



Discussion Summary (April-July, 2010):
Outcome Mapping and Logical Framework Analysis

Link to full discussion online: <http://www.outcomemapping.ca/forum/viewtopic.php?t=755>

Discussion on the OM Community Map
Selected highlights only, see below for full summary

Can anyone point me to descriptions of experiences that might provide insights on practical ways to integrate OM & LFA?
Kevin Murray, United States

‘we merged the LFA/OM using the strategy mapping exercise’
Niamh Brannigan –
Ireland

“OM and LFA are different methodologies that are based on different assumptions about development and social change.”
Jan Van Ongevalle, Belgium

“I think OM ideas could be reconciled with a version of the LogFrame that I have called the *Social Framework*.”
Rick Davies, United Kingdom

“I find OM as methodology that comes to complement and operationalize the LFA.”
Charles Warria, Kenya

“I’ve struggled with trying to use a hybrid OM-LFA approach”
Naomi Hall Opio, Kenya

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Original Email

Kevin Murray

29 April 2010

Hello,

I'm a relatively new addition to this list, and I have already found it extremely useful to my work.

At the moment, I'm working with a global advocacy alliance that uses fairly traditional log-frame analysis as the basis of its MEL system. Facing some of the limits of that path, they are trying to find ways to integrate some of the insights of OM (and, perhaps, other methods) without jettisoning the entire logical framework that has been worked out in careful discussions with donors. Can anyone point me to descriptions of experiences that might provide insights on practical ways to integrate these methodologies?

Thanks,
Kevin Murray

Kevin Murray Strategic Consulting
"Helping Organizations Make Change"

Responses were received, with many thanks, from:

1. Kevin Murray – United States
2. Rachel Julian – United Kingdom
3. Niamh Brannigan – Ireland
4. Katharine Jones – Germany
5. Ritsu Nacken - Italy
6. Jan Van Ongevalle - Belgium
7. Rick Davies – United Kingdom
8. Charles Warria – Kenya
9. Naomi Hall Opiyo – Kenya
10. Jacquelyn

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- **Kevin Murray**, who works with a global advocacy alliance, asked for descriptions of experiences on how Outcome Mapping (OM) and the Logical Framework Approach (LFA) can be integrated in practice in such a way as to minimize the shortcomings of the logical framework while maintaining its strong aspects. Kevin highlighted that they didn't want to 'jettisonise' the entire logical framework that had been worked out in careful discussion with the donors.
 - **Rachel Julian**, indicated that she was researching a similar issue in the field of conflict transformation. Rachel shared a paper from Daniel Roduner, Walter Schlappi & Egli Nadel¹ which presents a model for integrating OM and LFA (see figure 1 below). Rachel also shared the

¹ http://www.outcomemapping.ca/forum/files/Discussion_Paper_OM_LFA_Synthesis_2008-1_126.pdf



'Guide to 'Assessing our Contribution to Change' from ACT Alliance. This guide lists 25 tools for monitoring and evaluation².

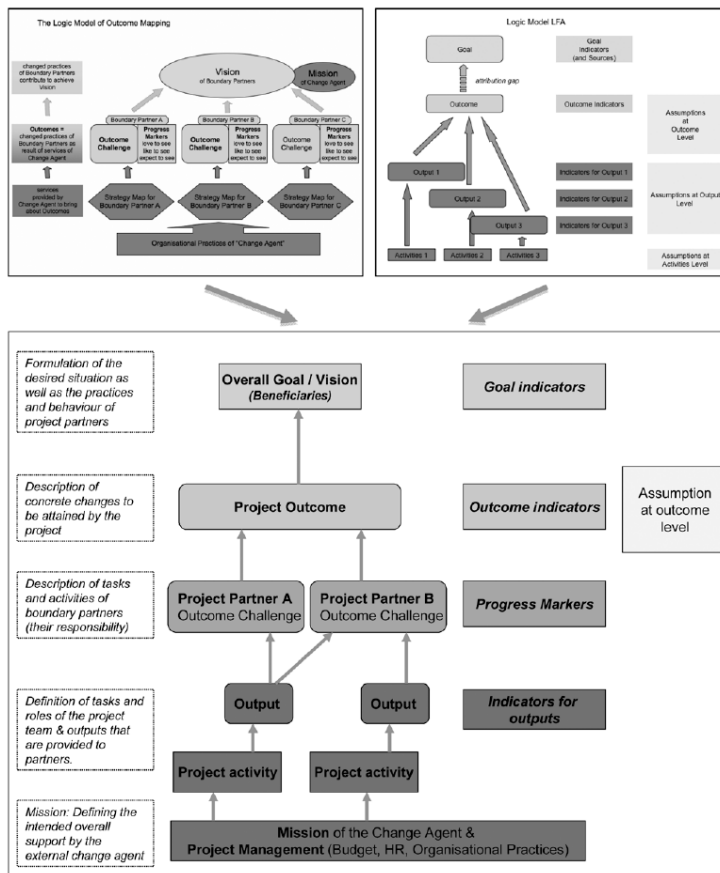


Fig.1: Synthesis model at a glance (Roduner et al, 2008)

- **Niamh Brannigan** informed the community that she integrated OM and LFA using the outcome mapping based 'strategy mapping' exercise, in a programme that provides advice at Ministerial level. Their 2010 organisational framework is now based on the synthesis of both approaches. She highlighted the challenge of convincing managers who are still locked into the LFA mindset, about the usefulness of integrating both approaches. In Rachel's case, outcome mapping helped to understand that "... being generally busy, is not enough to influence change on partners and environments, especially if a programme or organisation is working in an advisory capacity at the ministerial level. At this level, immediate returns are few. We had to look for 'results' further upstream ..."
- **Ritsu Nacken-Morino**, shared two additional resources related to outcome mapping and logical framework:
 1. MDF, 2007, Outcome Mapping and Logical framework, MDF: This paper gives a brief overview of OM and LFA and explores the advantages and disadvantages of both methodologies³.
 2. ODI (Simon Hearn and Harry Jones), 2009, Outcome Mapping, a realistic alternative for planning, monitoring and evaluation: This paper is based on research from case studies of OM application. It reviews OM principles to guide donors considering support for projects

² <http://www.actalliance.org/resources/policies-and-guidelines/impact-assessment/IA-Guide-eng-v1.pdf>

³ MDF paper: <http://www.mdf.nl/uploaded/FILES/htmlcontent/Paper%20OM%20and%20LFA%20SZ.pdf>



using OM, and other decision-makers seeking methods to improve the effectiveness of aid policies and practice⁴.

- **Jan van Ongevalle** shared a summary of an earlier comparative discussion on OM and LFA⁵. The main conclusion of this discussion indicated that the problems with the LFA stem from its lack of sensitivity to complexity theory and the fact that it's designed for actors who are relatively distant from the implementation team. The main recommendations involved replacing LFA with other approaches, notably OM in this case, or somehow modifying the log frame to make it more useful (for example by orienting it around partners or defining indicators as behaviour changes). Jan also launched a request for concrete examples of programmes where LFA was the most appropriate method, where OM was the most adequate or where an integrated approach was most suitable.
- **Rick Davies**, in response to Jan's question, introduced the 'Social Framework'⁶ (see fig.2 below) as an alternative version of the LofFrame that can be reconciled with OM ideas. The social framework replaces the Logical Framework's sequence of abstract stages described as activities>outputs>outcomes>impacts with a sequence of actors representing a pathway through a wider network of actors. Each of those actors will have a boundary partner, being the actors before and after them in this pathway. For each of those actors there could be a set of progress markers (in place of indicators) plus means of verification and assumptions. Rick suggested the following advantages of the social framework approach:
 1. it is easier to communicate to non-M&E specialists
 2. responsibility for achievements is spread along the whole pathway and expectations are clarified about the expected changes in all the actors in the pathway.

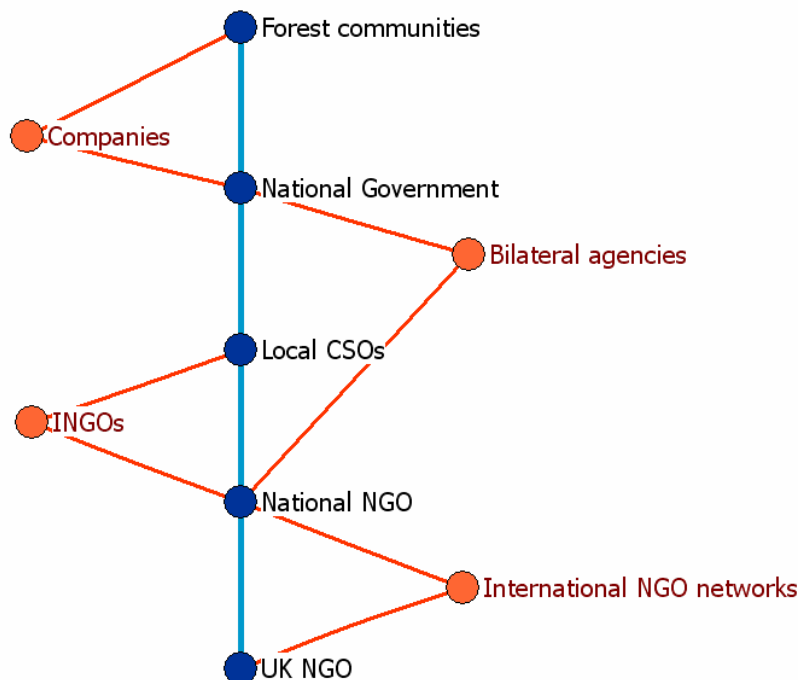


Fig.2: Social Framework (Rick Davies)

⁴ ODI paper: <http://outcomemapping.ca/resource/resource.php?id=257>

⁵ Summary of comparative discussion around OM and LFA (2008): <http://www.outcomemapping.ca/resource/resource.php?id=139>.

⁶ <http://mande.co.uk/2008/uncategorized/the-social-framework-as-an-alternative-to-the-logical-framework/>



Two questions were posed about the Social Framework. The first question related to the challenge of monitoring along the various levels of actors, keeping in mind that monitoring at one level of the boundary partners in outcome mapping is already quite a challenge. The second question probed for the type of projects or programs that could be more suitable for the Social Framework Approach. Rick clarified that the different actors within the network are responsible for the monitoring of the next actor in the framework. In practice reporting detail understandably diminishes with each degree of distance away from the initial actor. Rick also reminded us that asking people to report on changes among the other actors in the framework is not the same as expecting them to be responsible for those changes happening (the latter is not expected). The social framework can be useful in situations where there is pathway of different actors influencing each other. In case a pathway branches into two or more directions then the emerging pathways will need to be followed up making it of course more challenging. Rick gave the example of a maternal health project in Indonesia where the pathway would be DFID>UNICEF>District Health Offices> local Health Centres>local communities.

- **Charles Warria** notes that OM should be seen as complimentary to LFA. While the LFA clearly outlines the changes that are aimed for in a project, the OM methodology will give clarity on the question how the changes come about.
- **Noami Hall Opiyo** indicates that she has struggled to use a hybrid LFA-OM approach and thought that the social framework might provide an answer. Naomi requested a format for the Social Framework. There is a simplified format⁷ available on the web.
- **Katherine Jones**, asked for more information on practical examples of how OM and LFA can be integrated through various methodologies.
- **Jacquelyn** reminded us about the importance to learn from practical experiences on the field.

⁷ <http://mande.co.uk/2008/uncategorized/the-social-framework-as-an-alternative-to-the-logical-framework/>



Concluding remarks and actions to take forward

- The outcome mapping and logical framework discussion continues to generate interest. More and more organisations are searching for alternatives to the logical framework approach. They don't necessarily seek to replace the logical framework approach but instead seek to compliment it with other more complexity oriented methodologies such as outcome mapping. This is often necessary because the logical framework is still a requirement for many organisations and back donors.
- More models are becoming available that can help practitioners to develop a practical integrated OM-LFA approach that can work in their contexts. The fusion model of Daniel Roduner and colleagues and the social framework of Rick Davies were given as examples in this discussion thread.
- Also a growing body of practical experiences with integrating OM and LFA is becoming available for practitioners to learn from. However, limited concrete details were given in this discussion about how OM and LFA were integrated in practice. The advantages and possible challenges of such integration were not fully elaborated. A second part of this discussion could therefore focus on the more practical implementation aspect in order to help practitioners to experiment with integrated approaches in their own practice.