# Logic (Theory of Change) Model

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| ***A logic model is a conceptual way of understanding the causal path of*** ***project development illustrating how the resources used during implementation ultimately deliver economic impact*** |

**Why is it important?**

To ensure effective intervention *and* value-for-money, public sector organisations have an obligation to understand how project (and/or programme) activity will lead to an improvement within the economy. A logic (or theory of change) model is a conceptual way of presenting the causal pathway and effects of project delivery: capturing the linkages between the resources allocated, the activities undertaken to deliver the outputs, follow-on outcomes, and, over time, expected economic impact.

The main benefits of having a conceptual logic model include:-

* The ability to inform strategic planning, contribute to project design, aid development of project objectives and assist with decision-making;
* Aiding understanding of key deliverables and both “how” and “where” economic impact (and wider benefits) will be derived;
* Acting as the backbone for the monitoring and evaluation framework (for those variables identified across the project pathway as inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes throughout its active lifetime); and
* Underpinning both measure and target setting and aiding the ability to influence the mid-term direction of the project/programme and which will feed into the eventual evaluation.

**Key considerations**

A logic model breaks down a project into five stages, from inputs to impacts. Table 1 defines what each of these stages is and gives examples of the types of measures that might be relevant for each stage. These measures can then become the monitoring indicators: the things that are “counted” at regular intervals so that project performance can be tracked and, if necessary, adjustments made.

**TABLE 1 The Stages of the Logic Model**

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| **Logic Model Stage** | **Definition** | **Example** |
| Inputs | Public sector resources needed to deliver the project. | Money, staff, premises. |
| Activities | Actions needed to deliver the project. | Products/services delivered, research undertaken, workshops delivered. |
| Outputs | Measurable direct results of the activities. | Leverage of business Research & Development, qualifications gained, development of new products and services. |
| Outcomes | Changes that occur to the beneficiaries and the medium term benefits on the economy.  | Increased sales, IP generated and protected, export markets entered. |
| Impacts | The quantitative effect upon the Scottish economy. | Net additional GVA and employment. |

In addition to the quantitative effects of a project it is important to note that not all benefits can be quantified or monetised. Accordingly, the wider qualitative benefits should also be captured and reported so that the journey to impact can be described according to underlying project objectives. This might include such things as greater understanding of the route to market, cultural changes in company management and greater appreciation of the benefits of working with academic institutions.

Diagram 1 outlines the stages and flow of the logic model approach, followed by supporting detail on the key variables. What can be seen is that:-

* The project’s aims and objectives should influence activity at the various stages of the model, from inputs to impacts;
* For each of the stages it should be possible to specify what it is hoped will be achieved, for example how many workshops will be run and how many companies will attend? As far as possible these factors should be quantified in terms of numbers and timing. These can then become the measures and targets for each stage of the model;
* The measures and targets are then used to populate a monitoring and evaluation framework;
* At regular intervals the measures are counted and progress assessed against the targets;
* If there is substantial variance then the targets may need to be reassessed. This can often be the case with innovative projects where there may not be any experience to inform target setting when the project is developed. Such a reassessment should not be taken as an admission of failure but is recognition of the many uncertainties surrounding project implementation; and
* Any such reassessment might then result in adjustments to the measures and targets set for the other stages of the model. In essence this is formative evaluation.



**Templates**

The template below (Diagram 2) can be used to develop a logic model approach where it is beneficial to capture outcomes over time (short, medium and long term). Flexibility of approach is important when aiming to capture the ‘dynamics’ of a project and should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

**DIAGRAM 2 Logic Model Template**

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**Need more help?**

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