



CREATED BY GUSNIP NTAE CENTER

Understanding, Creating, and Using Logic Models

What is the document?

This document offers an overview of logic models, defines key terms, and provides a visual example for current and potential GusNIP grantees.

What is a logic model?

A logic model¹ is a picture of how an effort or initiative is intended to work. It explains why your strategy is a good solution to the problem at hand. Effective logic models make an explicit, often visual, statement of the activities that will bring about desired change for a community and its people.

A logic model presents the shared relationships among the resources, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impact for your project. Identifying all the components of a project helps keep participants moving in the same direction by providing a common language and point of reference. By displaying the sequence of actions involved in a project, a logic model:

1. **Clarifies** the linkages between investments and activities, outputs and expected outcomes of the project;
2. **Communicates** externally about the rationale, activities and expected results of the project;
3. **Tests** whether the project "makes sense" from a logical perspective; and
4. **Provides** the fundamental framework on which the performance measurement and evaluation strategies are based (i.e., determining what would constitute success).

What key terms should I understand?

- **Situation** – A description of the challenge or opportunity. The problem or issue to be addressed, within a complex of socio-political, environmental, and economic conditions.

¹ Synonyms include: road map, conceptual map, pathways map, mental model, blueprint for change, framework for action or program framework, program theory or program hypothesis, theoretical underpinning or rationale, causal chain or chain of causation, theory of change or model of change.

- **Inputs** – What is invested, such as resources, contributions, and investments that are provided for the project.
- **Activities** – Activities are what the project does with its inputs to services it provides to fulfill its mission.
- **Outputs** – Products, services and events that are intended to lead to the project's outcomes.
- **Outcomes** – Planned results or changes for individuals, groups, communities, organizations or systems. Types of outcomes include:
 - **Change in knowledge** – Occurs when there is a change in knowledge or the participants actually learn.
 - **Change in behavior** – Occurs when there is a change in behavior or the participants act upon what they have learned.
 - **Change in condition** – Occurs when a societal condition is improved.
- **External factors** – Variables that may have an effect on the project but which cannot be changed by the managers of the project.
- **Assumptions** – The premises based on theory, research, evaluation knowledge, etc. that support the relationships of the elements of the logic model and upon which the success of the project rests.

What does a logic model look like?

There are many variations on the specific composition of a logic model. Each logic model uses a slightly different approach. Nevertheless, they all share a common foundation – the logic of how change happens. While logic models may not all look the same, they all do focus on inputs, outputs, outcomes, and impact. Below are two sample logic models – Figure 1: Logic Model from Gretchen Swanson Center’s NTAE Application and Figure 2: Generic Logic Model for NIFA Reporting.

Questions?

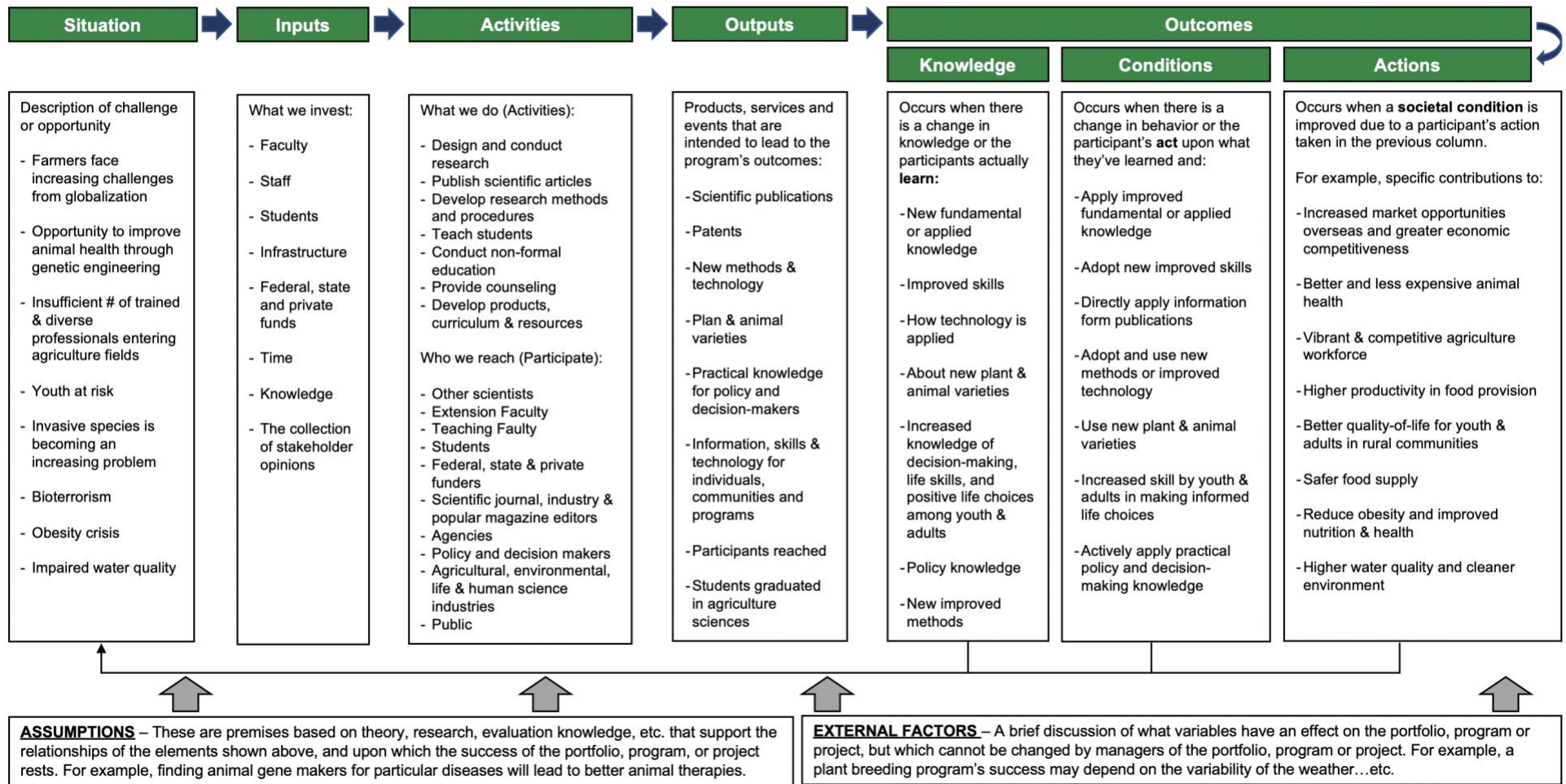
[Contact the GusNIP NTAE](#) to ask questions about logic models.

Logic Model



Generic Logic Model for NIFA Reporting

(This model is intended to be illustrative guide for reporting on NIFA-funded research, education and extension activities. It is not a comprehensive inventory of our programs.)



Version 1.3

The Nutrition Incentive Program Training, Technical Assistance, Evaluation, and Information Center (NTAE) is supported by Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program grant no. 2019-70030-30415/project accession no. 1020863 from the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture.