

Assignment Two Discussion Page

Online Learning

OL 202: Learn How to Design, Fund and Manage Nonprofit Programs

Center for Sustainable Development: <https://nonprofit.csd-i.org/ol-240-design-fund-manage-nonprofit-programs/>

This week's resources:

Class Home Page

Assignment Two Homework Page

Download Class Documents

OL 202 Assignment Two Student Logframe Template to Fill In

Part 1.

Assignment 2: Planning for Impact

Why are we planning for impact? Non Profits aren't keeping pace with growing need. Part of that is because the projects that we design and implement haven't traditionally been designed to achieve long term impact.

We began the process of designing long-term sustainability and impact into our projects in the last course by making sure that we had community buy-in. Next we investigated if the activities we had chosen had an evidence basis for solving the challenges that we identified.

The next step is to begin designing impact into the project by adding outcome and impacts statements into our log frame matrix.

Why our focus on impact?

Escalating energy and food prices and increasing population pressures have led donors and Non Profits to realize that we must use research to identify what has impact in non profit programs – and act with urgency. We need to shift from activity and output-based programs to outcome and impact-based programs.

“It is time to take stock, admit that business-as-usual hasn't worked, agree to change mind-sets, and really change the way that everyone works.” Vanessa Rubin, CARE International.

“What is important today is to realize that the time for talking is long past. Now is the time for action.” Jacques Diouf, Director General FAO. A recent FAO study estimates that 1.2 billion people go hungry every day.

“The stakes for increasing the effectiveness of philanthropy are very high. If we're going to solve complex problems like climate change or AIDS, we must become much more serious about getting resources where they can have the most impact.” Jacob Harold, Hewlett Foundation.

What is impact? What are outcomes?

World Bank definitions:

- Impact is the long-term, sustainable changes in the conditions of people and the state of the environment that structurally reduce poverty, improve human well-being and protect and conserve natural resources.
- Outcomes are behavior changes in partners – changes that contribute to the long-term sustainable improvement in people's lives.

So this week we're going to write an impact statement for our project that will be the very long-term goal that we're hoping to achieve, and outcome statements for each one of our sub-goals which represent mid-term achievements that let us know that we are progressing towards our long-term impact.

Two very important points:

1. Our projects can only influence our communities in making positive behavioral changes. For example, we can introduce the concept of nutrition, but it is ultimately their decision to incorporate it into their daily lives. We can't force them, only influence their decision.
2. You'll see that the outcome and impact statements are off to the right side of the logframe structure. I did that intentionally. They aren't part of the 'mechanical' part of the structure where activities lead to fulfilling outputs, and outputs lead to filling sub-goals. Since we can only hope to influence our community, the outcomes and impacts are happening on another level that depends on sustained behavioral change.

And how do we insure sustainability? How do we insure our communities will incorporate these behavioral changes? Through community buy-in. Through the community's sense of ownership of the project. We began that in week one with the Ten Seed participatory needs assessment and continued when we returned in week 4 to get their feedback and buy-in on our project concept.

Part 2.

Measuring our Successes

Our Activities and Outputs need to be very clear so that we will absolutely know if we've achieved them or not, and they need to be measurable. This week we will also add indicators that let us know that we have achieved them, and a means of verification than create certainty.

Getting started

The Assignment Two Homework Page will guide you the process.

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