**Concept Note -** Use of Log frame to identify scheme level key outputs outcomes and respective indicators at scheme proposal stage (EFC/SFC/PIB proposal)

**1. Background**

Presently, the EFC/SFC/PIB template has provisions for indicating scheme level outputs and outcomes, their respective targets and progress (year wise estimates) in **section 2 and 8**. The sponsoring Ministry/Department has to provide relevant information on outputs and outcome in these sections. However, proposals drafted by the sponsoring Ministry/Department may not have clearly mentioned outputs, outcomes and relevant measurable indicators. Also, at times, the mechanisms for capturing data on the proposed indicators are not clearly laid down. This leaves the measurement plan for the proposed scheme incomplete at its design stage itself. Additionally, in cases where the proposed scheme does have indicators defined, often, process or input indicators are phrased as output indicators. Similarly, output or intermediate outcomes are phrased as outcome indicators. This is primarily due to the lack of standardized approach and systematic capacities in the concerned Ministries/Departments to build an M&E plan right at the design stage.

The EFC/SFC/PIB proposal forms the basis of scheme guidelines, which is regularly referred to during scheme implementation, monitoring, evaluation and appraisal process. Naturally, the absence of details like key indicators to be tracked, their means of measurement and the underlying assumptions at the EFC/SFC stage translate into poorly designed schemes in terms of their M&E plan. This hinders not only the scheme implementation (setting responsibility and accountability across various activities) by limiting evidence-based tactical maneuvering but also, by constraining the effective and objective assessment of scheme performance at a strategic level.

DMEO, NITI Aayog has developed the Output Outcome Monitoring Framework (OOMF) for each CS/CSS scheme, jointly with Ministries/Departments. DMEO, as part of its comments on EFC/SFC/PIB proposals, has been suggesting key outputs and outcomes and measurable indicators and thereby, ensuring indicator quality through, primarily on **sections 2.1, 2.2 and 8.2 and 8.3** on outputs and outcomes.

In view of the above, it is imperative that a structured, objective and clear approach is adopted across the Government of India to ensure ‘quality at entry’ in terms M&E integration into the new schemes/programmes being designed and launched across Ministries/Departments.

**2. Introduction - Log Frame**

To address the above-mentioned issues and suggest a structured approach to scheme design, a log frame can be used by the sponsoring Ministry/Department during the scheme proposal draft phase.

**3. Definition and Approach**

i. A log frame is a tool/matrix, which gives a schematic representation of how the scheme activities will lead to immediate outputs, and how these outputs will lead to the outcomes and objectives. It is proposed that the scheme division in the sponsoring Ministry/Department articulates all the key activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts proposed in the scheme through a log frame in a logical, systematic and sequential manner while developing the EFC/SFC proposal.

Fig - Schematic representation of the log frame

ii. Broadly, the log frame has the following elements of enquiry in the same order of representation -

1. **Input** – resources deployed in the scheme
2. **Activity** – broad set of activities planned within the scheme
3. **Output**- intended results of the activities
4. **Outcomes** – objective of the scheme i.e. the outcomes/impacts intended to be achieved among the target groups for the intervention.

iii. Each element of enquiry in the schematic representation of log frame has a measurable indicator and a source of data collection mapped to facilitate development of output-outcome architecture. In addition, while designing the template for a particular scheme, various assumptions and risks involved in scheme implementation can be clearly articulated.

iv. World over, most of the developed countries, project-implementing agencies, Multi-lateral donor organizations, monitoring and evaluation offices use the log frame at each level of implementation (project, program, scheme) from the design phase to evaluation phase.

**4. Operational Guidelines**

i. The critical factors in the scheme are summarized in a tabular format (as in table below) to be introduced in a separate sub-section within section 2 in the EFC/SFC/PIB proposals covering outputs and outcomes in the scheme.

|  | **Objectives** | **Measurable indicator(s)** | **Means of verification**  **(Data source)** | **Important assumptions/Risks involved** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Outcomes** |  |  |  |  |
| **Output (s)** |  |  |  |  |
| **Activity** |  |  |  |  |
| **Input** |  |  |  |  |

Table – representation of log frame template

1. **Objective (s)** – to enlist the scheme objectives which are also the outcomes intended to be achieved through the scheme intervention
2. **Output (s)** – to enlist the result of activities planned in the scheme
3. **Activity** – to enlist the activities planned in the scheme through the financial outlay
4. **Input** – to enter the financial outlay of the scheme

ii. The scheme division in the sponsoring Ministry/Department can refer to each element of enquiry in the template and articulate measurable indicator against the identified objective/output/activity and also mention the means of verification (data source) mapped to each indicator to facilitate development of a comprehensive output-outcome data reporting and monitoring architecture. In addition, while designing the template for a particular scheme, various assumptions and risks involved in scheme design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation stage can be clearly articulated.

iii. A log frame can be a sub-section of the Section 2 of the EFC/SFC/PIB proposal (as 2.1), following which the outputs and outcomes can be summarized in section 2.2 and 2.3 respectively.

**5. Benefits and features of log frame**

1. It provides a unifying framework for all the stakeholders, from design to implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
2. It improves scheme design and supervision through structured and logical simple summary of development initiatives under the broad outline of the scheme. This is further facilitated by clear articulation of measurable indicators for Inputs, Activities, Outputs and Outcomes. A single framework can pave the way for different indicators to be monitored and focused upon at various stages of scheme life cycle i.e. inputs at pre-launch stage, activities and outputs in implementation stage and outcomes and impacts at the review stage.
3. It improves scheme performance by identifying the key risks and assumptions and fostering their mitigation during scheme implementation.
4. It helps develop data architecture for the scheme’s means of measurement and, facilitate convergence of data capturing across different schemes with similar/same data points.

**6. Conclusion**

The EFC/SFC/PIB proposals need to have clearly defined outputs and outcomes and their key indicators capturing framework for effective scheme design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. A log frame provides an effective tool for summarizing critical assessment parameters (inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts), identifying measurable indicators and developing their means of measurement, while indicating risks and assumptions in the scheme implementation. It is used across developed countries, top private and public organizations, and Multi-lateral donor agencies for effective representation of key scheme elements for all stakeholders.

Therefore, a log frame can be a part of the template for a EFC/SFC/PIB proposal (as a sub-section 2.1 in section 2) and help filling information in proposed sub-section 2.2 and 2.3 to clearly articulate (financial year wise) - outlay, outputs and outcomes, their respective key indicators, source of data capture, baselines, targets and progress for each schemes which are initiated for continuation.