Evaluation of the
Stronger Families and Communities Strategy 2000-2004
Supplement

This supplement to the SFCS 2000-2004 Evaluation newsletter (February 2005) provides information about the project logic used by projects and the Strategy as a whole. It has been developed to assist SFCS 2000-2004 projects designing and undertaking their project evaluation.

Project logic

Project logic sets out a chain of intended outcomes and explains how project activities are intended to contribute to these.

Many projects have found it useful to use project logic for planning, monitoring and evaluation. The evaluation of the 2000-2004 Strategy has used project logic extensively to understand individual projects and the Strategy as a whole.

Many different terms are used instead of ‘project logic’, including program theory, logic models and theory-of-change. Some versions of project logic are simple descriptions of the inputs, processes, outputs and outcomes of projects. Other versions try to explain in detail how the project achieves its outcomes, including the effect of the context.

Other reading

The RMIT Evaluation Team suggest the following books and online resources.

Books

Online resources

<http://www.wkkf.org/Pubs/Tools/Evaluation/Pub3669.pdf>
A detailed guide to using logic models is in the WK Kellogg Foundation’s guide to Logic Model Development, which can be downloaded free.

http://www1.uwex.edu/ces/lmcourse/
Online module on program theory and logic models.

http://www.theoryofchange.org/index.html

Looking across SFCS projects

To look at the different outcomes across the various projects, we can make use of a common project logic that leads to stronger families and communities. This common project logic was the basis of the performance indicators that were used across the Strategy. Figure 1 shows the seven levels of SFCS 2000-2004 outcomes.

Results to date from the Final questionnaires have shown how this common project logic can be used to summarise outcomes across the range of different projects.
### Figure 1
The seven levels of SFCS 2000-2004 outcomes

<table>
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<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
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| 7.    | Stronger Families and Communities  
This is about how families and communities apply the strengths from Levels 1 to 6 to improve their wellbeing. |
| 6.    | An environment where communities participate in and drive their own solutions to strengthen their families and communities  
This level of participation goes to the issue of sustainability of community participation and longer-term more extensive self-determination. |
| 5.    | Family and community trust/resilience/adaptability  
This is about sustainable levels of trust, willingness to cooperate in future and adaptability as a way of addressing issues as they arise. |
| 4.    | Demonstration/application of greater understanding, skills and capacity  
This involves applying the skills (e.g., leadership, project management and specific skills such as parenting skills) and capacity that have been learned. It includes application during the life of the project, transfer of skills to other family and community issues, and opportunities and problems during and after participation in the Strategy project. It implies some sustainability of understanding, skills and capacity. |
| 3.    | Greater choice, understanding, skills and capacity for initiative  
This includes not just the particular skills that might have been the direct target of a project but also the understanding, skills, confidence and capacity acquired by the participants in the course of planning and managing the projects. Capacity also includes newly established partnerships. Greater choice can include access to a wider range of services or more appropriate services. |
| 2.    | Greater awareness  
This includes awareness of Strategy, its principles and values as well as awareness about specific issues developed by projects. The feedback arrow shows that basic awareness of the Strategy is a prerequisite for participation and participation in turn enhances awareness. |
| 1.    | Participation and enhanced trust  
This is about trust and participation developed on a smaller scale through a particular Strategy project. Participation includes direct participation in the Strategy and/or the processes of the Strategy, including the application process, even if the application is unsuccessful. It refers to extent, range, nature and quality of participation, and consultation at the level of the targeted communities and individuals in communities. It also includes participation (of volunteers) engendered by the strategy. |
**Examples** of early evaluation findings against levels 3 to 5 of the SFCS outcomes

**Level 5. Family and community trust/resilience/adaptability**

Fifty-two per cent of projects that completed Final questionnaires reported they had helped individuals, families and communities to become more adaptable and resilient, more trusting of each other and more willing to cooperate.

A project working with young people reported that the newspaper developed and produced by them helped them to present themselves positively and their writings were beginning to break down barriers with older generations. They provided specific examples of breaking down generational and socio-economic barriers. There was also some evidence of increased preparedness amongst adults to have youth involved in decision-making.

**Level 4. Demonstration/application of greater understanding, skills and capacity**

Seventy per cent of these projects reported that they had successfully contributed to enhanced skills, confidence and capacity for action among participating individuals, families or communities.

A leadership project reported that 70 per cent of participants who attended training stated the training had increased leadership competencies, such as decision-making and priority setting. They provided examples of how they had been able to apply these competencies.

**Level 3. Greater choice, understanding, skills, capacity for initiative**

Sixty-five per cent of these projects reported that they had assisted individuals, families and communities to apply capacity they already had or had developed through participation in the project.

Young people who, through a Strategy project, had developed skills on the job applied their skills to such activities as running a fashion show, local bands concert, youth radio program and a Youth Summit in the Region. The project had encouraged some young people to stay in their community by clarifying career choice and opportunities for them.

**More information about the evaluation**


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