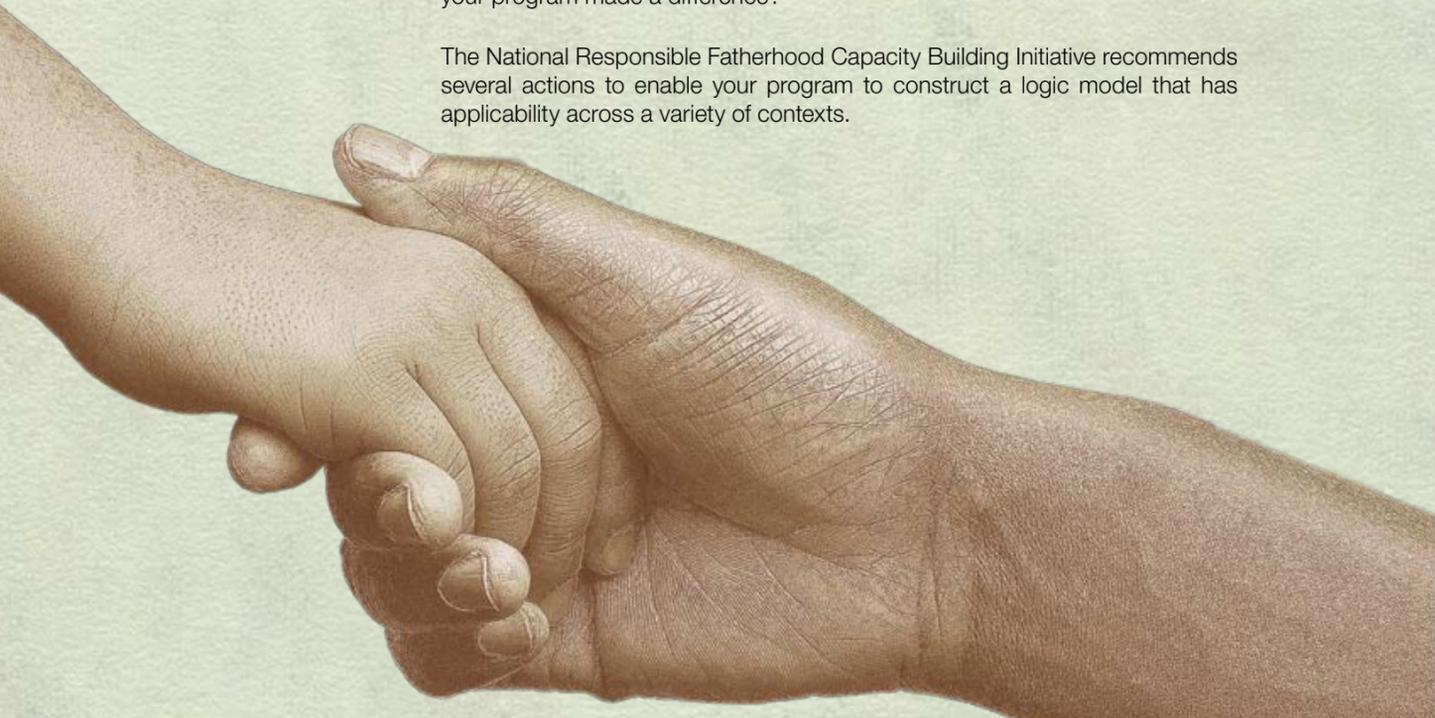


6

Techniques for Guiding Program Progress

With a committed and high-performing corps of board members, staff, and volunteers, your program has the potential to effect dramatic changes in the lives of fathers and families in your community. To realize that potential and ensure success, use a simple but powerful tool—a logic model—to clearly explain your program to key stakeholders and funders and answer their question, “How has your program made a difference?”

The National Responsible Fatherhood Capacity Building Initiative recommends several actions to enable your program to construct a logic model that has applicability across a variety of contexts.



Building Capacity for Programs that Promote Responsible Fatherhood...

Leadership Development

Organizational Improvement

Program Enhancement

Community Engagement



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Family Assistance

National Responsible Fatherhood Capacity Building Initiative
101 Lake Forest Blvd., Suite 360
Gaithersburg, MD 20877
Phone: 301.948.0599
Fax: 301.948.4325
www.fatherhood.org/capacitybuilding

National Responsible Fatherhood Capacity Building Initiative subawardees are encouraged to request technical assistance for organizational capacity building by contacting the National Fatherhood Initiative.

This project is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Family Assistance to assist States and communities as they promote and support responsible fatherhood and healthy marriage. All opinions are those of the authors and do not reflect the opinion of the sponsoring agency.

6

Ways

to Create a Useful

Logic Model



NATIONAL RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD
CAPACITY BUILDING
I N I T I A T I V E

1 Understand the Role of a Logic Model

Program development is a process for planning, implementing, and measuring the success of board, staff, and volunteer efforts. A logic model adds value to each stage of program development by showing the relationships among program components. A logic model is merely a picture of how your program works. It presents a visual display of the connections among the resources available to operate the program, current and planned activities, and changes or results you hope to achieve. A logic model is a mechanism that helps you formulate program strategy while communicating to funders and others that the program is backed by integrated, systematic planning.

2 Evaluate the Situation

Start building your logic model by developing a comparison baseline for determining whether change has occurred as a result of what your program does. You might organize a logic model committee or workgroup and schedule brainstorming sessions to identify the major issues and concerns facing fathers in the populations you serve. In the logic model, state the issues and who is affected. Identify areas of strength and weakness. Consider the resources currently available as well as the ones you will need to operate your program.

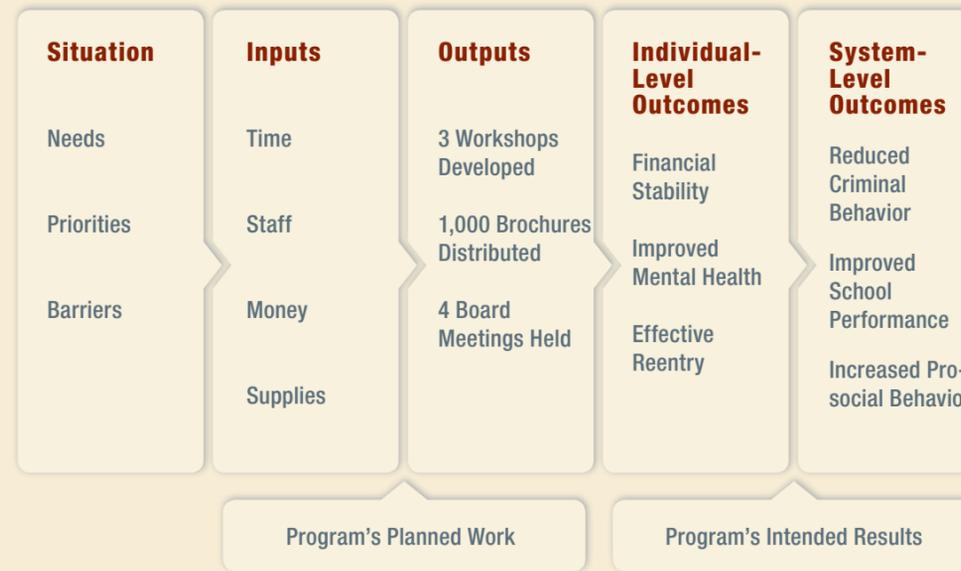
3 Identify Inputs

Inputs are the resources that are invested in a program. In your logic model, include the human (board, staff, and volunteer time), financial (grants, donations), knowledge (research, curricula), and community (involvement of external organizations and collaborators) assets that demonstrate program quality. Additionally, specify organizational inputs such as facilities and equipment.

4 Determine Outputs

Outputs are the direct results of program activities. They are what the program does and the people it reaches. Outputs can include workshops, counseling, volunteer development, training, distributing publications or other materials, or health screening. Outputs often are described in terms of scope, such as the number of training sessions attended. Outputs also can be depicted in terms of characteristics or behaviors, such as the degree of satisfaction with program services.

Sample Logic Model



5 Envision Outcomes

Outcomes, or impacts, are the benefits or changes that result from your inputs and activities. Outcomes can be individual, measured as changes in knowledge, attitudes, skills, behaviors, or status. For example, one desired outcome might be increased demonstration of fathers' involvement in the lives of their children. Programs that promote responsible fatherhood also can measure outcomes at the system or community level. A desired outcome might be changes in policy that make child support guidelines more father-friendly. Outcomes you work toward can be short-term (within a few months), medium-term (approximately 1 year), or long-term (2–5 years or later). While short- and medium-term outcomes tend to be easier for programs to measure, evaluating long-term outcomes is important for indicating how your program fosters sustained change.

6 Outline the Model

There is no right or wrong way to fashion a logic model. Through simple pictures and words, the logic model should reveal how your program will work and what you expect it to achieve. The logic model should explain your program without supplying unnecessary detail or confusing readers with too many boxes and arrows. As you shape the logic model, remember that people are the link between the situation and the impacts. Whether the workgroup began to conceptualize the logic model by evaluating the situation first, or started with desired outcomes in mind and reversed the process, the model should have a logical sequence when read from either direction. And just as your program changes over time, so too should your logic model. Ongoing review and assessment will keep the logic model fresh and responsive to the evolving environment that is inherent in serving fathers.