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Benefits Realisation in Programme Management: Logic or Lottery?

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Outline of the evening

- **Benefits Realisation Management in regeneration**
- **Reasons why Benefits Realisation Management isn't done, or is only partially done, and the implications**
- **Methods for linking benefits to programme activities**
- **Final Discussion**

My Background

- Qualified as a Town Planner
- Managed urban regeneration programmes in 1990's



- Joined APM in 2000
- Interest in methods of project and programme management
- Interest in cross-disciplinary working

ODF™ Perspectives

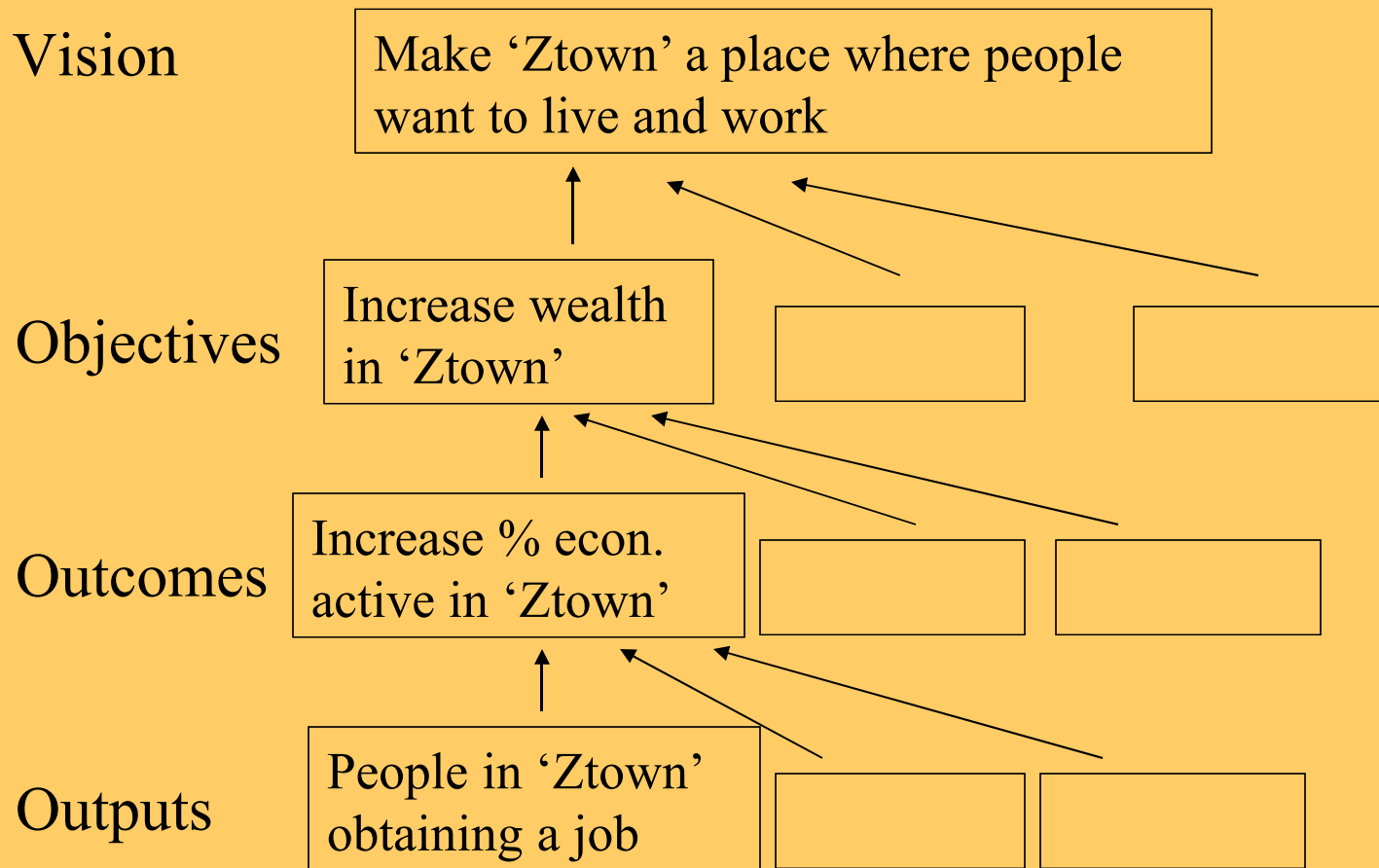
- Established earlier this year
- Operational Dimensions Framework
 - Arose out of practice in regeneration in 1990's
 - Refined through DBA thesis
- Apply dimensional thinking to project and programme management, particularly to 'Community and Social' programmes (MSP, Fig. 1.4)

Benefits Management and Regeneration Programmes

Funding from EU and/or UK Government,
levering in other public, private and third
sector funds, to

- Regenerate disadvantaged neighbourhoods, and
- Enhance the lives of specific groups in society,
and
- Enhance achievements in particular aspects of
life (economic/environmental/social)

Benefits hierarchy in regeneration



Evolution of Benefits Management in Regeneration

	Vision	Object-ives	Out-comes	Outputs	Approach
1980's		*		*	Loose targeting
Early 1990's	*	*		*	Tight targeting
Late 1990's	*	*	*	*	Neighbourhood Renewal
Mid 2000's	*	*	*	*	Pool budgets, integrate public sector performance regimes

Issues with Benefits Realisation in Regeneration

- Defining benefits
- Incorporating qualitative benefits
- Aligning benefits at different levels
- Attribution, at higher levels
- Meeting aspirations for transformational change

Similar to other sectors??

Benefits Realisation Deficits

1. 'Bricks and Mortar'	Assumption made that capital investments will improve quality of life
2. 'Pressure of deadlines'	Time pressures, eg to submit a bid for funds or to achieve a year-end spend target, determine investments, without a firm benefits base.
3. 'Funny Business'	Programme benefits are outweighed by other factors, such as who gets the resulting contracts.
4. 'Follow the Leader'	Programme is initiated by political imperative – we've got to be seen to be doing something, and this is what we are going to do
5. 'Fly by the seat of your pants'	The rationale for programmes is driven by a factors such as intuition, optimism and opportunism, rather than a solid business case.

Limits to Benefits Realisation Management

- Benefits realisation is only applied to part of the programme, eg those elements that are delivering easily measurable benefits.
- A restricted range of benefits are considered across the programme, rather than all the benefits .
- Benefits are only analysed and managed over the life of the programme, whereas the long term impact is what matters
- Benefits at higher levels up to the programme vision are not included in the benefits chain
- While benefits are defined at different levels, there is no process to link the different levels

A Deeper Malaise?

‘It’s time the great and the good met
some real scary kids’

Society Guardian, 25 June

Methods for linking benefits to programme activities

- **Logical Framework (Project Cycle Management)**
- **Realistic Evaluation**
- **Theories of Change**
- **Evidence-based Policy**
- **Network Theory**
- **Dimensional Analysis**

Potential to integrate with approaches in Ch 7 of MSP, eg Benefits Maps, Benefits Profiles

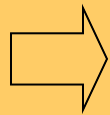
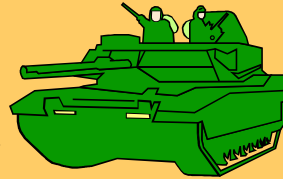
Origins of the Logical Framework (Logframe)

1950

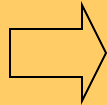


2000

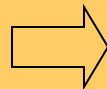
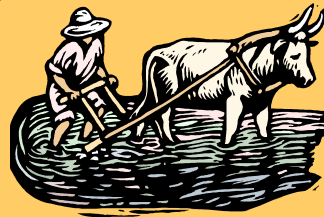
Military
Planning/General
Systems Theory



Different Logic
Models developed



First Logical
framework
produced for
US AID



Adopted in UK by
predecessor of Dept.
for International
Development



Used in UK
regeneration
programmes, on
partial, patchy basis



What is a Logframe?

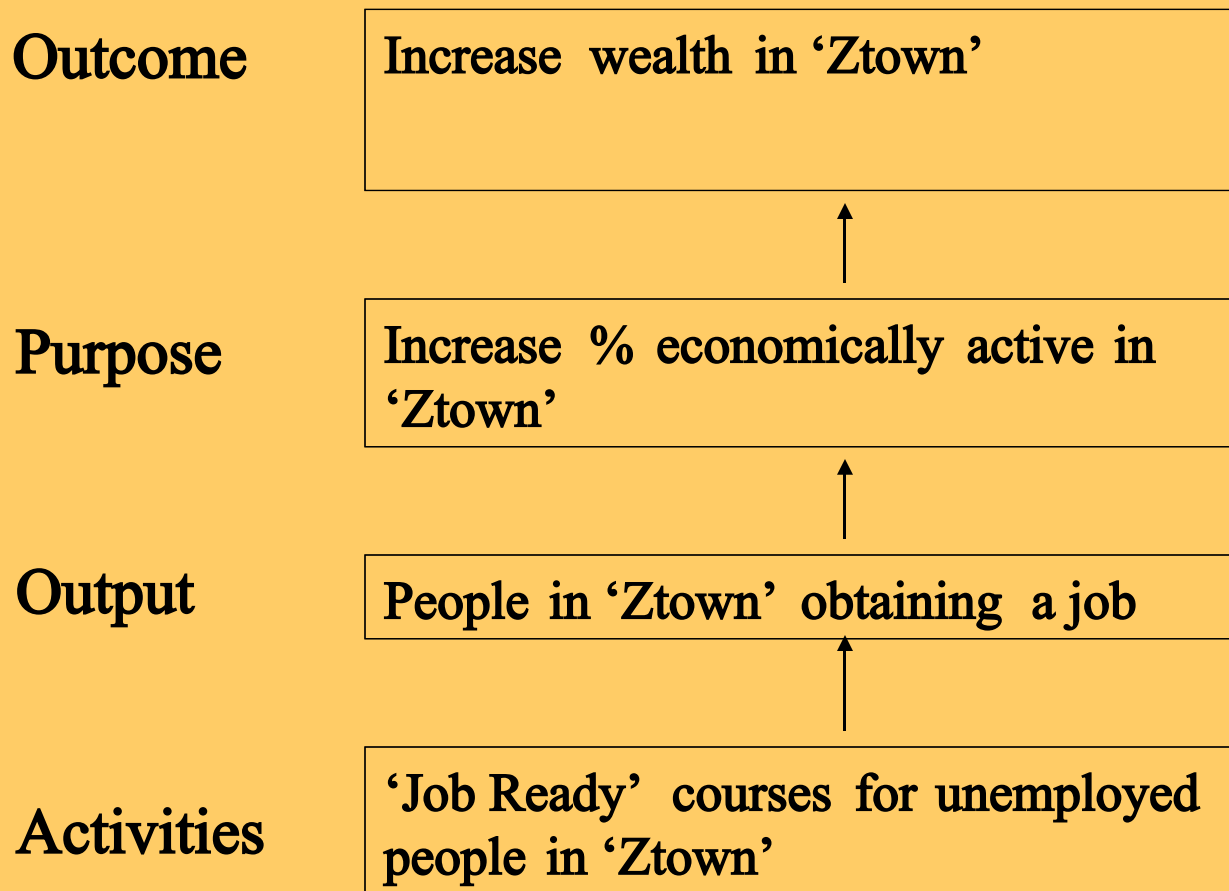
- grid used to establish cause and effect relationships within a project or programme
- has many different variations on a basic theme
- basis of ‘Project Cycle Management’, which uses the logframe during the stages of the life of a project or programme
- combined with other analytical tools, such as problem trees, objectives trees, options analysis, stakeholder maps

Constructing a Log Frame

	Objectives	Indicator	Evidence	Assumptions
goal				
purpose				
output				
activities				

The diagram illustrates the relationships between the levels of a Log Frame. Blue arrows show that each level (Objectives, Indicator, Evidence, Assumptions) is derived from the level immediately above it. For example, Objectives are derived from the goal level, and Assumptions are derived from the activities level.

Logical Framework example



Uses of Logical Frameworks

- Enables activities to be aligned to benefits at different levels
- Cause and effect assumptions made explicit, transparent and measurable
- Encapsulates key information in a compact format
- Not ‘rocket science’ – similar to many of the benefits realisation tools in MSP

Logical Frameworks - limitations

- Linear, mechanistic, predictable view of the world
- Terminology can be confusing
- Rigidities in grid, eg different levels of benefit
- Structure doesn't lend itself to a formalised review process
- Better in simple contexts, eg for individual projects

Realistic Evaluation

- Based on meta-theory called critical realism
- Arose from evaluation perspective, but concept applies across project life cycle
- Simple formula

Context (C) + Mechanism (M) = Outcome (O)

Realistic Evaluation – ‘CMO’ Example

Context

+

Job-seekers, with specific employment histories, skill levels and no other major barriers, such drug dependency or criminal record, in a buoyant labour market.

Mechanism

=

‘Job Ready’ courses, of a specific length and content

Outcome

Success rate of ‘x’ % in assisting people into work, within ‘y’ weeks of the course ending

Uses of Realistic Evaluation

- Build up evidence base of ‘CMO’ combinations
- Transferable theory – this type of intervention works in these respects for these subjects in these kinds of situations

Realistic Evaluation - limitations





- Concept simple but applying it in practice needs a lot of skill
- Linear and mechanistic
- Doesn't cover the range of levels of benefit
- 'Context' is a static concept.

Theories of Change (ToC)

- Originally developed in the US, to address the difficulties in evaluating Comprehensive Community Initiatives
- ToC is an approach to designing and evaluating social change initiatives
- Make the theory of change explicit, and get commitment to it – participative tool
- Key element is ToC maps

Theories of Change – example

(would be expressed in map form)

1. Agree Goals and assumptions – achieve long term employment for a specific client group with particular employability barriers 
2. Backwards Mapping and connecting outcomes – work with client group to map their stories on the root causes of employability barriers and the combination of factors that would lead to long term jobs 
3. Developing Indicators – what would need to happen to have a chance of achieving the outcomes 
4. Identifying interventions – what combination of activities is needed to cover all the connected outcomes? 
5. Writing a narrative – encapsulating the theory map in a story, to sell it to those whose support will be needed.

Theories of Change - limitations

- Flexibility of the approach means that it can be applied well, or badly
- Choices to be made, eg whether to focus on benefits at different levels, or on different timescales
- Theories of change can vary between different stakeholders – how to get consensus?

Network Theory

- Add theoretical insights to inform mapping techniques in ToC (and MSP)
- Build networks to help understand the complexity of relationships within programmes
- Inherent flexibility of networks – moving between scales, eg local to international
- Universality of networks – potential for cross-disciplinary learning

Evidence-based Policy or ‘what works?’

- Major Government theme in the early years of New Labour
- Building up information bases of accessible material
- Key question – how to transfer that knowledge to your own situation?
- Might use evidence to inform a Logframe, CMO framework, Theory of Change, Benefits Map or Benefits Profile
- How to decide what evidence is relevant?

Dimensional Analysis

- Deconstruct the different dimensions involved in any activity, to identify the similarities and differences between two or more cases
- Use Operational Dimensions Framework (ODF), as a starting point
- Build up context-specific versions of the ODF

Operational Dimensions Framework

Type of Dimension	Inputs	Processes	Outcomes for people	Outcomes for people	Outcomes for people	Contextual	Contextual
Dimension, and how it relates to service delivery	<p>1. Resources</p> <p>Combination of human and physical resources and funding</p>	<p>2. Functions</p> <p>Different activities undertaken within services</p>	<p>3a. Social Group</p> <p>Impacts on different groups in society</p>	<p>3b. Theme</p> <p>Impacts on different aspects of life. What kind of changes in people's lives is the service aiming to achieve?</p>	<p>3c Organisational Allegiances</p> <p>Stakeholders with an interest in the service Who are they? What are their interests in service delivery and outcomes?</p>	<p>4. Time</p> <p>Timescale over which service processes and outcomes are delivered</p>	<p>5. Space</p> <p>Geographical area over which service is delivered</p>

Using the ODF for Benefits Realisation – assisting people into work

- Draft context-specific version of the ODF – see next slide
- Analyse evidence base to see how other case studies compare, in terms of their dimensional composition
- Might use results to inform a Logframe, CMO framework, Theory of Change, Benefits Map or Benefits Profile

Operational Dimensions Framework (ODF™) for a programme to assist people into work

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Type of Dimension	Input and Outcome	Processes	Input and Outcome	Input and Outcome	Input and Outcome	Contextual	Contextual
Dimension and categories within dimensions	1. Resources drawn upon by the deliverers of the programme – includes human resources, energy, capital resources, revenue items and funding.	2. Functions - different activities undertaken to assist people into work eg engagement, employability, job brokerage, flexible return to work packages	3. People a. Social group characteristics Categories are ‘diversity’ groups, eg age, gender, ethnic origin	3. People b. Thematic needs/ interests Aspects of the lives of beneficiaries, relevant to the objectives of the programme, eg drug dependency, employment history	3. People c. Organisational allegiances Links to groups and organisations made in the course of delivering the service to the beneficiaries	4. Time over which the programme is implemented	5. Space – geographical area covered by the initiative
Questions for service delivery	How is the funding going to be translated into resources to undertake activities? What are the other complementary resources required, eg capital funding for buildings and equipment?	What activities are going to add most value to what exists already? How are the functions going to fit together as a coherent programme, eg taking a disengaged individual through the ‘journey’ to a stable job?	The programme might include targets for outcomes for people belonging to different social sub-groups. How are beneficiaries to be engaged to achieve the targets? How does service delivery need to be varied according to social group?	What are the different needs and interests of the beneficiaries, relevant to the task of assisting them into work? What barriers to work will the programme address and what is already available from existing services?	What group and organisational allegiances will need to be made by beneficiaries? How is the programme going to be organised to be effective, under the respective roles associated with it? What other stakeholders will affect the success of the programme?	What is the timescale for the interventions, and for the overall programme? How does the journey experienced by beneficiaries link to the timetable of overall targets for people into work?	What area will the various projects cover? Where do the beneficiaries live, and where are the jobs they might fill? Is spatial targeting on disadvantaged areas going to be a feature of the programme?

Benefits Realisation - conclusions

- An art, and a science
- Look at benefits realisation management over the course of the whole programme
- Lots of techniques for modelling relationships between activities and benefits, but no Holy Grail!
- More evaluation of programme outcomes - build up a body of evidence

Useful References (1)

- **Logical Frameworks**

[http:// mande .co.uk/2008/topic-bibliographies/
logframe
/the-logical-framework-a-list-of-useful-documents/](http://mande.co.uk/2008/topic-bibliographies/logframe/the-logical-framework-a-list-of-useful-documents/)

- **Realistic Evaluation**

Pawson, R., Tilley N. (1997), *Realistic Evaluation*,
London: Sage

- **Theories of Change**

[www.theoryofchange .org](http://www.theoryofchange.org)

Useful References (2)

- **Network models**

[http:// mande .co.uk
/special-issues/network-models/](http://mande.co.uk/special-issues/network-models/)

- **Evidence-based Policy**

www.evidencenetwork.org

Operational Dimensions Framework

Breese, R. (2007), *Joining up Public Services : a Critical Realist Approach to Holistic Governance*, DBA thesis, Sheffield Hallam University, or contact the author for short summaries and examples of the use of the ODF.

Any Questions?