



Logical Framework Analysis

WHAT IS LOGICAL FRAMEWORK ANALYSIS (LFA)?

A log frame (also known as a Project Framework) is a tool for planning and managing development projects. It looks like a table (or framework) and aims to present information about the key components of a project in a clear, concise, logical and systematic way. The log frame model was developed in the United States and has since been adopted and adapted for use by many other donors, including the Department for International Development (DFID).

A log frame summarises, in a standard format:

- What the project is going to achieve?
- What activities will be carried out to achieve its outputs and purpose?
- What resources (inputs) are required?
- What are the potential problems which could affect the success of the project?
- How the progress and ultimate success of the project will be measured and verified?

WHY USE LFA?

Because most donors prefer it?

LFA can be a useful tool, both in the planning, monitoring and evaluation management of development projects. It is not the only planning tool, and should not be considered an end in itself, **but using it encourages the discipline of clear and specific thinking** about what the project aims to do and how, and highlighting those aspects upon which success depends.

LFA also provides a **handy summary to inform project staff, donors, beneficiaries and other stakeholders**, which can be referred to throughout the lifecycle of the project. LFA should not be set in concrete. As the project circumstances change it will probably need to reflect these changes but everyone involved will have to be kept informed.

What is so intimidating about using LFA?

Perhaps because we are very conscious of the complexity of development projects, we find it hard to believe that they can be reduced to one or two sides of A4. Remember that the log frame isn't intended to show every detail of the project, nor to limit the scope of the project. It is simply a **convenient, logical summary of the key factors of the project.**

The LFA is a way of describing a project in a logical way so that it is:

- **Well designed.**
- **Described objectively.**
- **Can be evaluated.**
- **Clearly structured.**

WHAT DOES THE JARGON MEAN?

Some of the terminology involved in LFA may seem rather intimidating. Do not be put off by the language. Remember that the goal, purpose, outputs and activities are all objectives but at different levels of the project hierarchy. Different donors use slightly different terminology, but the logical frameworks are all the same in principle. You will come across the following terms:

TERM	MEANING	EXAMPLE
Narrative Summary	The goal, purpose, outputs and activities of the project as described in the left-hand column of the logical framework. (the Objectives column)	See below.
Goal	The ultimate result to which your project is contributing - the impact of the project.	Jamaica's dominance of competitive bobsledding.
Purpose	The change that occurs if the project outputs are achieved - the effect of the project.	Jamaica wins the gold medal for bobsledding at the 2002 Winter Olympics.
Outputs	The specifically intended results of the project activities - used as milestones of what has been accomplished at various stages during the life of the project.	Team members selected by (date). Team at full fitness by (date) etc.
Activities	The actual tasks required producing the desired outputs.	Develop training schedule. Find practice venue. Publicity campaign to recruit team member, etc.
Indicators	Also referred to as measurable or objectively verifiable indicators (OVI) quantitative and qualitative ways of measuring progress and whether project outputs; purpose and goal have been achieved.	1. Team members capable of running x metres in x seconds by x time. 2. 4 year training schedule, budget and outcomes developed and agreed by x, etc.
Means of verification	M.O.V is the information or data required to assess progress against indicators and their sources.	1. Fitness report from team doctor. 2. Schedule written and agreed (signed) by coach, team members and team doctor.
Assumptions	Factors external to the project which are likely to influence the work of the project management has little control, and which need to exist to permit progress to the next level in the LFA.	The Jamaican team qualifies for the Games. It snows enough for the Games to be held, etc.
Super goal	The long-term results of continued achievement of the goal of the project.	Hot countries seen as serious competitors in winter sports.
Inputs	What materials, equipment, financial and human resources are needed to carry out the activities of the project?	Funding, Coach, Bob-sled, Snow, Medical Advisor, etc.

WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED?

The reality of funding proposals and completing log frames usually means a desk officer in the UK trying to summarise a project outline for a funding application. However, if used correctly as a planning tool, LFA ought to be developed first by, or working closely with the person most closely involved in project implementation who will most likely be your project co-ordinator or partner organisation overseas. The project detail can be more easily developed from the log frame than the other way round.

Writing log frames in the UK is not participatory, which has led to criticism of the log frame as a planning tool. Ideally it should be produced 'in country' so that during the planning stage participatory approaches can be used to feed into the log frame as it is developed. Whilst project beneficiaries may not identify easily with the concept of LFA, they may be able to identify the factors that are critical to project success, as well as the most appropriate indicators of progress. In this way, participatory techniques can be used to inform LFA.

The log frame can also provide a guide as to what information needs to be gathered through participatory processes, and can be enhanced by combining the outcomes of other planning tools, such as social mapping, wealth ranking, and problem and objective trees.

If the log frame has to be written, adapted or changed in the UK, it is important to feed the detail back to fieldworkers, partners and other relevant stakeholders overseas. **The input to a log frame should be a team effort, as much as possible.**



If you are not the person closest to the project, it is important to engage that person in developing the log frame.

Always consider:

- What impact the objectives & indicators will have on their work.
- What is realistically achievable?
- Will they have enough time to collect the information you are asking for?
- Are the assumptions you are making realistic to them? Are you fully aware of their working conditions?

WHAT DO I NEED TO PRODUCE A LOGICAL FRAMEWORK?

- Supply of large sheets of paper, (preferably flip chart sheets).
- Pencil, eraser and 'Post-it' notes or cards, so you can adjust and amend as you go along.
- Somewhere to work without distractions.
- Ideally, someone to discuss and 'bounce' ideas around with.
- As much information about the planned project as possible - preferably do it 'on site'.

NOW, WHERE DO I NEED TO START?

Many people find it useful to start by developing a Problem Tree. Try to identify what is the real problem the project is to tackle and write it in the middle of a sheet of paper. Then consider the direct causes of the problem and write them in a horizontal line below the problem.

Next, repeat the process for each of those on another horizontal line and continue to repeat as necessary.

All the statements must be written in negative terms. This will give you a problem tree in which a cause and effect relationship operates from the bottom to the top. You may also find it useful to work upwards from the original problem, identifying its effect etc.

Then changing the wording of each item into positive terms will change the Problem Tree into an Objective Tree. Next, decide whether the original problem is still

going to be the main focus (or goal) of the project. This may now be higher or lower on the Objective Tree.

Having made that decision, the purpose, outputs and activities should be present in the next three horizontal lines of the Objective Tree. It will probably be necessary to decide what to include at this stage, as the project has to be of a manageable size. (See Figure 1 below: A Logical Framework - DFID model)

The key to completing log frames is to use the

information generated in the Objective Tree and:

- **Start at the top and work down**
The objectives column - what is the project going to achieve?
- **Then think laterally**
How can the progress of the project be measured against its objectives?
- **Then reflect back up**
What assumptions are to be included and what are their implications?

Figure 1: A Logical Framework (DFID model)

Taken from DFID's "Guidelines on Humanitarian Assistance", May 1997

Objectives	Measurable indicators	Means of verification	Important assumptions
GOAL: Wider problem the project will help to resolve	Quantitative ways of measuring or qualitative ways of judging timed achievement of goal	Cost-effective methods and sources to quantify or assess indicators	(Goal to supergoal) External factors necessary to sustain objectives in the long run
PURPOSE: The immediate impact on the project area or target group i.e. the change or benefit to be achieved by the project	Quantitative ways of measuring or qualitative ways of judging timed achievement of purpose	Cost-effective methods and sources to quantify or assess indicators	(Purpose to Goal) External conditions necessary if achieved project purpose is to contribute to reaching project goal
OUTPUTS: These are the specifically deliverable results expected from the project to attain the purpose	Quantitative ways of measuring or qualitative ways of judging timed production of outputs	Cost-effective methods and sources to quantify or assess indicators	(Outputs to purpose) Factors out of project control which, if present, could restrict progress from outputs to achieving project purpose
ACTIVITIES: These are the tasks to be done to produce the outputs	INPUTS: This is a summary of the project budget	Financial out-turn report as agreed in grant agreement	(Activity to output) Factors out of project control which, if present, could restrict progress from activities to achieving outputs

DFID describes the Logical Framework as "a tool to help designers of projects think logically about what the project is trying to achieve (**the purpose**), what things the project needs to do to bring that about (**the outputs**) and what needs to be done to produce these outputs (**the activities**). The purpose of the project from the DFID viewpoint is to serve our higher level objectives (**the goal**)".

NOTE: The two boxes in the centre of the "Activities" row are not used for Measurable Indicators and Means Of Verification as the progress and success of the Activities are measured at the Outputs level. Remember, the Activities are carried out to achieve the Outputs. These "spare" boxes can therefore be used to provide any useful additional information such as Inputs and Budgeting requirements.

THREE STAGES TO SUCCESS:

STAGE ONE - TOP DOWN (OBJECTIVES)

STAGE TWO - WORK ACROSS (MEASURABLE INDICATORS AND MEANS OF VERIFICATION)

STAGE THREE - BOTTOM UP (ASSUMPTIONS)

STAGE ONE - TOP DOWN (OBJECTIVES)

1. GOAL

Starting at the top and using the information from the Objective Tree consider the overall **goal** of the project. What issue or problem is the project trying to address? The goal may be beyond the reach of this project on its own. What ultimate objective is the project contributing to? This should be a brief statement or summary.

Example

To increase literacy among young people in the sub-Saharan region.

2. PURPOSE

What final result are you trying to achieve? This is the **purpose** of the project. This should be clear and brief.

Example

School attendance and literary skills of 6-14 year olds in (named region) of the sub-Saharan is increased.

3. OUTPUTS

What are the particular **outputs** needed to achieve the Purpose of the project? There may be several outputs.

Example

'Five new language teachers recruited and trained.'
'Classes running in all schools at times when children are not required to complete family duties.'
'Information sessions for families with school age children held in each village demonstrating benefits of literacy.'

4. ACTIVITIES

List the **activities**, which are needed to achieve these outputs. There may be several for each output. Statements should be brief and with an emphasis on action words.

Example

'Hold publicity campaign in (named region) to recruit language teachers by (date)'. 'Agree and arrange selection process & schedule for teacher recruitment involving existing teaching staff'. 'Hold training sessions for new teachers covering aims, approach, customs, potential problems holding information sessions, record-keeping, expenses'. 'Arrange appropriate accommodation for teachers in each village at least before arrival'. 'Plan and hold meetings in each village for families with school age children to demonstrate the benefits of literacy' etc.

5. INPUTS

When required to do so provide additional information, such as the **inputs** which are needed to carry out these activities. Again, there may be several for each activity and it will help to run through each individually, listing required inputs (resources, equipment, tools, people). Group the inputs and list each once rather than repeatedly. This may include a summary of the project budget.

Example

Budget, Training space, Accommodation, Support for existing teaching staff, Teaching materials, Transport to village, Project Co-ordinator / Fieldworker etc.

STAGE TWO - WORK ACROSS (MEASURABLE INDICATORS AND MEANS OF VERIFICATION)

As you work down each step of your objectives, think:

- How the outputs and activities can be measured.
- What indicators can be used to measure achievement against?
- What information will be needed, and how it can be gathered?
- What problems, obstacles or barriers might arise to prevent the project from progressing as planned?
- How can their impact be minimised?

6. INDICATORS

Starting either from the top or the bottom of your

hierarchy of objectives, begin to work across the log frame, identifying the indicators for measuring your progress. Indicators need to define 'QQT', Quality, Quantity and Timing:

- Quality** - The kind (or nature) of the change.
- Quantity** - The scope (extent) of the change ie. by how much, how many.
- Timing** - By when the change should have taken place.

There are two kinds of indicators you will need to use:

Process indicators

Which measure the extent to which you have achieved your stated objectives.

Example

How many children attending school by (specified)time.

Impact indicators

Which help to monitor the achievement and the impact of your work.

Example

How many children pass (specified) literacy test at (specified) time.

In addition, indicators can also be:

Direct

Example

The Number of children attending school.

Indirect (also known as soft or proxy).

Example

More books borrowed from the school library - suggesting more children reading, therefore wider literacy.

Examples

Using Indicators at the Purpose level:

School attendance of 6-14 year olds is increased by 200 per cent within 4 years. 90 per cent 6-14 years olds (in named region) of the sub-Saharan to have gained (particular level) of literacy skills within 4 years.

Using Indicators at the Outputs Level:

Five language teachers recruited and trained by (date).
At least two classes running in all schools at times when children are not required to complete family duties by (date). At least three information sessions for families with school-age children held in each village demonstrating benefits of literacy by (date).

7. INFORMATION SOURCES

Next, try and work out your means of verification for each indicator. **What information will you need, and how and from where can it be gathered?**

Will project staff or others need to keep records, or can they get the information from somewhere else? Consider the cost implications, if any, and build this into the project budget.

Don't exclude anecdotal evidence (eg. views expressed by project beneficiaries, etc) if this is the most appropriate source of information, but remember that donors can be wary of this evidence, and it may later be necessary to demonstrate your claims!

Note:

If you are confused about indicators - don't panic! Identifying indicators requires some practice. Try to find a mentor with more experience who can advise you. Or move on to look at means of verification - thinking about what information you need, and how to get it, may help to define what the indicator should be. If you come up with a long list of possible indicators try to narrow it down to the essential ones.

STAGE THREE - BOTTOM UP (ASSUMPTIONS)

8. EXTERNAL FACTORS

What external factors (outside your control) could affect the success of your project or prevent work from progressing? These may be climatic, political, economic, etc. but should be real (possible) risks rather than a list of everything that could go wrong.

Reflecting up from the bottom of your log frame, consider how, if each assumption holds, it will be possible to move to the next stage of the project.

Example

There are sufficient rains to ensure that children are not required to replant crops and therefore unable to attend school.

And/or, Sufficient teachers with knowledge of local dialect are recruited.

And/or, Conflict from neighbouring region doesn't spread into local area so that emergency needs take precedence over education.

9. DOUBLE CHECK

Following completion of your log frame, **go over it, from bottom to top, to check the logic of it:**

- Will the inputs and activities clearly lead to the outputs required to achieve the purpose and contribute to the goal?
- Will the indicators and means of verification effectively measure the progress of the project?
- Are the assumptions reasonable or do they indicate a level of risk, which suggests that the project is unlikely to get off the ground or be completed? (The killer assumption)
- Is the project staff committed to the objectives and indicators identified and see them as realistic and achievable?
- Are there any changes, which could be made which will make the project it more practical and workable?

10. WRITE IT UP

When the log frame has been checked (and rechecked) and it is truly logical, and representative of the project, type (or write) it up onto A4 sheets.

At this point **all the relevant stakeholders should have had a chance to contribute to (and agree) the completed log frame.**

11. STAYING INFORMED

And still you haven't finished; remember that LFA is a flexible tool for planning, managing, monitoring and reporting your project. **As the project progresses and situations change, return to the log frame and revise it accordingly.** Agree these changes with the donor and other stakeholders and **keep everyone informed so that they are able to keep up to date with current progress of the project and its future direction.**

WANT TO FIND OUT MORE?

• Gosling L and Edwards M (1995) "**Toolkits: a practical guide to assessment, monitoring, review and evaluation**" Development Manual 5 pp. 178-192 Save The Children, £6.95 (New edition due in March 2003 with updated information on Logical Frameworks)

• The DFID "Guidelines on Humanitarian Assistance" published in May 1997 includes guidance on preparing log frames, and is available on the DFID web-site at http://62.189.42.51/DFIDstage/faqs/files/guidelines_on_humanitarian_assistance_v5.0a.doc

• DFID Chapter on Logical Frameworks in their Tools for Development series: http://62.189.42.51/DFIDstage/FOI/tools/chapter_05_frame.htm

• The Civil Society Challenge Fund Guidelines 2002 include an Annex C on The Logical Framework: http://62.189.42.51/DFIDstage/Pubs/files/cscf_guide.htm

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ABOUT BOND

BOND is the network of over 270 UK-based non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working in international development and development education.

BOND aims to improve the extent and quality of the UK and Europe's contribution to international development, the eradication of global poverty and the upholding of human rights.

The Guidance Notes Series aims to provide 'how-to' information on a variety of topics for the development sector. This edition also provides signposts to resources for those keen to pursue the topic further.

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Top Tips

- Don't leave it to the last minute. Start working on your log frame when you begin planning the project. You may need to gather information as you go along that will be difficult to get later (eg baseline data against which to measure progress).
- Try and get the person planning and implementing the project to complete the log frame. If this is not possible consider the implications of the objectives, indicators & verification on field staff and partners.
- Develop a problem tree. By turning the problems into objectives, this should help clarify the goal, purpose, outputs and activities of your project.
- Find a mentor with experience of writing log frames who can offer you advice & assistance.
- If you get stuck, don't panic - move on to the next stage and come back to the tricky bit later.
- Work in pencil so you can erase things and make amendments easily, and use a large sheet of paper with plenty of room for 'thinking' then reduce it down to A4 later.
- It is difficult to get it right first time, keep reflecting and revising until you are satisfied that the project is workable and the log frame is clearly logical!
- Use the log frame as the basis of the funding application and then throughout the project lifecycle to track progress and adapt to changing situations. You can use the log frame to review assumptions and implications, and to keep donors and other stakeholders informed of significant changes.