Designing Indicators

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ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

Developing indicators starts with understanding the values and goals of the community. Undertaking some kind of community planning process is a critical first step to developing indicators (see the Community Planning subsection of the First Steps: Visioning and Mapping A Path Forward page in the Toolkit).

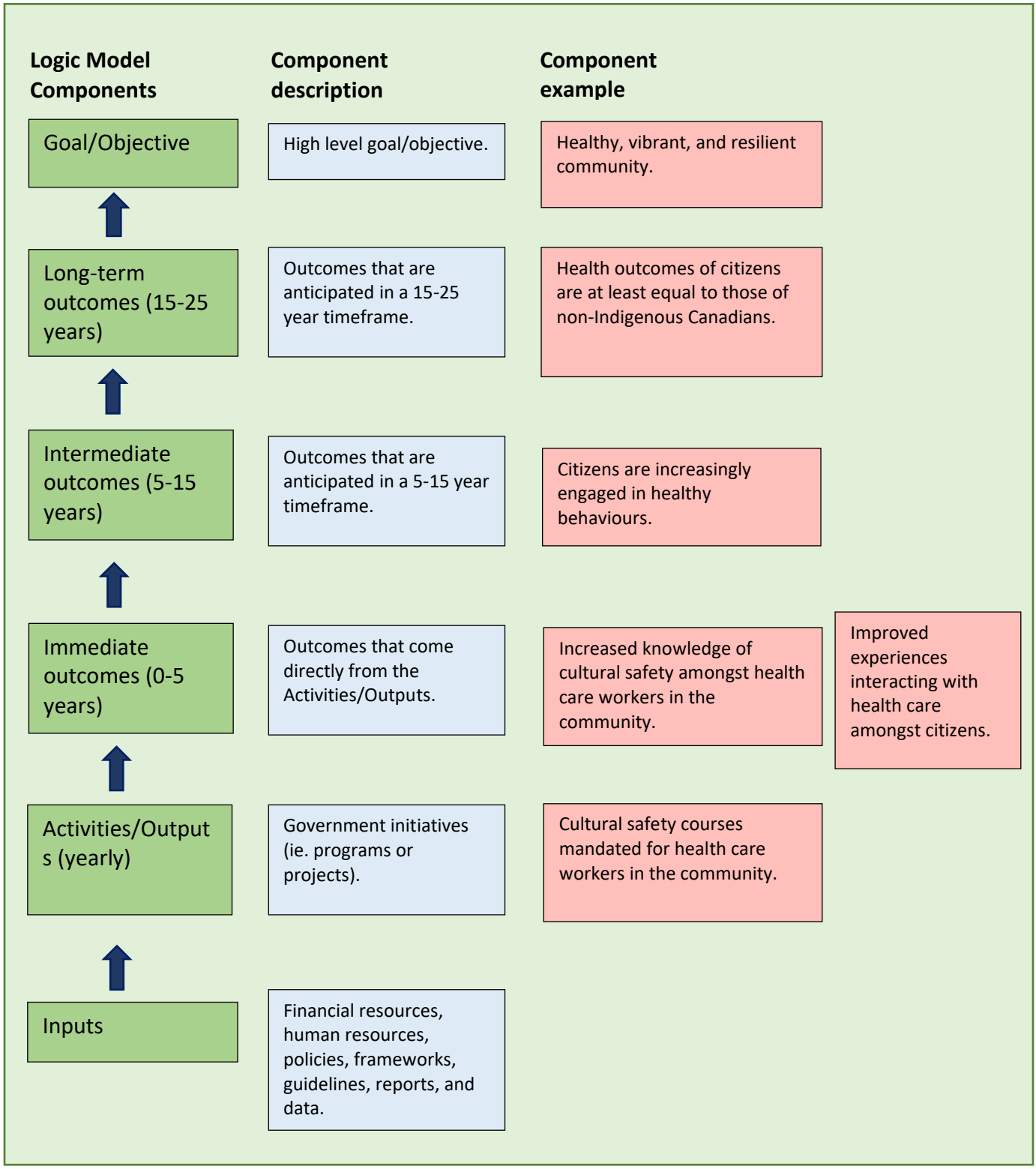
The First Nations Health Authority's Health and Wellness Planning Toolkit discusses how to develop an engagement and communications plan.

DEFINING DESIRED OUTCOMES USING LOGIC MODELS

A logic model is a planning tool used to chart a path towards an overarching goal. Developing a logic model will help you define the outcomes you are trying to measure. Once you know the outcomes you are trying to measure, you can design the indicators that will be used to measure each outcome.

Logic models follow the basic structure in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1. LOGIC MODEL STRUCTURE AND EXAMPLES.



Develop your own logic models by starting at the top with the overarching goal/objective, then working your way down to the specifics.

LOGIC MODEL EXAMPLES

The Social Wellbeing Gaps Working Group of the Collaborative Federal Policy Development Process developed three logic models that are included in the federal policy (see Annex D of the policy here). They provide a way to track at the collective, national level, the effectiveness of the gaps-closing policy and will be central to the 5-year evaluation of the policy.

The logic models in the federal policy may be helpful tools for your government to use in your own planning. Think of these as a template to work from. They do not dictate or limit what you can do.

Try to develop at least one indicator to measure each outcome identified in your logic model. For example, you might define the following indicators from the logic model components identified above:

TABLE 1. EXAMPLE INDICATORS FOR DIFFERENT OUTCOMES.

Logic model component	Component example	Indicator example
Long-term outcome	Health outcomes of citizens are at least equal to those of non-Indigenous Canadians	Life expectancy
Intermediate outcome	Citizens are increasingly engaged in healthy behaviours	% of population reporting being active or moderately active
Immediate outcome	Increased knowledge of cultural safety amongst health care workers in the community	% of health care workers that have taken cultural safety training
Immediate outcome	Improved experiences interacting with health care amongst citizens	% of patients reporting positive interactions with health care workers.

SAMPLE INDICATORS

Creating indicators from nothing is often not necessary. Consider drawing from the work of others when developing your list of indicators:

- The surveys listed in the External Data Sources page of the Toolkit are a great source of well-researched indicators and survey questions.

- Measuring Wellness: An Indicator Development Guide for First Nations includes a list of sample wellness indicators in the areas of ancestry/culture/tradition, education, employment, health/wellbeing, employment, housing/infrastructure, government, environment, and social.
- The First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) wellness indicators
- The OECD webpage Measuring well-being and progress: Understanding the issue.
- Indigenous Wellness Indicators, Indicators in the City of Vancouver Healthy City Strategy
- Health Indicators of Inuit Nunangat within the Canadian Context
- Sample Indicators leading to Ecological Outcomes, Christopher Horsethief, Ph.D.
- Inuvialuit Indicators: indicators combining Census data, data from GNWT Bureau of Statistics, and primary data generated by the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation