



SPC
Secretariat
of the Pacific
Community



**GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE ALLIANCE:
PACIFIC SMALL ISLAND STATES PROJECT**

**IMPACT EVALUATION OF
LOGICAL FRAMEWORK APPROACH & PROJECT MONITORING WORKSHOP IN
NIUE**



PREA
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Introduction

Pacific Research and Evaluation Associates (PREA) delivered training on the Logical Framework Approach and Project Monitoring to government staff in Niue on May 25, 2015. This training was a follow-up to previous training on proposal preparation using the logical framework approach.

The training formed part of the Global Climate Change Alliance: Pacific Small Island States (GCCA: PSIS) project funded by the European Union (EU) and implemented by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC). The initial round of training was delivered to nine countries in 2013-2014. The second round of training in 2015 was delivered to five countries (Tuvalu, Kiribati, Palau, Niue, and Tonga) that requested further capacity building¹.

The aim of the training was to strengthen the capacity of national government staff to use the logical framework approach to develop successful and integrated climate change adaptation project proposals.

The content of the training was based on the results of the impact evaluation from the first round of training, which identified areas which participants sought further capacity building in. The intent was for participants from the first round of training to attend the second round so that they may build on their knowledge and skills from the initial training. However, most participants in the second round of training had not participated in the first round and thus the training was less of a refresher and required the facilitators to cover all the LFA steps in detail.

This report evaluates the impact of the training at least five months following the workshop.

Impact evaluation

The impact evaluation framework was informed by the anticipated short and medium-term outcomes from the training workshop.

The anticipated short and medium-term outcomes are summarised below:

- Participants apply the logical framework approach steps to develop proposals or in their general work duties
- Participants submit quality funding proposals informed by the logical framework approach
- Participants have confidence in applying the logical framework approach steps and project monitoring.

About the training workshops

The training workshop was delivered over four consecutive days.

The objective of the training was to build participant capacity in proposal preparation using the logical framework approach and project monitoring.

At the end of the workshop participants were expected to be able to:

- Apply the logical framework approach to develop a robust logframe matrix
- Develop an accurate timeline and budget for projects, based on identifying the tasks and costs to implement activities in the logframe matrix.
- Develop a monitoring plan and understand how to monitor projects as they are implemented.

The key topics covered during the workshop included:

¹ Cook Islands was later added as a sixth country but was not included in the impact evaluation.

- the logical framework approach steps
- developing a logframe matrix
- project monitoring (developing a monitoring plan & data collection methods)
- creating a timeline and budget.

The effectiveness of the training workshop was evaluated through a post-workshop survey that was completed by participants on the last day. A post-workshop report was created and submitted to SPC and should serve as a reference for those interested in the details of the training workshop.

The Niue workshop was conducted between 25th and 28th May 2015 and attended by 22 participants.

Methodology

The impact evaluation took place in November 2015, at least three months following the training. The evaluation consisted of:

- An online survey issued to all participants.
- Personally addressed follow-up emails to remind participants to complete the survey online or as an attachment.
- Phone calls to remind participants to complete the survey, or to complete the survey over the phone.

Some participants were not reached if they did not have a valid email address or other contact details.

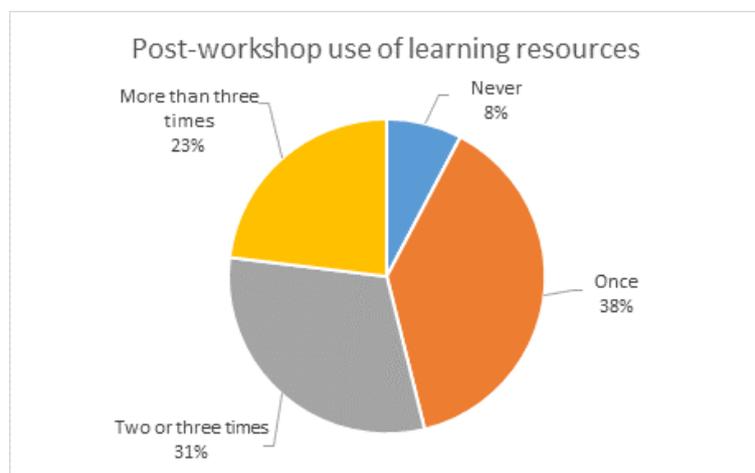
Results

There were a total of thirteen respondents for the Niue impact evaluation. This is approximately a 60% response rate for participants with valid contact details (and 60% of total workshop participants).

Workshop resources

All workshop participants were provided with a hardcopy of the learner guide and presentation slides. A USB flash drive was also distributed that contained electronic versions of all the training resources, including presentation slides, additional examples and further reading. All but one respondent indicated they had referred to either the learner guide or electronic resources at least once (n=5), two or three times (n=4) or more than three times (n=3) (Figure 1). This provides some indication that the content and resources were valued by participants.

Figure 1.



Use of LFA steps

All of the respondents indicated that they had found the LFA steps and tools useful (n=6) or very useful (n=7) in informing future project proposals. Whilst most (n=11) also thought the LFA steps would be very useful in assisting with their general work duties, a few (n=2) participants were unsure if the LFA would be useful in this regard.

All respondents indicated having used at least one of the LFA steps for proposal preparation, or in general work duties. One respondent indicated having used all of the steps in both proposal preparation and work duties². The number of respondents using the LFA steps is outlined in Table 1. The steps had been used more often in performing general work duties (n=46) than in preparing proposals (n=27). This demonstrates that the LFA training has built capacity of staff not only in proposal preparation but also in the performance of their role in government, and emphasises the benefits of the LFA process in planning for both work and proposals. Whilst no LFA steps stand out as being used significantly more or less than others, there was less use of the logframe matrix, timeline development and budgets. The development of M&E data collection tools was also less represented in results.

It is interesting that only two or three participants reported having developed a timeline and budget to support a project proposal and yet later when asked, participants reported having collectively developed seven funding proposals since the training. Given that a timeline and budget are generally mandatory components that must be submitted with a project proposal, then the results for having used a timeline and budget should feature more strongly than reported. This anomaly could be explained by not understanding the question correctly, or it could be that participants did develop timelines and budgets, but not using the specific steps and process recommended during the LFA workshop.

Table 1. Use of the LFA steps in proposal writing and other work duties - Niue

LFA Step	Used or performed since training for a project proposal	Used or performed since training for general work duties
Conducted a situation analysis	4	8
Conducted a stakeholder analysis	5	6
Developed a problem tree or solution tree	4	6
Developed a logframe matrix	3	4
Developed a monitoring and evaluation plan	3	6
Developed a monitoring data collection tool	3	4
Created a timeline or Gantt chart	2	6
Created a budget	3	6

“...IT'S REALLY NEW TO ME AND I'VE LEARNED A LOT FROM THE TRAINING. IT SHOWS THAT THERE ARE NO SHORT CUTS IN PROPOSAL WRITING.”, NIUE WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT

² This participant has not developed any monitoring tools since the workshop, however this is technically not a step of the LFA.

Proposals prepared since the training

Four respondents indicated they had completed or worked on a total of seven funding proposals since the training workshop was held (Table 2). Five proposals were reported to have been successful, and the remaining two proposals are pending an outcome. Elements of the LFA process had been used in all but one proposals submitted.

Table 2. Funding proposals prepared following the training

Donor / Grant Name	Were you successful?	Did you use LFA?	Short Proposal Summary
GIZ	Yes	To some extent	Septic tanks for Alofi township
Ridge to reef	Yes	Yes	Integrated ridge to reef project on Biodiversity and Heritage
NZAid	long term proposal and still in decision phase	Yes	NZD \$10M
China Aid	Long term proposal	Yes	NZD \$10M
EU_GIZ/ACSE Project	Yes, worked in a team with Project proposal approved for PDD phase	Yes	Alofi waste-water and sanitation project with a value of EU\$4,000,000 which the PDD is now approved but still sorting out Evaluation Assessment adjustments for final PDD sign-off.
Niue Development Bank (NDB)	Yes.	Yes but not all the details.	Micro-loan for home renovations valued at NZD\$6,000
Confidential	Yes	No	Confidential

Future proposals

Six survey respondents indicated they had plans to submit additional funding proposals in the next six months, whilst six respondents were unsure and one indicated they had no plans to submit a proposal. All but one respondents noted that they would use the LFA, or parts of it, in preparing future project proposals. There was no additional information provided to explain why one respondent would not use the LFA to inform future project proposals.

The high number of respondents indicating that they would use the LFA in future proposals demonstrates the general positive impact of the LFA training in motivating participants to use a clear, logical process to design better projects, leading to better-prepared proposals.

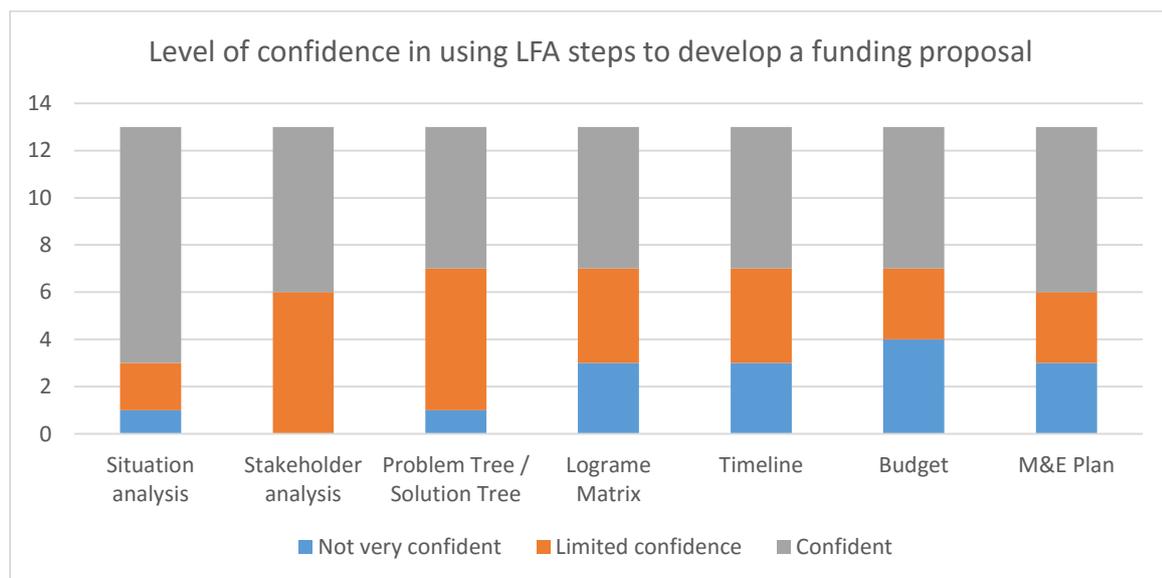
Survey respondents indicated varying degrees of confidence in using the LFA steps and developing M&E plans following the training (Figure 2). Nearly all (12 of 13) respondents indicated they could undertake a situation analysis, stakeholder analysis and problem analysis / solution analysis steps. There was slightly less confidence in being able to develop a logframe matrix, timeline and M&E plan. Participants indicated they had the least level of confidence in developing a budget where four participants indicated they were not confident about being able to complete this step. This difficulty with the budget step is surprising given that an extra hour was spent on this step compared to the

first round of training. The additional time and level of detail spent on completing a budget may have uncovered additional complexity not dealt with during the original round of training which has resulted in a reported reduced level of confidence to complete this step.

Overall, the results are positive in that there was a good balance between respondents indicating confidence to use the LFA steps alone, and those with limited confidence who could still complete the steps with assistance. Only very small numbers of participants indicated they had no confidence to use the LFA steps. Given the balance between those participants who are confident to use the LFA alone and those requiring some assistance, an informal network or community of practice to support the use of the LFA in Niue could be established. This should be encouraged so that the skills can be practiced, reinforced and maintained over time.

Figure 2. Level of confidence in using the LFA and M&E plans following the training – Niue

“SINCE THE TRAINING, I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO APPLY WHAT I’VE LEARNED INTO MY ROLE AT PMCU. IT HAS HELPED ME VERY MUCH.”, NIUE WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT



Additional capacity building

Participants were asked to nominate any additional training they needed to support them in their work. Their responses were categorised in Table 3.

Table 3. Additional training requirements- Niue

Capacity building area	Number of nominations by participants
Practical application of LFA to real project	4
Refresher LFA training every 2 or 3 years	4
Budget	1
M&E	1

Request for more support to apply the LFA to a real project over an extended period of time from start to end was the most highly nominated idea. This feedback for additional time to be spent on developing real projects over a one or two week period also came through in general comments made by survey respondents.

"THERE HAS BEEN NO PROJECTS IN MY SECTOR CURRENTLY, SO IT IS I HAVEN'T GOT THE CHANCE TO PUT MY LFA TRAINING INTO USE.", NIUE WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT

Participants also requested LFA refresher training to be conducted every two to three years. This request reflected the fact that there is often a long delay between training and having the opportunity to apply the LFA to a project. Participants indicated that the refresher training would help keep these skills fresh and ready to be applied even when there has been a large gap in between opportunities to apply the skills. One participant also nominated a request for follow-up training focused on budgeting. Reflecting on the higher lack of confidence to undertake the budgeting step, it is likely that support for training on budget preparation may actually be higher than reported. One respondent also noted that it would be beneficial if LFA was made a standard process across Government, however, this suggestion is beyond the scope of consideration by this evaluation.

About the workshop

Respondents were asked to provide feedback about their reflections of the training (see Annex 1 for all comments). Generally speaking, respondents reported that they gained a lot from attending the training. The most common theme that emerged from feedback was an increased level of understanding about what is required to write a project proposal and an increased level of confidence in being able to undertake this task. Participants also gained a good understanding of the LFA steps and where they fit into the various stages of designing a project. One participant also reported an increased level of understanding in the importance of M&E. Another participant acknowledged that learning how to develop a logframe matrix was the highlight of the training. The importance of working as a team to develop proposals was acknowledged by one respondent who was reflecting on the different knowledge and opinions that people bring to the task at hand.

Some respondents also suggested that the capacity building would be more valuable if working on a real project over a longer period of time.

Conclusion

Overall, the Niue workshop was very successful with high attendance rates and a high level of engagement from participants. The Niue respondents demonstrated that the benefits of the training have flowed on to impact both proposal writing and general work duties. As such, the GCCA-funded training is having wider benefits than its core objective of the development of better proposals. Niue respondents also indicated that the LFA had been used to support the preparation of seven project proposals, all of which were successful in being funded or are awaiting an outcome. Overall, the impact of the Niue training was positive.

Recommendations

Develop a contact list of past LFA participants and keep them updated on resources and grant opportunities that may be of interest. The list should be used to distribute the new “A Guide to key Funding Sources for Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction” (September 2015) developed by Pacific Island Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environmental Program (SPREP).

Provide LFA refresher training to past participants in two years' time to keep their skills sharp and ready for application.

Consideration should be given for a longer in-country visit where the focus is on more one-on-one mentoring to support the development of project proposals after the standard 4-day workshop is conducted.

Forming a network of local LFA practitioners, or a community of practice, would provide support for participants who do not yet feel they have enough confidence in undertaking the steps of the LFA. Alternatively, designating a local or regional LFA focal point from one of the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) agencies as a mentor could also provide the required support.

Annex 1 – Participant Feedback

Benefits of the training

- That I have a fair understanding of the step by step process involved in project proposal, and would be more confident in writing one up. I can also identify areas I would need assistance in.
- The theoretical concepts discussed during the workshop was brought to life using the Toktoklau Case Study - this was the biggest benefit I gained from the training as it highlights just where in the project specific steps are applied.
- The biggest benefit was actually being able to participate in the training and being able to learn a lot that would be helpful in future proposal endeavours that I would wish to take on.
- To actually doing it with other people
- "Integrate the process into national programs which based on outcomes. Identify benefit and resource available to share opportunities.
- prepare a logical framework
- basic understanding of the sequential steps of the LFA
- Biggest benefit would be attending the training workshop. It's really new to me and I've learned a lot from the training. It shows that there are no short cuts in proposal writing.
- Its understanding the rational and logic of the project using the LFA process. It makes the proposal more simple and structured.
- Better understood Problem tree analysis and Monitoring and Analysis.
- Learning how the project proposal is all about, with all its outcomes.
- Since the training, I have been able to apply what I've learned into my role at PMCU. It has helped me very much
- I wasn't present for most of the training, but it was useful for those of my team that attended

Follow up support

- Probably a refresher course every 2 to 3 years in order to brush up on project proposal skills and running through the necessary steps of the project life cycle again. Also would be helpful if more support/training provided for project budgeting as finance is an important component in projects and would require a bit more focus and more support.
- More refresher courses or training sessions as such.
- Not training but actually do one project and complete and submit would be useful
- Formulate or register this LFA across the government institution to standardise proposal to easier to process by other sector.
- Monitor and evaluation.
- Better understating of the LFA if it's used occasionally
- Developing more projects proposals and using the LFA process more often to get use to the LFA system. The more times and experiences i use the LFA, the more confident i will be but refresher is needed every 2 years as things change and knowledge systems evolve.
- Continue with the training materials and making sure a project proposal is done for the future.
- At this point, practicing how to write project proposals is a good idea.
- More practical training, examples of projects etc.

Other comments

- There has been no projects in my sector currently, so it is I haven't got the chance to put my LFA training into use.
- Need to encourage participants to provide actual proposals they are working on or activities could relate more to in country proposals for a more realistic feel.
- Work on a real project for 2 weeks would be very useful.
- Select a few members to build their capacity and be well recognised nationally.
- Prepare a real logical framework on a real proposal.
- In order to have a solid project proposal, is to go through all the steps shown and also work in a group because everyone has different opinions.
- I believe in a more agency focused training where participants are more serious about using the tool. The department of environment has taken the lead in trying to get other sectors involved however some are not as proactive as others. Use less participants but focused on actual projects.
- Would be good for small groups but looking at the proposals it can be complicated to follow but at the end we need help in order to make it a success.