

LOGICAL FRAMEWORK (LOGFRAME)

A **logical framework**, or '**logframe**', is a tool that can be used for many purposes, most commonly planning, monitoring, and management of projects and programmes.

When to create and use a logframe?

Logframes are usually created during the **initial design and planning stage** of a project. They are then used through each remaining stage of the life cycle, through implementation, monitoring and evaluation. They provide a summary of your project in a consistent, standard format. It takes multiple rounds to get to the final version so don't be disheartened if you find yourself completing a version but then going back through it and revising elements, this is necessary to make sure that it is relevant and complete. As a fundamental planning and tracking tool, logframes are often also considered during evaluations.

A logframe is widely recognised as a useful and often essential tool, though some critics dislike its fixed nature and often see it as a top-down approach imposed by donors. While there is some truth in this, logframes offer a very helpful framework to structure and manage your projects.

Benefits of using a logframe

There are several benefits to using a logframe; these include:

1. It provides a **simple summary of key elements** in a straightforward and logical way that can be understood by the project team and by funders.
2. You can **consider whether your outcomes and objectives are practical** while developing the logframe and also have the opportunity to adapt them before you begin project implementation.
3. It **helps you plan out what activities** (described below) you need to undertake in order to reach your objectives.

4. It sets up a **framework for monitoring and evaluation** that allows you to compare the objectives and the actual results of your project.

Structure of a logframe

A logframe is a simple table that contains information about the project's **Goal, Objectives, Outcomes, Outputs and Activities**. The format can vary but will look something like this example below.

	PROJECT SUMMARY	INDICATORS (SMART)	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
GOAL:				
Objective				
Outcome A				
Outcome B				
Outputs				
Activities				

Elements of a logframe

1. **Goal:** The overall project aim/how your project will contribute towards solving a broader social or economic issue. This may also be referred to as the *Aim* or *Impact* of the project. Unlike other project elements, the Goal may not be measurable within the lifetime of the project.

Example: Reduce the prevalence of child trafficking amongst poor families in Bihar, India

2. **Objectives** are longer term changes that you seek to achieve through your project that will contribute to the Goal. Your objectives should explain **what** will be changed, **who** will benefit and **how** will the overall situation change for the target group **after** the project is completed. Objectives are produced as a result of achieving your outcomes and should be measurable within the lifetime of the project.

Example: Fewer families decide to engage their children in risky opportunities outside of their communities

3. **Outcomes** are the changes that take place as a result of your activities. Sometimes, you can divide your outcomes into short, medium, and long term outcomes, if that works best for a particular project/context. Outcomes are measurable within the lifetime of the project.

Example: Medium-term outcome – Duty bearers make public commitments to take actions towards combating child trafficking

4. **Outputs:** The observable, measurable, and tangible products or services delivered by the project, which will help achieve the above Objectives and Outcomes. They are usually phrased as your activities stated in the past tense (as if the activities have already been conducted) because the overall logframe should give a snapshot of what the project and the social issue could look like when the project is completed.

Example: 12 community meetings held with parents and community leaders to emphasise the value and importance of school.



You can control what happens with the outputs, but the level of control over the outcomes and objectives is lesser as the change moves to higher levels. You can control the number of awareness-raising meetings and when they will take place, but cannot control if those who attended learned anything or will go on to do anything differently as a result.



Strong indicators are 'SMART'. This means that they are:

- S** – Specific; it describes exactly what is being measured
- M** – Measurable; a value can be tested and tracked to identify change
- A** – Achievable; it is realistic within the project lifetime and available resources
- R** – Relevant; ensure that what the indicator measures reflects the outcome/objective
- T** – Time bound; it is clear when the change is expected to have happened



5. Activities: The main tasks that your organisation completes under the project.

Example: Hold 12 community meetings with each of the parents' and women's groups, per village per year

6. Indicators: The measures that you will use to identify progress made towards the objectives, outcomes and outputs at a specific point in time. Indicators are **neutral** - they **do not** include any reference to what kind of change is expected (increase or decrease), but simply record what is happening when the measurement is taken. Indicators help the people who are running the project to track the extent of what they are achieving.

Example of a weak indicator: Economically vulnerable parents know more about children's rights

This indicator is not *specific* enough, nor is it *measurable*.

Example of a strong indicator: Number and percentage of parents who demonstrate improved understanding about their children's rights

This indicator *is* measurable (the number of) and is specific as it details what needs to be known in order to be counted.

7. Proxy indicators - For activities such as behaviour change, it can be difficult to track progress. So at times we can use 'proxy indicators', which are indirect indicators. This means that we measure something else related to the change we wish to see. For example, if you wanted to measure the extent to which parents treat their children equally, you cannot enter their homes to assess this, but you can measure what proportion of boys and girls attend school in the village - this is a proxy indicator for parents' attitudes towards their male and female children.

8. **Means of Verification (MoV):** The tools that are used to gather the information or the data needed to verify indicators. These are also referred to as 'sources'.

Example: Pre- and post-tests, surveys, interviews, meeting minutes, school attendance records

9. **Assumptions:** The external factors or influences that may positively or negatively influence what happens in your project that you have little or no control over. If you come up with the assumptions required to carry out your project first, then they can be broadly applied to all your project objectives and outcomes.

Example: Parents' increased awareness of the risks of trafficking leads them to act against it, so they enrol their children in school.

How to approach developing a logframe

Although they take some time and effort to prepare, a logframe is a tool that you can keep referring back to throughout your project duration.

As mentioned above, it will take repeated modifications and revisions to get your logframe to a good standard. As you work on, and clarify various elements, you will be forced to think about details in the overall project and this will identify gaps and elements that need to be clarified and refined. Do not worry about getting it perfect the first time. Start from what you know, get the outline down on paper and the finer detail can be added as you work it through.

1. Begin with your **Goal/Aim** - at a high level, what do you want the project to do? You can then enter each of the **Objectives** in the 'Project Summary' column. You may have identified these through previous work, or from some exercises like a problem tree, or perhaps through feedback from community members, etc.
2. Next, define the **Outcomes** that will be required in order to achieve each Objective.
3. Third, what are the **Activities** that will be needed to produce these outcomes? Note that the activities are designed in order to achieve the relevant outcomes, **do not start from your activities and work them towards outcomes and objectives**. It is generally good practice to use a consistent numbering format for Objectives, Outcomes and Outputs as this makes it easier to be clear which element is being referred to in discussions throughout the project.

4. Finally, add the **Outputs** - the immediate results of the activities.
5. Next, working upwards from the activities, through outcomes and objectives, identify any **Assumptions** that are inherent in your project design. For example, if community meetings are planned, is there an assumption that the intended people will be able and willing to attend? And if they do, will they pay any attention to what is discussed or do they mostly come for the social opportunity or refreshments? Some of your assumptions may affect the results at all levels, others may be specific to either Outcomes or Outputs. Sometimes it can be helpful to categorise higher level assumptions, such as Political, Environmental, Social, or whatever categories make the most sense for your work. Assumptions are often used to develop a project Risk Register and to identify risk-mitigation and management strategies to further enhance the project plan.
6. Next, address the **Indicators** column for each row. These will describe the key components of your project's monitoring and evaluation. They can be developed together or consecutively, whichever you find to be the more straightforward approach. When developing Indicators, re-read the objective /outcome they refer to and ask yourself "Will measuring this Indicator really tell me if I am making progress against that objective/outcome?"
7. Next, identify your **Means of Verification (MoV)**, which is how you will get the information or data for the indicators - the method, e.g. interviews, a survey or the school attendance records.

It is generally a good idea to review the complete logframe and make adjustments as needed. Your finished version will probably be about two to four pages. It is often helpful to leave it for a day or two and review again, and/or to get other people working on the project to review it, to ensure that everything is as it needs to be and it is clear and consistent to a range of readers/users.

Finally, the logframe is a **living** tool to help you organise and manage your project - if something significant changes within the context of your work, you may need to change the logframe. Unfortunately, some donors are strict about not making changes to logframes as you progress, but thankfully more and more donors recognise and support adaptive project management, helping us all to achieve better results.

Below you will see the logframe structure completed for **1 outcome** from a sample project. When you create your own logframe, you will modify the content of the table according to your project details and create it for all your outcomes.

Sample logframe

	PROJECT SUMMARY	INDICATORS (SMART)	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
	GOAL: Reduce child trafficking in 3 target districts in Bihar			
Objectives	OBJ 1: Children in target communities attend schools and progress through to the next year (incl. assessments)			
Outcomes	OCM 1.1.a Increased rate of children's enrolment to the school	OCM Ind. 1.1.a. Number and percentage of children enrolled to the school, disaggregated by age, sex and caste (Target - 160 / 50%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with teachers • School enrolment records 	Project-wide <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When parents are more aware of the risks of trafficking, they want to act against so they enrol their children in school • Parents believe what they learn from the project in relation to child trafficking • Parents are receptive to
	OCM 1.1.b Increased rate of children's attendance to the school	OCM Ind. 1.1.b. Number and percentage of children attending to the school daily, disaggregated by age, sex and caste (Target: 160 / 50%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with teachers • School attendance records 	
	OCM 1.1.C Increased rate of children progressing to the next year	OCM Ind 1.1.c. Number and percentage of children progressing to the next year, disaggregated by sex, age, caste (Target: 144 / 45%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with teachers • School attendance records • Attainment records 	

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	PROJECT SUMMARY	INDICATORS (SMART)	MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTIONS
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daily meals provided for children at school Twice a week extra-curricular activities carried out in the school such as sports / extra help for studying / manufacturing activities 	<p>OP Ind 1.1.a: Number and percentage of days meals provided at school each school year (Target: 180 / 100%)</p> <p>OP Ind 1.1.b: Number of school-based extracurricular activities that take place each school year, disaggregated by type (Target: 360)</p> <p>OP Ind 1.1.c: Number and percentage of children attending at least one school-based extra-curricular activity each month over the school year, disaggregated by sex, caste and age (Target: 96 / 30%)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community meeting registers (including disaggregated data required for indicators) Activities records Play records (videos) 	<p>the information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents have the time and ability to attend relevant meetings and events Increased understanding contributes to changes in behaviour/decision making Local government do not impose barriers to access Stakeholders do not impose barriers to relevant community members Schools are a safe place for children where traffickers cannot reach Stats and records of attendance are accurate and complete Natural hazards do not impede project delivery
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold 12 community meetings with parents and community leaders Twice a week activities within schools to enhance children's attendance (such as sports, extra time helping students to study, craft activities) Provide one meal per day at schools to all children 			