Virtual workshop for Darwin Plus Stage 2 Applicants

12th September 2023

Group exercises & additional resources

This handout is to be used as a resource for the virtual group work sessions on 12th September 2023. We will be using a combination of **Zoom** Breakout Rooms and an online whiteboard software called **Miro**.

General instructions:

Finding your group/room: Groups will be allocated into Zoom Breakout Rooms and you will be given a link to a **Miro** board where you will find exercise materials – please navigate to the area on board which matches with your group number on Zoom by using your cursor or by typing your group number into the search bar at the top of the board – we have colour coded each of the groups for ease, and both exercises are marked with arrows:

How to use Miro:

Both exercises will be taking place on the same board which can be accessed via the shared link. On the left-hand side of Miro you will find the tools to use – for the exercises the key tools you will need are the **select** and **sticky note** tools.

Highlighted options are most useful (we think!)

==Select==

Templates

Text

==Sticky Note==

Shape

Connection Line

Pen

Comment

Frame

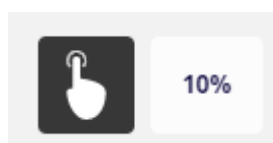File upload

Apps (for the adventurous user – we like IconFinder!)

If your screen is smaller, the toolbar might not display all icons at once. In that case, use the two arrows to scroll through the options.

The exercise materials (i.e. sticky notes and a template) should already be set up for you and the specific tasks are outlined below. You can move sticky notes around or add more sticky notes (perhaps in different colours) or text boxes to record your thinking. All of the templates are locked on the board, but please be mindful of other sticky notes as these can be moved around and accidentally deleted. There is a zoom function at the bottom right of the screen which you can use to Zoom in and out if needed (or use your mouse wheel or '+' and '-' keys on your keyboard) and there you can find a map of the board as well (any changes you make to the "zoom" will only be visible for you, not others in the group).
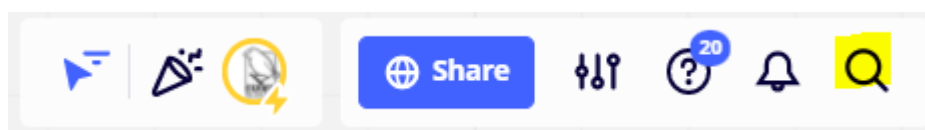
The Zoom function is found on the bottom right of the board (or else use your mouse).

Here you can also find a helpful map of the board.

There is also a useful search feature which can be used to find your group number – just click on the magnifying glass icon located in the taskbar at the top of your search and type in the relevant group number.

The Exercises

Exercise 1 - Mapping a project design

You will be allocated into a group in a Zoom Breakout Room and provided with a link to Miro.

Step 1. Please briefly introduce yourself to everybody in your breakout room! Please spend no more than 5-10 minutes introducing yourself before moving on to the exercise!

Step 2. Please find the right set of boards on Miro for your group (the number at the top should be the same as your Zoom breakout room – see instructions no earlier page). You will find a template and a number of sticky notes to carry out your exercise. Working as a group, consider these different components of a logframe taken from a fictitious Darwin Plus project.

- Identify the problem statement (only one)
- Identify the project activities, outputs, outcome (only one) and impact (only one)
- Think about the 'why'
    - Is it clear?
    - Do you have any questions about the change process?
    - Are there any leaps of logic/evidence gaps?
    - What risks and assumptions are there?
- Map the project components onto the template provided and discuss as a group

You will need to think about:

- How activities are combined to achieve outputs (what processes need to occur)
- How those outputs combine to effect intermediate change (outcome)
- The critical assumptions that need to be considered
- The particular contextual issues that need to be considered
- Does this project design truly address the problem statement?
- Are project components necessary and sufficient to bring about intended change?

Feedback to plenary.

The table below, taken from the Stage 2 Application form, may provide useful frames of reference. Once you have completed the exercise, think about how you may use these tools to improve your own project design.

Darwin Plus Stage 2 logframe format:

Project Summary	SMART Indicators	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions
Impact: (Max 30 words)			
Outcome: (Max 30 words)	0.1 0.2 Etc.	0.1 0.2 Etc.	
Outputs: 1.	1.1 1.2 Etc.	1.1 1.2 Etc.	
2.			
3.			
4.			
Activities (each activity is numbered according to the output that it will contribute towards, for example 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 are contributing to Output 1) 1.1 1.2 1.3 etc.			

Exercise 2 – Good evidence and indicators

You will be allocated into a group in a Zoom Breakout Room – please note that this may be different from your previous group, however we will be using the same link to access the Miro board.

Stage 1 - Indicators

- Sort out the indicators from the 'Means of Verification' (MoV)
- Identify which indicators are appropriate to each level of the results chain (Output or Outcome)
- Map onto relevant part of the simplified logframe template
- Assess quality of indicators against SMART criteria. Consider how they could be improved. Identify at least one example to feed back to the plenary.

Stage 2 - MoV

- Take the 'MoV' identified in step 1 and match to the corresponding indicator
- Discuss the MoV in turn. Is it feasible[*]? Will it produce high quality evidence? Is it relevant to the indicator? Is it sufficient? Remember, evidence should be independently verifiable, so internal project reports alone won't be enough. Such MoV should be triangulated with independent evidence
- If MoV are not appropriate or feasible, discuss more robust alternative(s)
- In light of the evidence assessment, review whether alternative wording of indicator would be more appropriate to reflect the result and a realistic likelihood that evidence may be collected to verify / measure it

[*]Feasibility should consider time, resources, expertise

Additional materials

SMART Indicators

At home, have at least 1 colleague review the logframe indicators included in your application. Have them undertake a SMART analysis of each indicator, assessing whether it is:

1. **Specific:** Is it Specific? Is it appropriately phrased for the level in the project results hierarchy (e.g. is an input indicator used as an output indicator, is an output indicator used as an outcome indicator)? Will it measure whether the output will be achieved, or measure whether the outcome delivers the change that is anticipated?

2. **Measurable:** How will the indicator be measured? Will it need a baseline to be established first?

3. **Achievable:** Can the project achieve the indicator in the time scale and with the resources available to it? Is the information that needs to be collected to measure the indicator available at an acceptable cost?

4. **Relevant:** Will the indicator deliver relevant management information that may be used to improve the project's performance?

5. **Time-bound:** Is there an indication of when the indicator milestone is expected to be met?

Score out of 10 for the SMARTness of each outcome indicator i.e. score out of 2 for S, out of 2 for M etc.

2 = fits the requirements

1 = ok but could be stronger

0 = weak and does not meet the requirements

Preparing an M&E Plan

As part of your application preparation, consider how you will implement your monitoring by drafting an M&E plan. You may use the template below. This is a good way of sense checking your planned monitoring framework set out in your logframe.

Template

Indicator	Means of Verification	What needs to be monitored / evaluated?	Methods for data collection	Sampling (who/what will be included? How many?)	Timing (when and how often is information required?)