



# Evaluation Briefs

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## Aligning a Logic Model with a Strategic Plan

DASH partners funded through the 801 cooperative agreement are required to complete a strategic plan that includes a 5-year program logic model. This brief defines logic model and strategic plan, describes the components of a logic model and strategic plan, and outlines steps for aligning a logic model with a strategic plan.

### Definitions

A **logic model** is a pictorial diagram that shows the relationship between your program components and activities and desired health outcomes. It is a visual way to present and share your understanding of the relationships among the resources you have to operate your program, the strategies/activities you plan to implement, and the outputs and outcomes you hope to achieve.

A **strategic plan** is a document that describes your program's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, and outlines five-year program goals, strategies to achieve the goals, and directions for the five years of the cooperative agreement. It is a program planning tool that provides a blueprint to strengthen program activities, address areas for improvement, and move the program forward to new accomplishments.

### Components of a Logic Model

A logic model includes process and outcome components. The process components include **inputs** (resources available to operate a program including staff, organizations, communities, and finances), **strategies/activities** (specific things that the program is doing), and **outputs** (the amount of product or service that the program intends to provide). The **outcome components** are the intended outcomes or specific changes that are direct results of program implementation. These include changes in knowledge, attitudes, skills, and behaviors. These can be considered in three time blocks as **short-**, **intermediate-**, and **long-term** effects. A logic model also includes the **overall program goal** which represents the overall mission or purpose of the

program often expressed in terms of changes in morbidity and mortality. A logic model should reflect the logical links between strategies/activities and intended effects, that is, the link between the process components and the outcome components.

### Components of a Strategic Plan

- A **list of stakeholders** who were involved in your strategic planning process and their role in the process.
- A summary of your program's **strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT analysis)** based on your analysis of internal and external data.
- A **list of internal and external data sources** used in your SWOT analysis. Internal data describe the current status of your Dash-funded program and how it operates. External data describe the population that your program serves and the environment in which your program operates.
- A description of the **strategies** that your program will use to achieve its five-year goals that includes the rationale for each strategy and a timeline indicating the year(s) of the cooperative agreement that your program will implement each strategy.
- **Communication, implementation, and evaluation processes** that outline how, by when, and by whom the strategic plan will be communicated, implemented, and evaluated.
- A **5-year program logic model** and an **annual workplan** that aligns with your strategic plan.

## Steps to Align Your Logic Model with Your Strategic Plan

If you do not have a logic model to guide your work, you may have trouble charting a road map for your program that shows the links between your strategies and outcomes. Because the logic model reflects your program, it is important that your logic model aligns with the 5-year program goals and strategies your program has identified in its strategic plan. The following are steps to aligning your logic model with your strategic plan:

- **List your strategies in the strategies/activities column of your logic model.** The strategies developed through your strategic planning process are the means or broad approach by which your program will achieve its goals. Similarly, the strategies/activities column of your 5-year program logic model represents broadly what you plan to do to achieve your outcomes. (In a 5-year logic model that aligns with a strategic plan, program strategies are listed in the strategies/activities column. In other types of logic models that are not intended to represent a strategic plan, specific program activities may be listed.)
- **List the expected effects from your 5-year program goals in the long-term outcomes of your logic model.** The 5-year program goals developed through your strategic planning process are broad statements of program purpose that describes the expected long-term effects of your program. Similarly, the long-term outcomes column in your logic model are the outcomes you intend to achieve in five years as a result of the strategies/activities you are implementing.
- **Include SLIMs and *Indicators* in your logic model.** Select *Indicators for School Health Programs* (*Indicators*) to measure your outputs and the School Level Impact Measures (SLIMs) to measure your short-term and intermediate outcomes. Not every outcome has to have a SLIM associated with it nor does each output have an *Indicator*.
- **Fill in the gaps.** Once you have completed the first three steps, you will typically need to add outputs, short-term outcomes, and intermediate outcomes to

show the links between your strategies/activities and long-term outcomes. You will also need to include other data sources besides *Indicators* and SLIMs that will help you to measure outputs and outcomes that they do not measure.

- **Perform checks to assure links across logic model columns.** You should be able to read the logic model from both left to right and right to left, ensuring that a logical sequence exists between all of the items in each column.
- **Ensure that the logic model represents the program but does not provide unnecessary detail.** Remember that a logic model fits on one page and provides a broad overview of your program. Review the items placed under the headings and subheadings of the logic model, and then decide whether the level of detail is appropriate. Ask “What items in the logic model can be combined, grouped together, or eliminated?”
- **Revise and update the logic model periodically to reflect program changes.** Changes in your logic model may be needed to reflect revisions to your strategic plan such as a change in strategy or other changes based on new evaluation findings.

## Resources

*Brief 2: Logic Model Basics.* Available at <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/evaluation/pdf/brief2.pdf>

*Brief 5: Integrating the Strategic Plan, Logic Model and Workplan.* Available at <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/evaluation/pdf/brief5.pdf>

*Strategic Planning Kit for School Health Programs.* Available at [http://www.cdc.gov/Healthyyouth/evaluation/sp\\_toolkit.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/Healthyyouth/evaluation/sp_toolkit.htm)

For information on CDC DASH School Level Impact Measures (SLIMs), visit: [http://www.cdc.gov/DASH/program\\_mgt/801\\_resources.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/DASH/program_mgt/801_resources.htm)