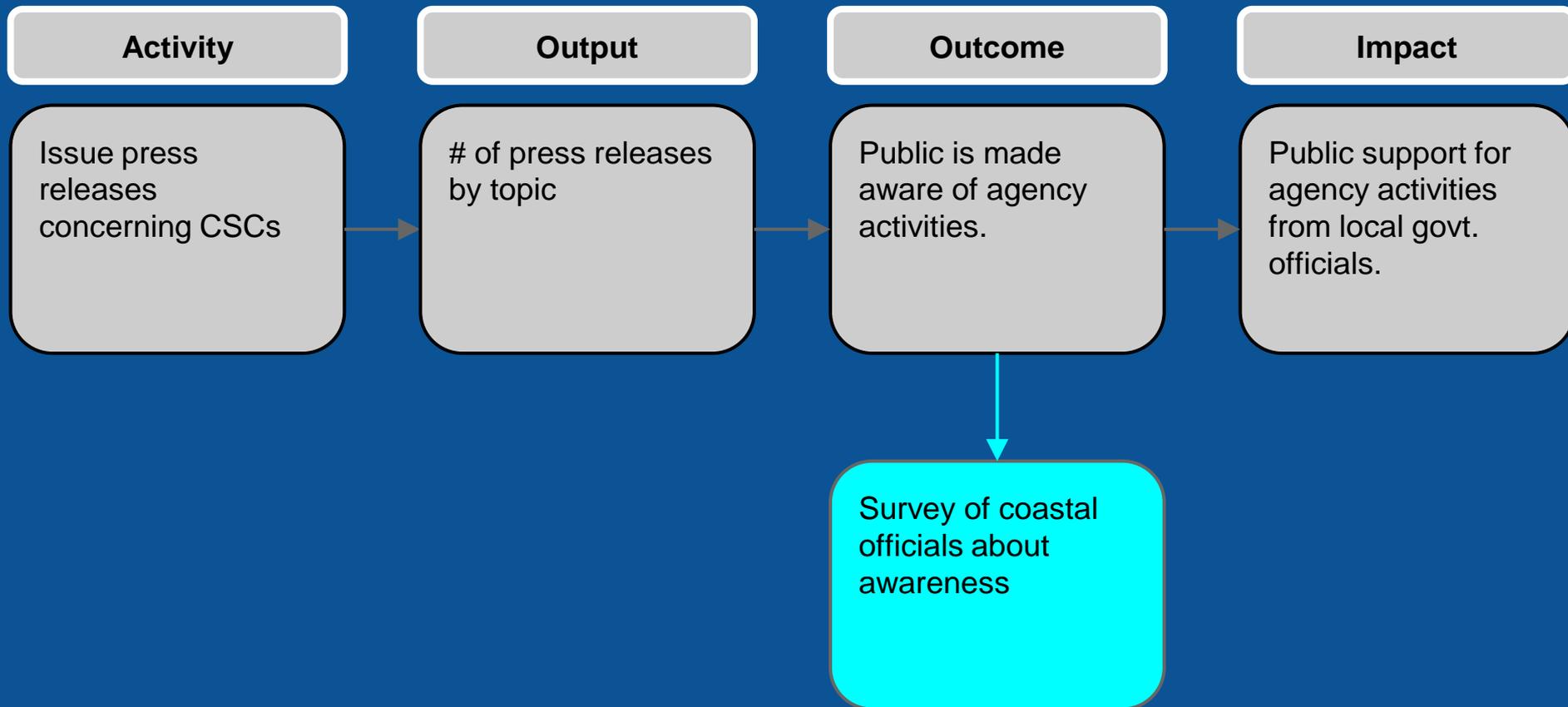
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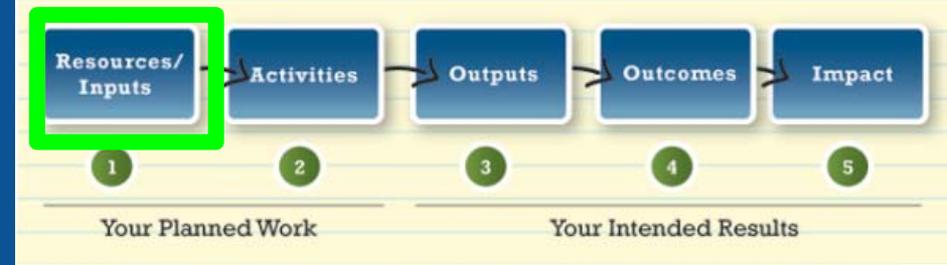
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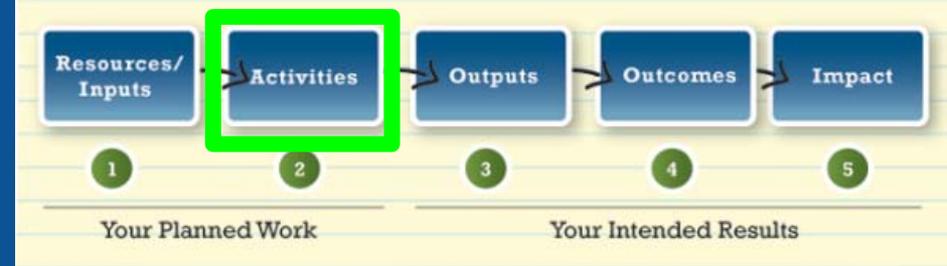
Inputs



What the logic model will tell you in each category:

- Maximum size of the program
- Any limitations as a result of a specific shortage in an area
- Scope in relation to laws and regulations
- Scope in relation to contracts/partnerships
- Timing of availability of resources

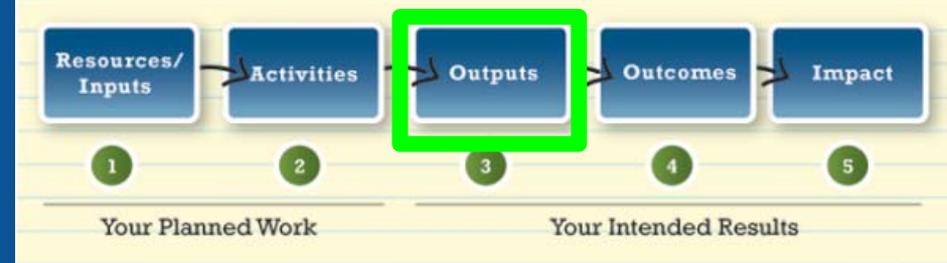
Activities



What the logic model will tell you in each category:

- Process evaluation
- Roadmap of activities
- Who needs to participate and when
- Barriers to efficient operations
- How long processes take
- Efficiency of activity delivery
- Bottlenecks
- Outreach activities
- Time per task

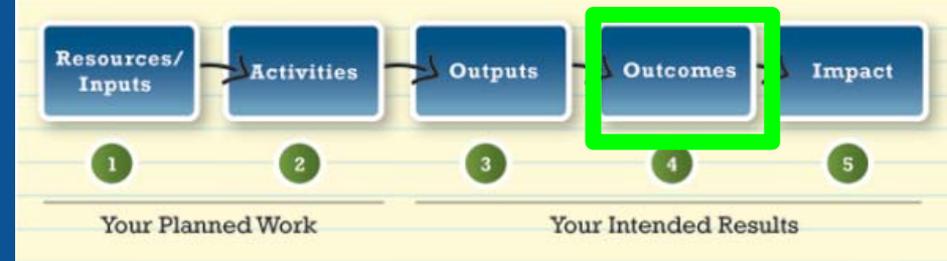
Outputs



What the logic model will tell you in each category:

- Performance measures
- Measures in relation to targets
- Timing of when outputs are produced

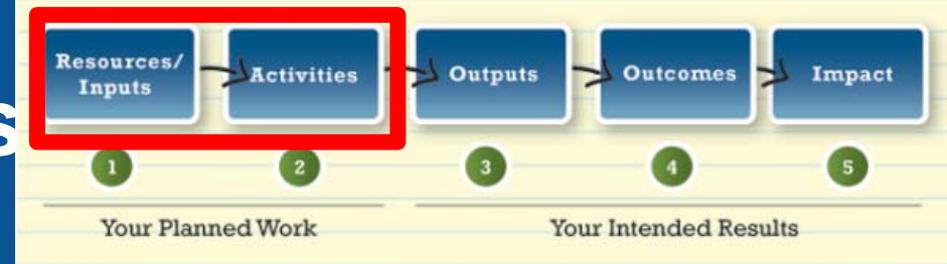
Outcomes



What the logic model will tell you in each category:

- Outcome measures

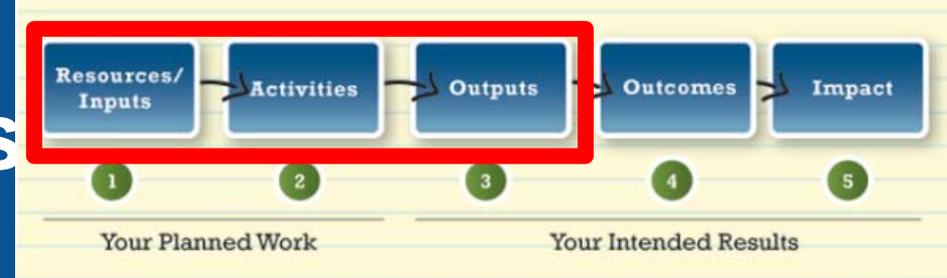
Inputs + Activities



What combined categories will tell you:

- Whether activities are reasonable in relation to inputs
- Whether specific inputs are sufficient/too much
- Whether inputs are the right mix/balance
- Cost per unit of activity
- Effect of law/reg. constraints on program activity
- Actual functionality of contracts/partnerships
- Whether input/activity timing is functional

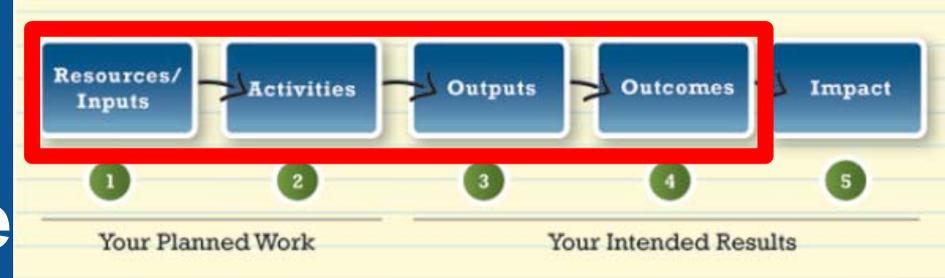
Inputs + Activities + Outputs



What combined categories will tell you:

- Effectiveness of activity in producing outputs
- Costs per unit of output
- Reasonableness output of targets in relation to inputs and activities
- Costs per unit by types of outputs (such as types of training)
- Actual time between initiation of activity and output
- Actual impediments to achieving outputs

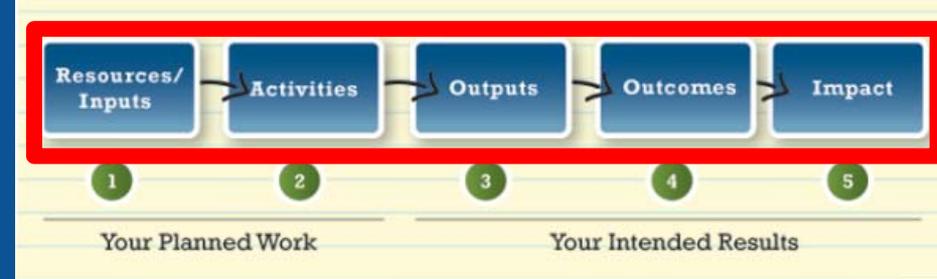
Inputs + Activities + Outputs + Outcome



What combined categories will tell you:

- Effectiveness of activity in producing outputs and outcomes
- Costs per unit of outcome (if quantifiable)
- Reasonableness of targets in relation to inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes
- Costs per unit by types of outcomes (such as skills applied)
- Actual time between initiation of activity, output and outcomes
- Actual impediments to achieving outcomes

Inputs + Activities + Outputs + Outcomes + Impacts



What combined categories will tell you:

- Effectiveness of activity in producing impact
- Cost per unit of impact (if quantifiable)
- Reasonableness of targets in relation to inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impact
- Costs per unit by types of impacts (such as organizational change)
- Actual time between activity, output, outcome and impact
- Actual impediments to achieving impact

Challenges of Logic Models

- Focal point – the “right” level for the logic model can be difficult to identify. It should match the purpose of the logic modelling activities.
- Distinguishing between outputs and outcomes.
- Filling out the worksheet from inputs to impacts.
- Writing clearly defined yet meaningful outcome statements.



Narratives

Some form of written description should always accompany the graphical logic model. Statement of program purpose, context, major assumptions.



Outputs vs. Outcomes

A challenge people face with logic models is distinguishing between outputs and outcomes. One way to understand this is that outcomes are not the direct results of program actions.

Which is the action? the output? and the outcome?



Improving Outcome Statements with 5 W's

- Households have a plan for tornadoes.

Who? Where? All households in La Plata, Maryland.

When? By the end of 2015.

Why? To save lives.

What? A family disaster plan with tornado-specific planning.

- By the end of 2015 all households in La Plata, Maryland will have a family disaster plan with tornado-specific planning.

