Logic Model Concepts

As it relates to working on a project, logic modeling is one way to visualize a plan. In creating a logic model, youth will need to carefully consider resources (inputs) required to execute a plan, the activities and participation that will occur, and the outcomes or results we hope to achieve. Often, the exercise of creating a logic model is most useful when done 'backwards' – that is, beginning with outlining the anticipated outcomes and then determining the required activities, participation, and resources to achieve them.

Step One:

Logic models always begin with a **situation statement**, which includes the necessary information about *why you are doing the project* and *how the project* work will occur. In the example -- a logic model regarding installation of a community garden -- a situation statement may be:

> *"Community members have inadequate access to fresh fruits and vegetables and there is an empty lot that attracts behavior that is unproductive, dangerous, and at times violent. A community garden strategically placed in the community will engage community members with healthy behaviors while also removing potentially harmful visitors and activities from the living environment."*

In this example, there are two *'why's'* of the work. First, community members need better access to healthy food options. Second, there is a physical space that, without purposeful use, invites unhealthy activities. The '*how'* is a community garden in the space.

Step Two:

In logic models, all anticipated results of the inputs and activities are **outcomes**. They include results observed in the short-, medium-, or long-term. Generally, we work to identify the outcomes first and work backwards to identify the activities, participation and resources needed to achieve them.

- **Short-term outcomes** are the immediate products that results from completion of activities; most often changes in knowledge, skills or awareness (example, the community creates a space for a community garden).

- **Medium-term outcomes** in community health work are typically changes in behavior among individuals or policy, system and environment factors that influence behavior (example, community members rent garden plots, they eat more fruits and vegetables).

- **Long-term outcomes** are population-level changes like a reduction of cardiovascular disease incidence. It is typically difficult to measure outcomes, because they occur over periods of time that are longer than the timelines of community health work. (Example, obesity and diabetes decrease in the community as a result of increased fruit and vegetable consumption).

Step Three:

Activities are **outputs** that require action and involvement. They are things like meetings, planning sessions, fundraising, and research efforts like surveying community members. By the simplest definition, activities include all steps taken to see the project through from start to finish -- from simple supply shopping trips to promoting an event. In the community garden example, activities that will occur are planning with community stakeholders, surveying people that the garden will benefit, building garden beds, planting and weeding, and an event to welcome all community members to the new shared space.

Participants in all program activities are also **outputs** in the logic model. All persons involved in or benefitting from activities are considered participants in the logic model. In a community garden, the community members that will receive produce from the harvest are participants.

Step Four:

Inputs include all the resources required for activities, participant involvement, and output production. Youth should list all the resources they may need for the project. Inputs could be things like money, staff, paper, pencils, computers, etc. This section of the model explicitly lists contributions from all partners -- youth, adults, program coordinators, and community organizations.

Step Five:

Finally, any **external factors or assumptions** made in the flow of logic from situation statement to outcomes are defined in the logic model, as well. External factors are elements outside of the control of participants or organizations and individuals taking action. In developing and demonstrating a flow of logic from inputs to long-term outcomes, assumptions are made about people, environment, things, and cultural context. In the community garden example, an assumption is that people like to eat fresh fruits and vegetables when they are available. An example of an external factor may be that a natural gas pipeline runs under the space where the garden is to be built so garden beds cannot be dug into the ground directly.

Logic Model Steps

START HERE
STEP 1:
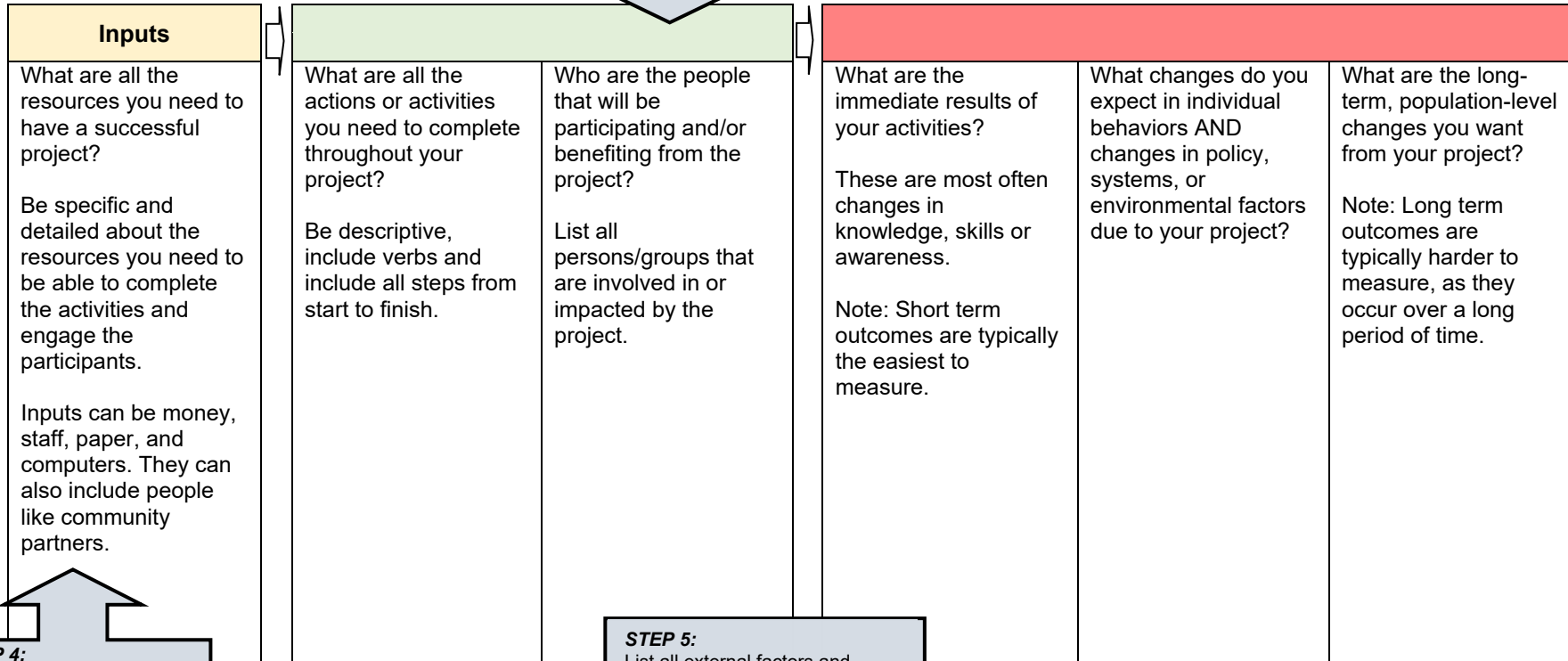Provide the necessary background information about WHY and HOW the work will occur.

STEP 3:
List all activities and participation that need to happen to achieve the outcomes listed in step

STEP 2:
List all results (outcomes) that you expect from your project.

Situation Statement: Why are you doing the work? How will the work occur?

Inputs					
What are all the resources you need to have a successful project?

Be specific and detailed about the resources you need to be able to complete the activities and engage the participants.

Inputs can be money, staff, paper, and computers. They can also include people like community partners. | What are all the actions or activities you need to complete throughout your project?

Be descriptive, include verbs and include all steps from start to finish. | Who are the people that will be participating and/or benefiting from the project?

List all persons/groups that are involved in or impacted by the project. | What are the immediate results of your activities?

These are most often changes in knowledge, skills or awareness.

Note: Short term outcomes are typically the easiest to measure. | What changes do you expect in individual behaviors AND changes in policy, systems, or environmental factors due to your project? | What are the long-term, population-level changes you want from your project?

Note: Long term outcomes are typically harder to measure, as they occur over a long period of time. |

STEP 4:
List all resources (inputs) needed to successfully achieve your activities and participation listed in Step 3.

STEP 5:
List all external factors and assumptions you are making that might impact your project.

Assumptions: What assumptions are you making about the people, environment, community, culture and the way you expect change to happen?

External Factors: What factors exist outside of the project and are out of the control of anyone involved? List any external factors that are relevant to the impact of this project.

Extension
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