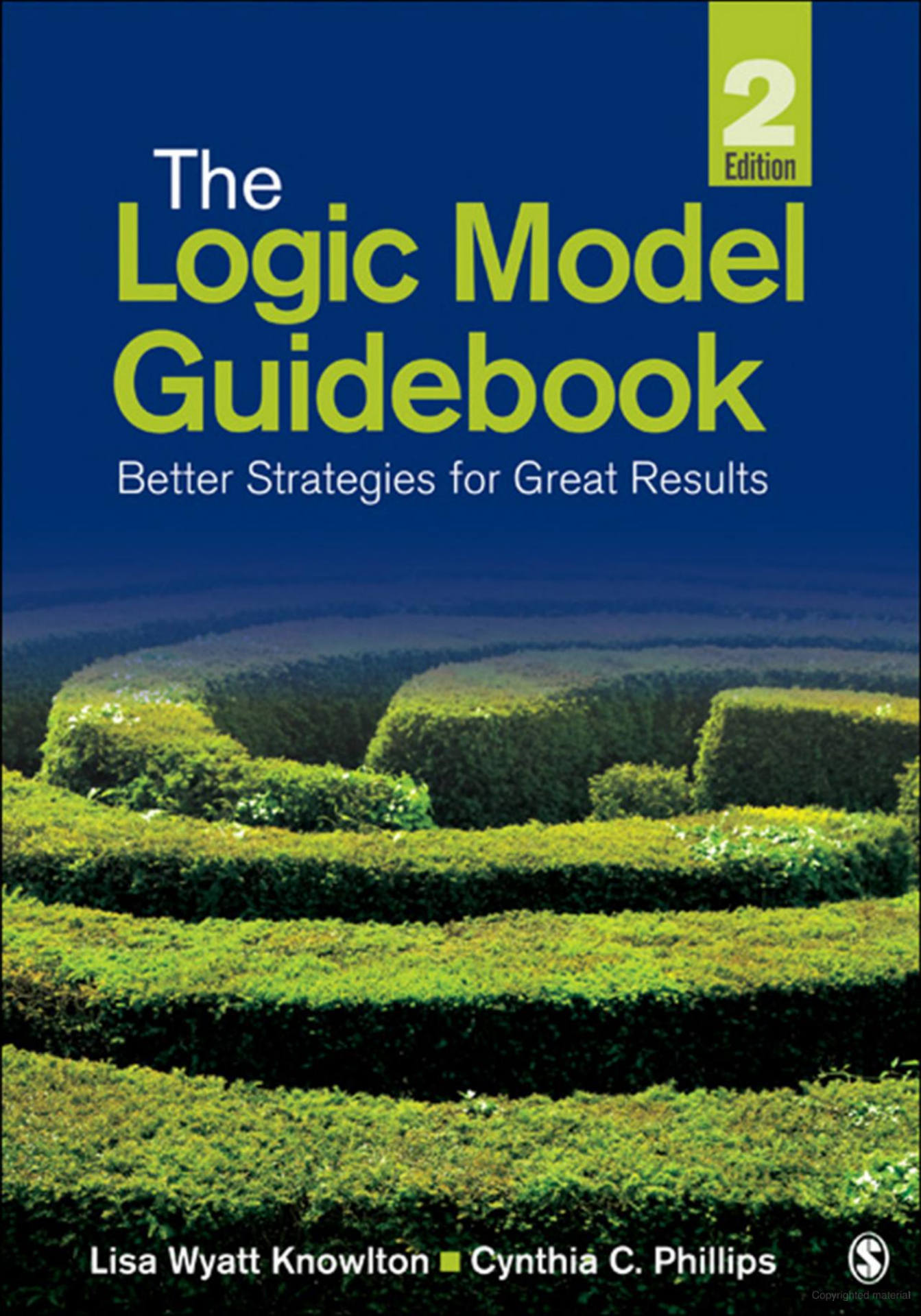
2 Edition

The Logic Model Guidebook

Better Strategies for Great Results



Lisa Wyatt Knowlton ■ Cynthia C. Phillips

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Preface

Responding to and creating change is demanding. Every day, people in nongovernmental organizations, the private sector, universities, and community-based organizations are responding to or creating change. Models can help us see what is and what we want to create. They can be powerful tools that support learning and performance. They can help us with metacognition: thinking about our thinking.

Logic models are used in a huge range of topical content and functions worldwide. They can easily explicate the influence of actions on results. If our aim is coping with change and generating it, a critical review of "do" and "get" is a vital action. As we face complex challenges like climate change, education quality, poverty, homelessness, water distribution, healthcare inequities, aging, and hunger, we need potent ways to communicate the current situation and the desired one. As we consider ways to innovate, transfer, and market knowledge—we need powerful approaches to new contexts. As we deliberate a sustainable planet—we need to be able to co-create options with shared meaning. Logic models are tools that help these examples of important work.

We wrote the *Guidebook* because we care about results. We know people need better skills, knowledge, and tools to have influence. While logic models are never perfect, they do offer a partial remedy for better decisions, plans, and adaptation. They can contribute to effectiveness and are consistent with Palchinsky's Principles to

- seek out new ideas and try new things;
- when trying something new, do it on a scale at which failure is survivable; and
- seek out feedback and learn from mistakes as you go along.

This second edition of the *Guidebook* provides the reader with a basic understanding of how to create and use logic models. This is important for people who work in the nonprofit, government, and private sectors with responsibilities to lead and manage. Evidence-based models can be particularly helpful to create programs, plan, communicate, and evaluate.

Logic models can provide important help that guides better thinking and focused inquiry. Logic modeling is a process that contributes to clarity about the sequence and the content of interactive relationships. Logic models display relationships of many

kinds: between resources, activities, outcomes, and impact. They can also articulate the interaction of environmental barriers and facilitators. The physical display models provide allows a chance to critically review the relational logic among the "pieces" and context. And they can be a platform to prompt important questions about assumptions and choices. Logic models can significantly aid strategy development if we use them to consider what's plausible, feasible, and optimal *vis-á-vis* intended results.

All logic models should be considered drafts. Every model example in the *Guidebook* has flaws. Because models represent perception and reflect choices, they have consequent limitations. Any individual has "blind spots," so people and groups that author models include those. Regardless, models and modeling offer a potent alternative to lengthy narrative because visual display is such a powerful, common way to create shared understanding and test quality.

There are no perfect models, but the quality of models certainly can range from simply "cockamamie" to highly strategic. Quality is a vital matter in creating models. The best standard we can offer to ensure the potential of its intended outcomes is prior evidence. However, when generating innovation, it's important to simply acknowledge rationale and "see" the prototype on paper. This can ensure fidelity of implementation and focus evaluation or at least document the initial approach in contrast to what actually is executed.

Modeling can be an exciting process. It includes a cycle of display, review, analysis, critique, and revision to develop a model. These action steps, best done with colleagues or stakeholders, can contribute significantly to more informed models and are more likely contribute to results. Using logic models in a systemic and disciplined approach to design, planning, communication, and evaluation can contribute to individual and organizational learning.

The *Guidebook* is a practical text for students and field practitioners. It is organized with the assumption the reader has no knowledge or prior experience. We hope it supports your changes in awareness, knowledge, and skill relative to models and modeling.

New to the Second Edition

Each chapter in the second edition retains some of the prior "classic" resources and includes many contemporary additions. We have added a large number of model examples, associated descriptions, and an entire new chapter with seven profiles that show the reader how models are used in the field.

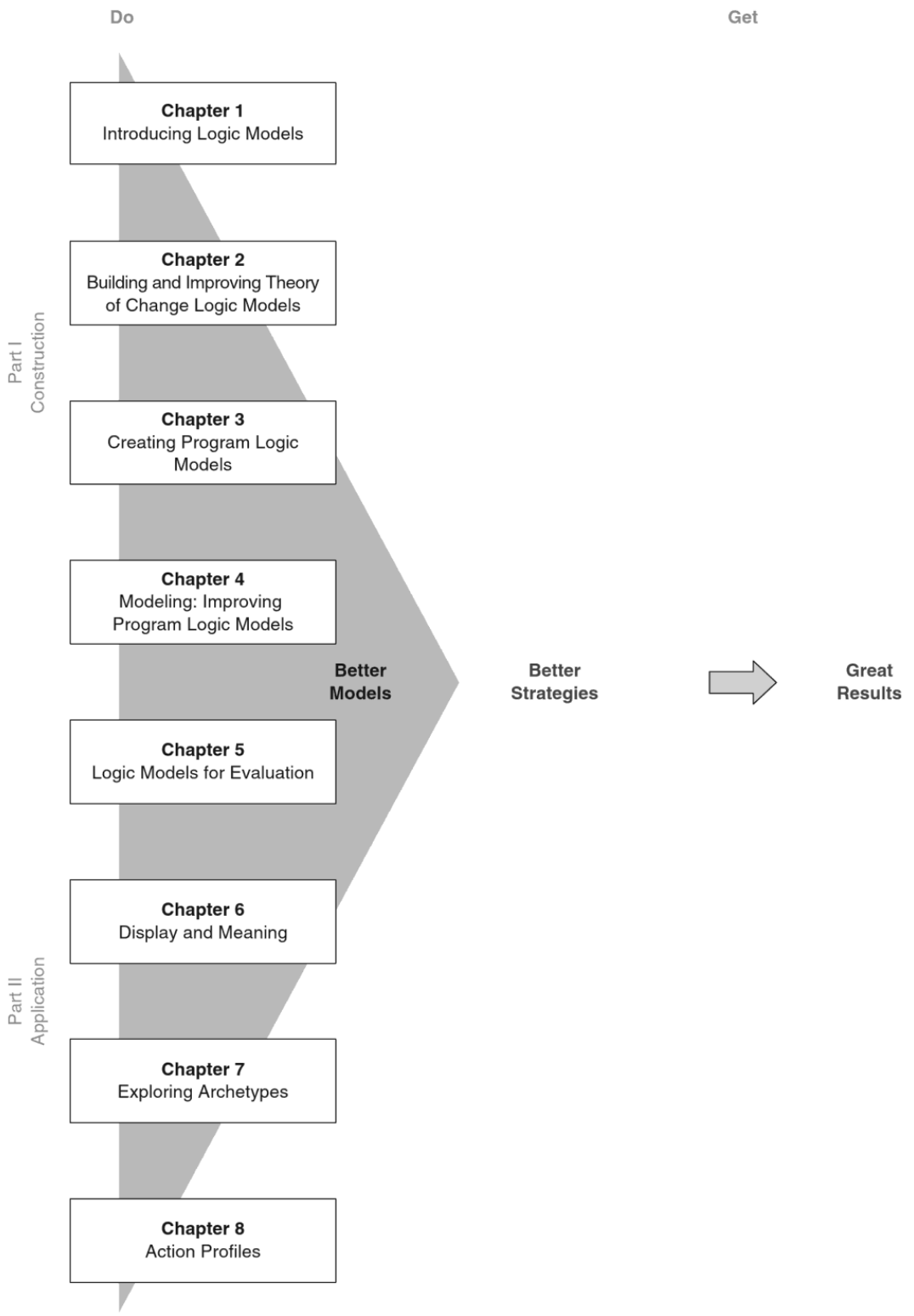
We've retained the initial organization of the text in two parts: construction and application. Model construction is covered in Chapters 1 through 4. The application of models is in Chapters 5 through 8. The construction chapters introduce readers to models and their creation and improvement. The application chapters offer a more thorough review of use and include many new examples of models in context.

Every chapter still includes an overview, learner objectives, questions, and exercises along with learner resources. Chapter 1 introduces models, their benefits, and

some caveats. Chapters 2 and 3 detail two types of models: theory of change and program logic models. Chapter 4 describes improving model quality. This is a vital contribution because we suggest that the model quality correlates to quality in planned strategy and tactics. Ultimately, these are important influences for implementation, evaluation, and intended results.

Chapter 5 focuses on how models can be of significant use to monitoring and evaluation. Logic models are an important tool in many aspects of evaluation design, planning, and execution. They are also very useful to those who are evaluation consumers. Chapter 6 provides examples of the range of display for models. We have included several new ones. Likewise, in Chapter 7 we identify some reliable evidence-based examples that can be archetypes for your work. These show how it's possible to "borrow brilliance" and build on the great work of others. Chapter 8 is all new content. It profiles some wonderful work using models as a central tool and process. These profiles show how logic models contribute to a range of functions and disciplines.

We hope this text is read and used in ways that support better thinking, strategies, and models. If so, we're confident you'll secure great results!



Acknowledgments

Our work is valuable because of amazing people, our clients, who care about change and results. Our first and warm thanks go to them.

This edition of the *Guidebook* benefited from many new contributors and more than a dozen new models. We appreciate the time and effort these colleagues made to enrich the text. Some of the models that appeared in the first edition have been retained. In all, contributors include the following:

Chapter 6

Example 1: Eco Hub—Adrian Jones, Integration and Application Network, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science

Example 2: Wayne Food Initiative—Tes Thraves, North Carolina State University

Example 3: Promoting Preschool Change—Gale Berkowitz, DrPH, (former) Director of Evaluation; Kathleen Reich, MPP, Program Officer, Leader, Preschool Grantmaking; Lois Salisbury, JD, Director, Children, Families and Communities Program, The David and Lucile Packard Foundation. Julia Coffman provided the Kingdon models.

Example 4: Collaborative Learning, Inquiry, and Practice—Beverly A. Parsons, Ph.D., Executive Director, InSites

Example 6: Independent Sector—Sherry Rockey, (former) Vice President Independent Sector

Chapter 7

Example 2: Pathways Mapping—Lisbeth Schorr, PhD, and Vicky Marchand

Example 4: Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships, Johns Hopkins University—Joyce Epstein, PhD.

Example 5: National Center for Injury Prevention & Control (CDCP)—Sue Lin Yee, MA, MPH, and Howard Kress, PhD.

Chapter 8

Profile 1: *Civic Engagement*—Seattle Works—Tara Smith and Dawn Smart, MA Clegg Associates

Profile 2: *Better Corporate Giving*—ConAgra Foods Foundation—Kori Reed, Vice President Cause & Foundation

Profile 3: *Kyrgyzstan Decent Work Programme*—International Labour Organization, Craig Russon, PhD, and Alexey Kuzmin, PhD Process Consulting

Profile 4: *Alabama Tackles Asthma*—Alabama Department of Public Health—Debra Hodges, PhD

Profile 5: *Resilient Communities*—Post Carbon Institute—Johanna Morariu, MA, Innovation Network

Profile 6: *Sheltering Families*—Haven House—Angela Mayeaux, Executive Director

Profile 7: *Environmental Leadership*—Paint Product Stewardship Initiative—Matt Keene and Chris Metzner

Our thanks to those who graciously submitted example models for this edition. Given limitations in space, most don't appear here in print. We hope there will be other ways to make your efforts more visible. The skills and considerable knowledge of the crew at SAGE were essential to many aspects of this book.

Several other exceptionally capable professionals contributed to new understandings in model development and applications. They include Sal Alaimo, PhD; Johnny Morell, PhD; Rosalie Torres, PhD; and Rodney Hopson, PhD.

Past and recent readers offered valuable critique and constructive feedback on all chapters. They include Kathryn Agard, EdD; Tom Chapel, MA, MBA; Richard Elmore, EdD; Simon Fass, PhD; Nancy Horn, PhD; Gary Miron, PhD; Janice Molnar, PhD; Lois-ellin Datta, PhD; David Osborn, DMin; Faye Richardson-Green; Craig Russon, PhD; Jim Sanders, PhD; Sylvie Taylor, PhD; and Rob Walsh, PhD Their comments and insights were helpful.

We deeply appreciate the generous and thoughtful comments on our text by Matt Knott, Wendy Puriefoy, David Ray, Kori Reed, Bill Rudnick, Joe Stewart, and Jill Wohlford, as well as several of the readers noted above. We applaud your leadership and the vital work you do in behalf of those most vulnerable—across the globe.

Even if it's the second time around, family provides important support in the many challenges of creating a book. They were bystanders to long hours at the computer and witnessed worry about the details. We are deeply grateful. Lisa applauds, with love, Timothy, Taylor, and Meg. Cynthia offers the very same to Courtney and Nick.

About the Authors

Lisa Wyatt Knowlton, EdD, is a cycling enthusiast, Lake Michigan fan, adoption advocate, and voracious reader. She holds a BA in international relations from Michigan State University, an MPA. from Western Michigan University, and an EdD in management and policy from Western Michigan University. Her work history includes senior roles in programming and management of private, community, as well as corporate philanthropy. She has managed change projects for the W. K. Kellogg Foundation as well as the Aspen Institute, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Independent Sector, and the Ball, Nokomis, and Kauffman Foundations. Lisa is a W. K. Kellogg National Leadership Fellow with experience in Central America, Asia, and Europe. Lisa authors a blog called *tinker.* She is a contributor to *Leadership in Nonprofit Organizations* (Sage, 2011). Her areas of specialization include strategy, organization development, leadership, change management, and systems thinking. She is chief strategy officer, management guru, and learning coach with Phillips Wyatt Knowlton, Inc. Lisa has cross-sector experience and speaks Spanish. You can reach her via e-mail at: lisaw@pwkinc.com.

Cynthia C. Phillips, PhD, is a birder, recovering aerobics instructor with 30 million meters rowed, and cyber-sleuth. She received a BS in biology and chemistry from Indiana University, an MA in educational leadership from Western Michigan University, and a PhD in measurement, research, and evaluation from Western Michigan University. Her experience includes consultation with the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, the Ball Foundation, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Nokomis, Kauffman, and the David and Lucile Packard Foundations in the design and implementation of evaluation, evaluation training, and knowledge management projects. She is the author of the W. K. Kellogg Foundation *Logic Model Development Guide.* Cynthia is a sought-after presenter on logic models and knowledge management. Her areas of specialization and expertise include evaluation/measurement; knowledge management; organizational learning; logic models, quantitative methods,

and qualitative methods; and electronic data collection and dissemination. Cynthia offers a user-friendly approach to evaluation capacity building. She is chief idea engineer and measurement expert with Phillips Wyatt Knowlton, Inc. You can reach her via e-mail at cynthiap@pwkinc.com.

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PART I

Construction

Basic Concepts

Models and Modeling

Logic models support design, planning, communication, evaluation, and learning. They are often used when explaining an idea, resolving a challenge, or assessing progress. They can untangle and clarify complex relationships among elements or parts.

Logic models are a graphic way to organize information and display thinking. They are a visual approach to the implicit maps we all carry in our minds about how the world does or *should* work. Logic models are tools that convey a scheme, program, or project in a brief, visual format. Logic models describe planned action and its expected results. A model is a snapshot of an individual's or group's current thinking about how their idea or program might work.

Modeling is a technique. The process of modeling encourages iterative development of an idea, program, or project. It can create a safe space to start a debate, generate ideas, support deliberations, and allow one to think more clearly about specific relationships. A single, coherent logic reflects a consistent thread that connects design, plans, execution, and evaluation. This thread of evidence-based logic is critical to program and organizational effectiveness.

Modeling allows careful consideration of the relationship between activities and results. When tackled by a team or small group of stakeholders, models can be improved by engaging the knowledge and experience of others. We think modeling is significantly underutilized as a valuable process with real benefits. We believe the best models are socially constructed in a shared experience that is facilitated. The shared understanding and meaning they produce among colleagues are valuable and enable success in subsequent steps of implementation and assessment.

Logic Model Benefits

In addition to extraordinary execution, organizational effectiveness ultimately requires design, planning, monitoring, and success measures. Logic models can contribute to the quality of all of these. In Chapters 1 through 4, we address models from the design and planning perspective. In Chapter 5, we offer more detail about their use with monitoring and evaluation. Logic models also

- Develop common language among stakeholders.
- Offer highly participatory learning opportunities.
- Document and emphasize explicit outcomes.
- Clarify knowledge about what works and why.
- Identify important variables to measure and enable more effective use of evaluation resources.
- Provide a credible reporting framework.
- Lead to improved design, planning, and management.

When logic models and modeling are used as a standard technique, they can influence an organization's effectiveness. Logic models offer the strategic means to

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