

Program Evaluation Toolkit

Module 1: Chapter 4: Outcomes

Regional Educational
Laboratory
Central

From the National Center for Education Evaluation at IES

Speaker 1:

Welcome to the fourth and last chapter of Module 1. In this chapter, you will explore the short-term, mid-term, and long-term outcomes that you expect your program will achieve to address the problem identified in chapter 2.

The final components of the logic model are the outcomes, outlined here in gold dashes. The outcomes define the anticipated results once you implement the program.

The resource *Definitions of Logic Model Components*, available on the resources page of the website, provides a complete definition of short-term, mid-term, and long-term outcomes.

Outcomes are divided into three types: short-term, mid-term, and long-term. Each type relates to how much time has elapsed from initial implementation of the program and what is being measured.

Short-term outcomes are the most immediate and measurable results for participants that can be attributed to program activities. They are typically changes in knowledge or skills resulting from the implementation of the program. They can be expected within a short period after implementation.

Mid-term outcomes are the more distant, though anticipated, results of participation in program activities. They are typically changes in attitudes, behaviors, and practices. These types of changes require a longer period to fully take place.

Finally, long-term outcomes are the ultimately desired outcomes of implementation of program activities. Often, they are the impacts of the program that are dependent on conditions beyond the scope of the program. They are typically systemic changes or changes in student outcomes. They may not be the sole result of the program, but they are associated with it and may manifest themselves after the program concludes.

Remember, changes in knowledge or skills need to occur first in order to effect changes in attitudes, behaviors, and practices, which then lead to systemic changes or changes in student outcomes.

Here are example outcomes associated with AMMP!.

Introduced in chapter 1, AMMP! is a fictitious after-school middle-grades math program used as an example throughout the toolkit. The completed logic model for this program, titled *AMMP! Logic Model*, is available on the resources page of the website.

The short-term outcomes focus on changes in knowledge or skills that result from AMMP!. The evaluation team expects to see, for example, increased awareness of the program among students, teachers, and the community; increased knowledge of effective techniques among tutors; and increased support for the program among teachers.

Next, the mid-term outcomes are expected changes in attitudes, behaviors, and practices as a direct result of the program. The evaluation team expects AMMP! to increase student participation in the program; homework completion rates; readiness for high school math; engagement, or attendance, in math classes; and community and business participation in the program. The AMMP! evaluation team seeks to partner with community members, and therefore the team expects community-sponsored events to take place.

Finally, the long-term outcomes are the distant systemic changes and changes in student outcomes that you hope will happen. In most cases, the long-term outcomes will not be the sole result of the program, but they will be influenced by the implementation of the program. The AMMP! evaluation team hopes to see increased graduation rates, fewer issues in the community, increased enrollment in advanced math courses in high school, better performance on state math assessments, and improved school–community relationships. Although other factors could influence these long-term outcomes, implementing the program is designed to help achieve them.

Keep in mind that the timing for these outcomes may differ. Some long-term outcomes are more distant than others. For instance, the AMMP! evaluation team may expect fewer community issues before increased graduation rates. These are both systemic changes, so they are both considered long term, but one is more distant than the other. Remember, these changes may manifest themselves after the conclusion of the program.

Here, you can see the outcomes for AMMP! from the prior slide are in the last three columns, shaded blue. The example here focuses on the outcomes that are most closely associated with program success and range from changes in knowledge to systemic changes that may result if all prior elements of the model are in place.

Once you have a draft logic model, use arrows or read through your logic model from left to right to ensure alignment across columns, from resources through long-term outcomes. This will help you identify whether you have the resources needed to conduct the program activities, whether you have identified appropriate outputs to determine whether you have conducted the activities, and whether the activities can reasonably be expected to lead to the desired changes in knowledge or skills; attitudes, behaviors, and practices; and systems or student outcomes.

This example from the AMMP! logic model demonstrates how this activity might look. The AMMP! evaluation team plans to use the teacher-designed math extension activities in the resources column to conduct math extension activities, in the activities column. The team expects to see the schedules of math extension activities, indicated in the outputs column. The team anticipates that the math extension activities will lead to the short-term outcome of increased student awareness of AMMP!, to mid-term changes in student behaviors such as increased student participation in AMMP! and increased engagement in math classes, and finally

to long-term changes in student outcomes such as improved performance on state math assessments.

Other resources, activities, and outputs may also influence these short-term, mid-term, and long-term outcomes, but these illustrated connections show how one resource and activity will help to achieve those outcomes. If, for example, the AMMP! evaluation team does not find a clear connection between math extension activities and the expected outcomes, the team may want to reconsider including math extension activities as part of the program, or the team may want to add more outcomes, as long as they align with the program goals.

The final piece of a logic model covers additional considerations. These are important details or ideas that do not fit into the other components of the logic model. They may include assumptions about the program, external factors not covered in the problem statement, or other important issues. Here, you can capture things that you cannot control but that may influence program implementation. It is important to capture them so that you are aware of them as you design and implement the program.

The additional considerations for AMMP! are at the bottom of the logic model, shaded in bronze. External factors include having an adequate number of tutors to meet student needs and having school facilities available. The AMMP! evaluation team also considers assumptions about the program—that unsupervised after-school time results in increased community issues and that recreational activities will improve attendance. As you implement your own program, you cannot be certain about these additional considerations, but you need to keep them in mind.

Now that you have completed a review of the structure and components of a logic model, it is your turn to complete a logic model for your program. You can find a blank logic model template, titled *Logic Model Template*, on the resources page of the website.

You can also use the Education Logic Model (ELM) Application, which is a downloadable, web-based resource that is designed to run in Chrome for a PC or Mac. This application uses a wizard-like interface to walk you through the steps of building your own logic model. A link to this resource is available on the resources page of the website and listed on the references slide at the end of this chapter.

Once you have drafted a logic model, you are ready to move to the next step in the program evaluation cycle: developing evaluation questions. In Module 2, you will explore how to generate measurable evaluation questions directly from your logic model.

This handout was prepared under Contract ED-IES-17-C-0005 by Regional Educational Laboratory Central, administered by Marzano Research. The content does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of IES or the U.S. Department of Education, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.