Developing a Program Logic

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What is a Program Logic?

A program logic is like a roadmap for a project that sets out how a project will achieve its desired outcomes.

Program Logic

Other terms you may use or see include:

- Outcome logic
- Outcome model
- Logic model
- Outcome hierarchy

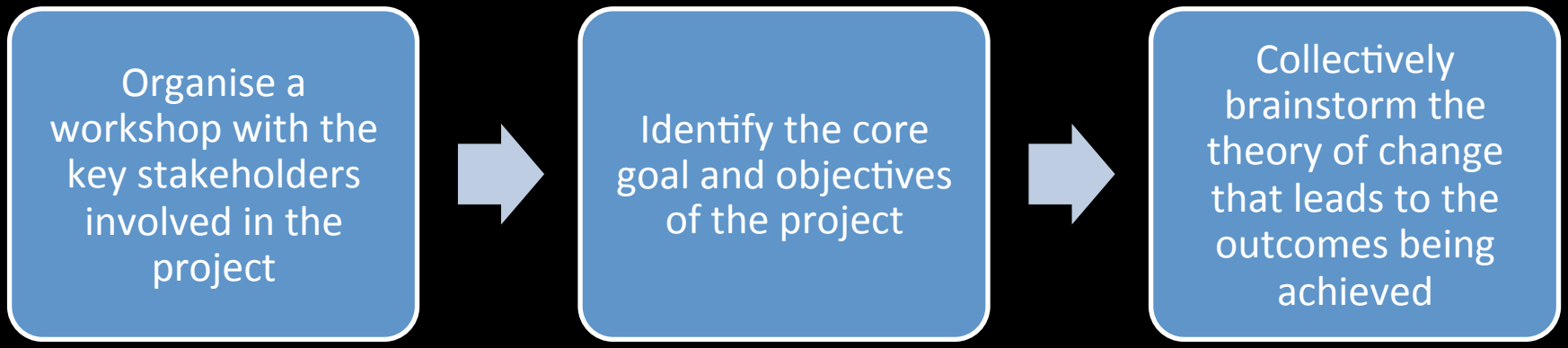
The main thing to remember is that the program logic outlines the theory of change (or theory of action) that underpins your project

Theory of Change

This is the pathway to reaching your destination.

For example, in order to be complete a project evaluation, you need to learn about evaluation (knowledge) and then undertake an evaluation (practice) to reach the end goal.

The Process


Organise a workshop with the key stakeholders involved in the project
Identify the core goal and objectives of the project
Collectively brainstorm the theory of change that leads to the outcomes being achieved

How to construct a program logic

Use a backcasting process, where you start by envisioning the future state (i.e. the long-term outcomes) and work backwards to identify what needs to happen in order to create the desired future.

Backcasting Example

OUTPUTS
Brochures added to energy bills

SHORT-TERM OUTCOME
Increased knowledge of benefits of

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME

Increased uptake of

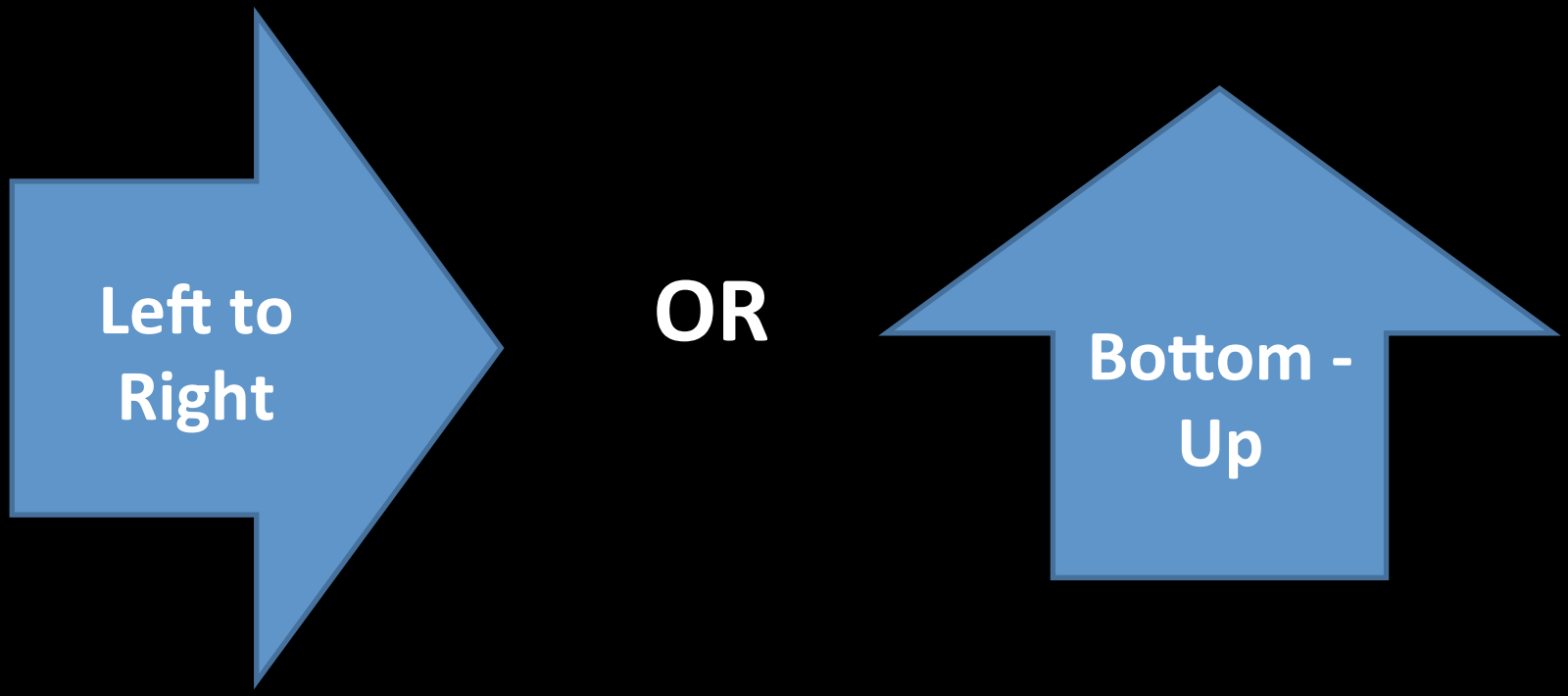
LONG-TERM OUTCOME

Solar hot water

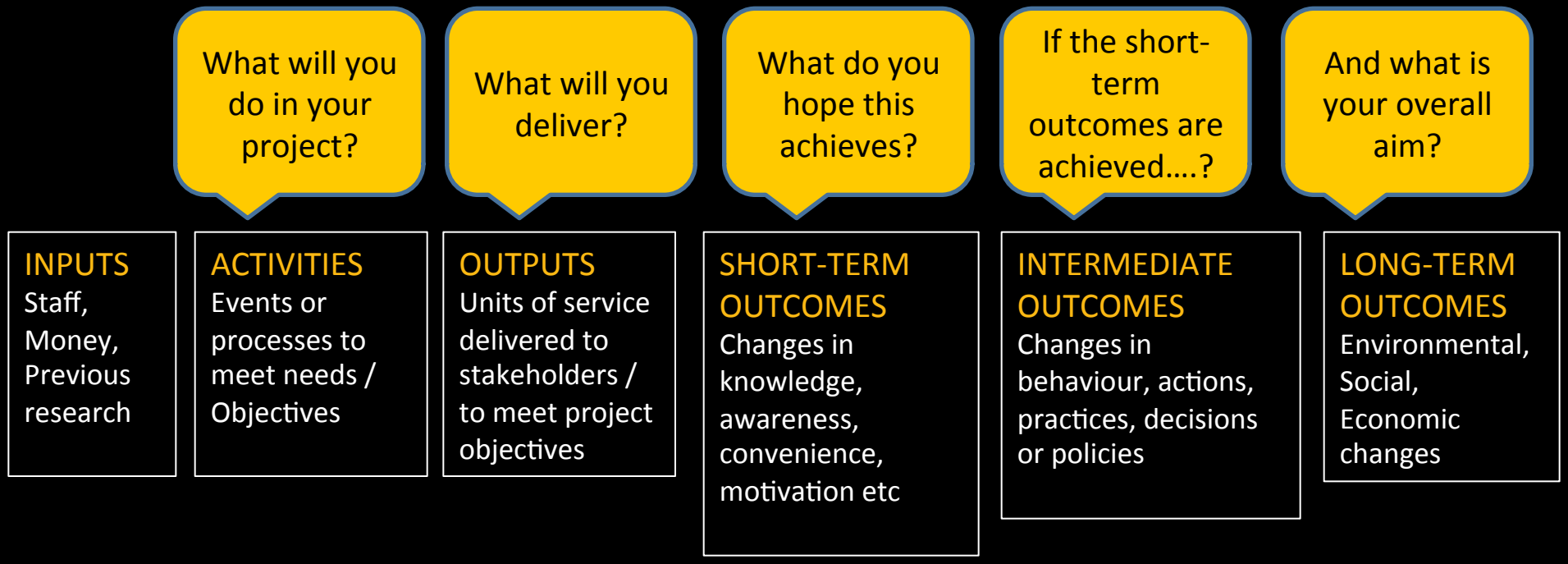
OUTPUTS
Financial incentives provided to households

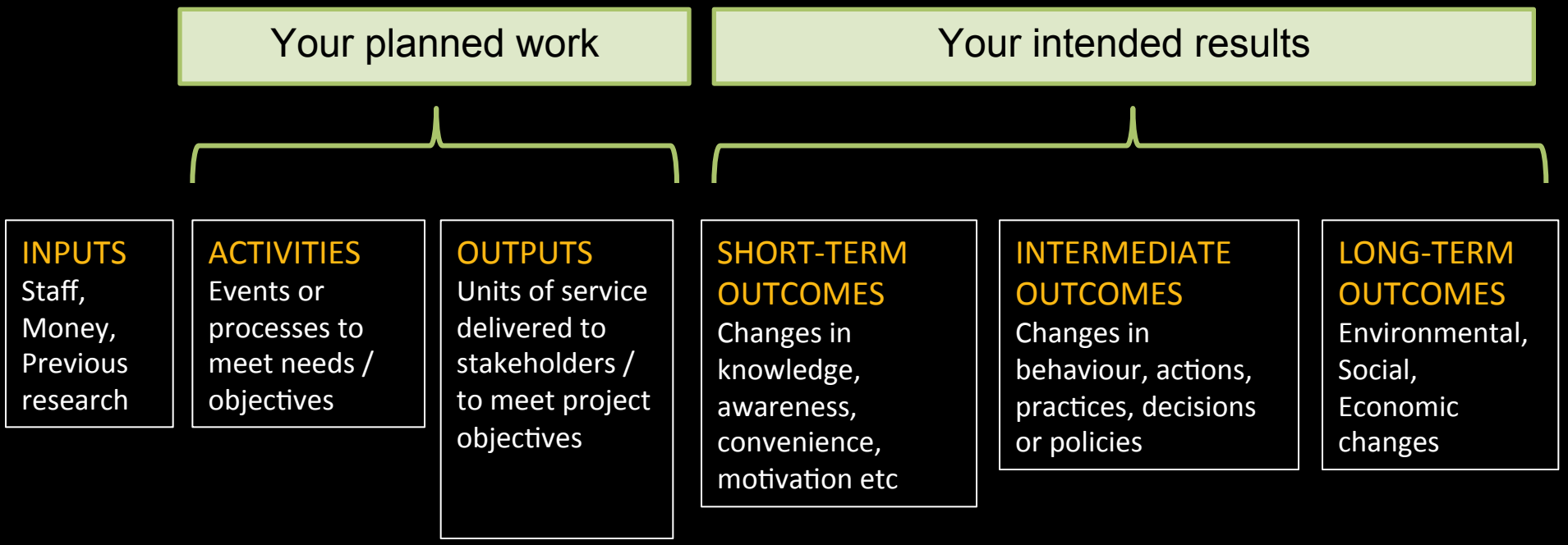
SHORT-TERM OUTCOME
Increased uptake of financial

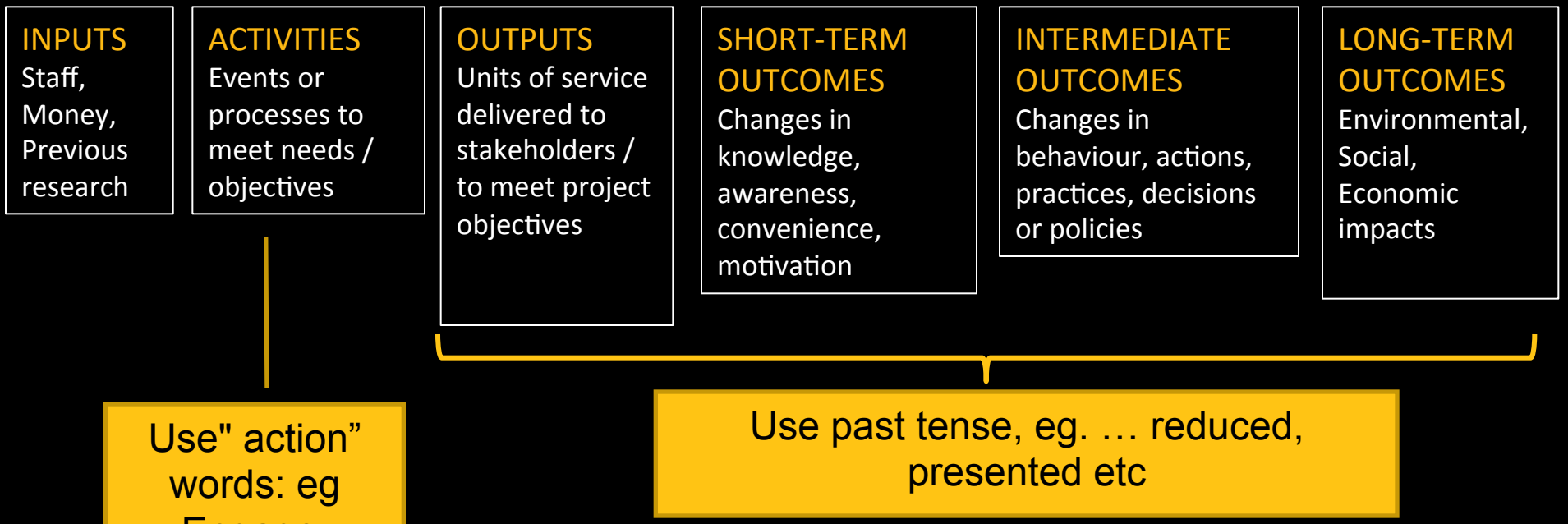
A program logic can be presented from…..



Presenting the final logic from left to right…




Your planned work
Your intended results
INPUTS
Staff, Money, Previous research
ACTIVITIES
Events or processes to meet needs / objectives
OUTPUTS
Units of service delivered to stakeholders / to meet project objectives
SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES
Changes in knowledge, awareness, convenience, motivation etc
INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES
Changes in behaviour, actions, practices, decisions or policies
LONG-TERM OUTCOMES
Environmental, Social, Economic changes


INPUTS
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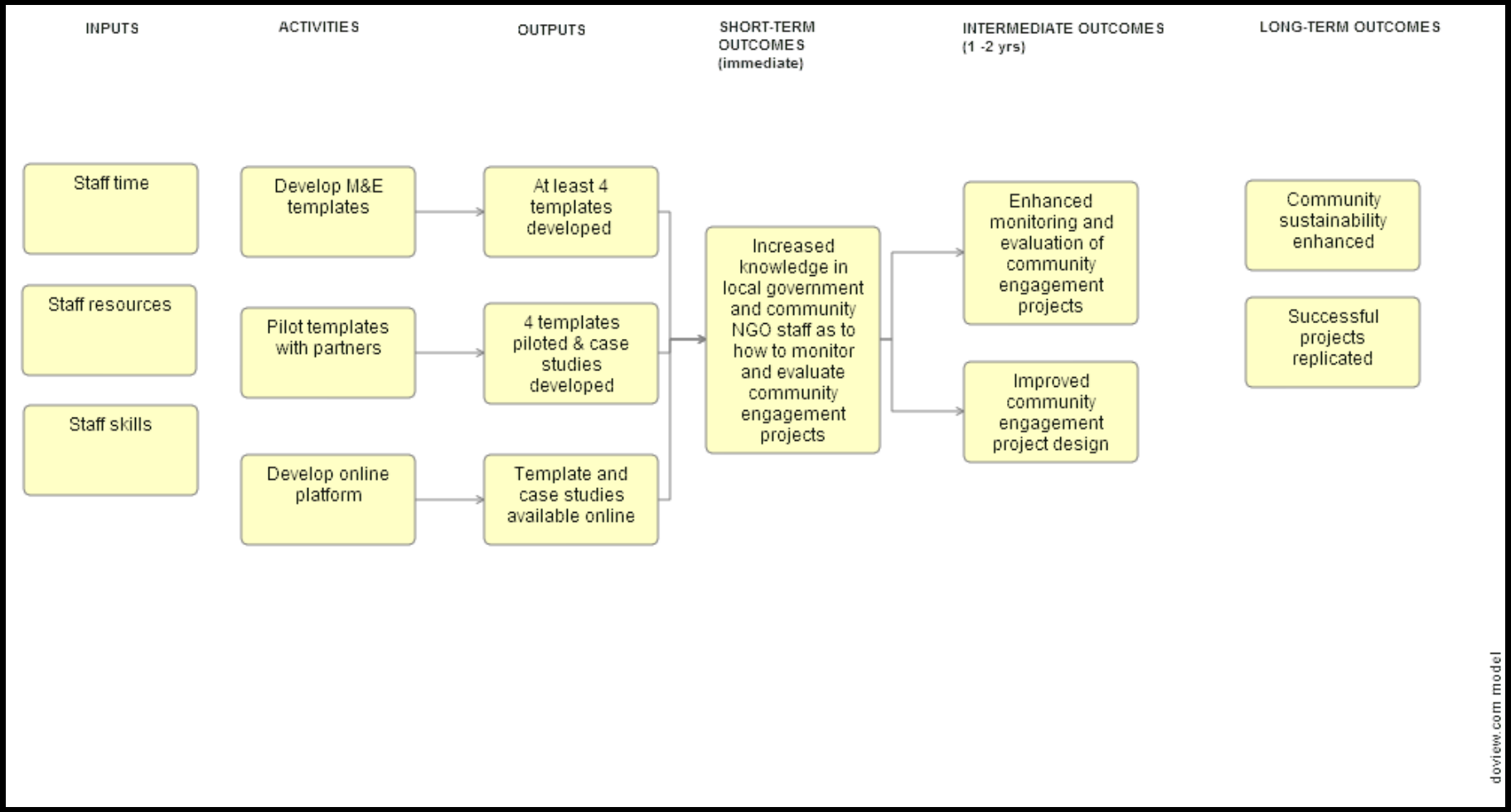
ACTIVITIES
Events or processes to meet needs / objectives
OUTPUTS
Units of service delivered to stakeholders / to meet project objectives
SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES
Changes in knowledge, awareness, convenience, motivation
INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES
Changes in behaviour, actions, practices, decisions or policies
LONG-TERM OUTCOMES
Environmental, Social, Economic impacts
Use" action" words: eg Engage, develop, deliver etc
Use past tense, eg. … reduced, presented etc

From bottom - up

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES	These are often beyond the scope of the project, but are important to identify, such as "reduced resource use"
INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES	These are the results of the increased skill or knowledge, such as changes in behaviour, or specific actions undertaken
SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES	These are the immediate results of your outputs, such as increased skills, knowledge, convenience, motivation
OUTPUTS	These refer to the results of the activities, such as "50 people attended workshops", "500 brochures distributed"
ACTIVITIES	These refer to activities like "hold 3 workshops", "develop brochures" etc
INPUTS	This is what you bring to the project

An example program logic for this online toolbox



Things to remember…

- A program logic should not be a detailed task list of everything you will do (you can do that in a project plan)
- It should outline what you hope to achieve (your intended result) and how you will do this (your planned work)
- A program logic provides a guide as to what you should monitor and evaluate