Lund University
Department of Political Science

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Tutor: Fariborz Zelli

# The Meaning of the Logical Framework Approach for NGO-officials in Colombia

## A phenomenological study of results-based management in development cooperation

Alfred Nisses

# Abstract

The quest for effectiveness and results has become a top political priority in the international development sector during the last decade. One of the prevailing tools for effectiveness and goal fulfilment for development projects is the Logical Framework Approach (LFA). Implementing organisations, such as NGOs, are often obliged to use the LFA for planning, implementation and evaluation in order to get funding from international donors.

This thesis takes its departure in the critique of the LFA, both concerning its theoretical assumptions and its practice. With a phenomenological approach and through qualitative interviews with 13 NGO-officials working with human rights, peace building and democracy projects in Colombia, this thesis examines the perceptions and experiences of the LFA.

The analysis shows a widely shared perception of a discrepancy between the theoretical assumptions of the tool and how development projects work in reality. Two problematic assumptions of the LFA are risk prediction and articulation of measurable and verifiable results. It is also shown that the NGO-officials perceive donors to apply different approaches to the LFA; some donors use the LFA with flexibility and with aim to promote learning while others use it strictly for accountability purposes. Furthermore, it is argued that the LFA could be understood as an instrument, which indirectly control the actions of implementing organisations through technical reasoning.

*Keywords*: LFA, Results Based Management, International Development, Phenomenology, Aid Effectiveness, New Public Management, Accountability, Colombia
*Words*: 9408

# Resumen

La búsqueda de la eficacia y los resultados en el sector del desarrollo internacional se han convertido en una prioridad política durante la última década. Una de las herramientas dominantes usadas para la eficacia y el cumplimiento de las metas en los proyectos de desarrollo es el marco lógico. Las organizaciones ejecutoras, como las ONG, están frecuentemente obligadas a utilizar el marco lógico para planificación, ejecución y evaluación de sus proyectos con el fin de obtener financiación de los donantes internacionales.

Esta tesis toma su salida en la crítica del marco lógico, tanto en la relación con sus suposiciones teóricos como en su práctica. A través de entrevistas cualitativas con 13 funcionarios en ONG que trabajan por los derechos humanos, la construcción de la paz y proyectos de democracia en Colombia, esta tesis analiza las percepciones y las experiencias del marco lógico. El enfoque teórico es la fenomenología.

El análisis muestra una percepción ampliamente compartida de una discrepancia entre los suposiciones teóricos de la herramienta y cómo los proyectos de desarrollo funcionan en la realidad. Dos suposiciones problemáticos del marco lógico son la predicción de riesgos y la articulación de resultados medibles y verificables. El análisis también muestra que los funcionarios perciben que diferentes donantes quieren que las ONG usen el marco lógico por propósitos distintos – algunos donantes lo utilizan estrictamente para fines de rendición de cuentas, mientras que algunos lo utilizan con flexibilidad y más bien con fines de aprendizaje. Además, se argumenta que el marco lógico podría entenderse como un instrumento que indirectamente controla las acciones de las organizaciones ejecutoras a través de un razonamiento técnico.

*Palabras clave*: marco lógico, gestión basada en resultados, cooperación internacional, fenomenología, eficacia de la ayuda al desarrollo, nueva gestión pública, rendición de cuentas, Colombia

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# Table of contents

**1 Introduction ...... 6**
1.1 The Logical Framework Approach ...... 7
1.2 Problem of design ...... 8
1.3 Problem of use ...... 9
1.4 Understanding LFA through Critical Theory and New Public Management ...... 10
1.5 Purpose and research questions ...... 11
**2 Theoretical approach ...... 13**
2.1 Phenomenology and hermeneutics of existence ...... 13
2.2 The hermeneutic alley ...... 14
**3 Method ...... 16**
3.1 Choices: country, organisations, informants ...... 16
3.2 Interviews ...... 18
3.3 Disposition of the analysis ...... 19
**4 The logics of the LFA – a resource or a constraint? ...... 20**
**5 The use of the LFA – promoting dialogue or control? ...... 23**
5.1 Perceptions of donors' intentions ...... 23
5.2 LFA and expertise ...... 25
**6 Conclusions ...... 27**
**References ...... 29**
**Appendix 1 ...... 31**
**Appendix 2 ...... 32**
**Appendix 3 ...... 34**

# 1 Introduction

During the past decade there has been a growing external pressure for development cooperation agencies to establish management systems towards effectiveness and results. The strive for effectiveness has been emphasised even more since the High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan, South Korea in 2011, and has today become a top political priority on a global level (Molander et al. 2011, p. 4; see also Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation, 2011; The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action, 2008). Assessing effectiveness of development projects is not a new phenomenon. Ben Ramalingam argues that there have been efforts to assess effectiveness as long as aid has been given. He points out three main reasons for explaining why effectiveness has been an important issue: (1) to promote *learning* for the sake of improving future development projects, (2) to promote *accountability* in the sense of giving account to parliaments, taxpayers and donors and (3) to promote *legitimacy*, as underpinned by the two first reasons (Ramalingam, 2013, p. 109).

The quest for effectiveness has been materialised through management tools for planning and evaluation. One of the predominant tools in the aid sector is the *Logical Framework Approach* (LFA), also called the *logframe*. It has been used for project management and accountability purposes since the 1980s (Holma & Kontinen, 2011, p. 183). The LFA is today used worldwide by aid agencies. It could be considered a standard in development cooperation used for project planning and appraisal as well as during the whole project cycle. The LFA is often a prerequisite for funding from several of the major bilateral and multilateral aid agencies (Crawford & Bryce 2003, p. 363-364). International aid agencies, in this study also called *cooperation agencies* or *donors*, which use the LFA and encourage their counterparts to use it when planning, implementing and evaluating projects are, among others, the UN-system, German GTZ, Norwegian NORAD, Canadian Cida and Swedish Sida (Örtengren, 2004, p. 3-5).

Despite the dominant and prevailing position of the LFA in the development sector, the tool has been criticized for its theoretical assumption as for its practice. Donors insist on using it while NGOs, those who have to deal with the LFA for their projects, seem to have a more reluctant attitude towards it (Bakewell & Garbutt, 2005, p. 1).

Previous research about the LFA consists mainly of investigations on a theoretical level. The articles I have found investigate the appropriateness and adequacy of the LFA for different processes and purposes in development projects, such as the suitability for the LFA to be used for planning purposes (Dale, 2003), the LFA for learning-oriented evaluations (Gasper 2000; Holma &

Kontinen, 2011) and the effectiveness to use the LFA for monitoring purposes (Crawford & Bryce, 2003).

The only empirical study, which investigates the use and opinions of the LFA among practitioners, is a report by Bakewell and Garbutt (2005). Their study focuses on views on the LFA among international development NGOs. The study is mainly based on a simple structured questionnaire and does not focus on any specific geographical region.

My contribution with this study is to fill in the research gap about the perceptions and practices of the LFA among development workers through a phenomenological research approach. The aim for this thesis is to understand the attitudes and practices of the LFA among 13 NGO-officials in Colombia.

The starting point of this study is a presentation of Sida's description of the LFA and the critique the tool has undergone in previous research. This will be presented in sections 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4. These sections constitute my prejudices about the LFA, in other words, the *horizon* from which I approach the phenomenon. As you will see in chapter 2, awareness about prejudices and pre-knowledge are central in hermeneutic studies. Thus, presenting the critique of the LFA is my way of handling my prejudices and pre-knowledge.

The purpose and research questions of this study will be articulated from the critique and presentation of the LFA.

## 1.1 The Logical Framework Approach

In Sida's handbook about the LFA, it is explained as an instrument to improve planning, implementation and evaluation of development interventions (Örtengren, 2004, p. 3). Dale (2003) and Bakewell and Garbutt (2005) make a useful distinction between the *logframe*, and the *Logical Framework Approach*. The latter is a method for the planning process. It enables agencies and organisations to systematically set out objectives for a development project, link together these objectives with certain activities, articulate indicators, which ought to determine whether the project has achieved its objectives, and to identify the assumptions and risks that underpin the design of the project (see also Örtengren, 2004; Gasper, 2000, p. 18). These elements are then summarized in the logframe, which could be seen as the overall program plan for the specific project (see appendix 1). Done right, the LFA and the logframe are assumed to make users think systematically about their projects, how activities contribute to goals, which enables good goal fulfilment and improvement of quality and hence the relevance, feasibility and sustainability of development cooperation (Örtengren, 2004, p. 3-7). However, the LFA[1] has been subject to a lot of critique concerning both its theoretical assumptions and its practice.

[1] Henceforth, the term LFA will be used to refer to both the method and the matrix, if nothing else is declared.

## 1.2 Problem of design

In this section I will present a critique to the LFA, based on previous research, which highlights the complexity of the logics and assumptions that the LFA is based on. The logics of the LFA – to strive for intended effects by intended means – and its assumption about predictability and measurable results have been criticised for not corresponding to every kind of development project and to the contexts in which they are carried out. I call this critique *the problem of design*.

Holma and Kontinen argue that the seemingly easy and well-structured tool subscribes to a highly linear logic of change, which suggests the world to be simpler and more predictable than it really is (2011, p. 183-184). The prescribed means-end chain makes the evaluation to only focus on the achievement of expected results. Gasper argues: “[the] LFA seems to downgrade the achievement of higher objectives by unforeseen routes, and the achievement of unintended effects, both good and bad.” (2000, p. 24)

Another problematic issue that emerges when the LFA is used in practice is the definition of what an objective or a result is and ultimately can be. According to Sida’s handbook a project’s purpose and results shall be “SMART”. This abbreviation means that an objective has to be Specific, Measurable, Approved by the project owner and the project group, Realistic and Time-bound. These objectives are then linked together with indicators, which shall be “objectively verifiable” (Örtengren, 2004, p. 16). Measurability is a very important aspect when articulating objectives, it is even what finally determines the nature of an objective: “The process of setting up indicators reveals whether the objectives are non-specific and unrealistic.” (Örtengren, 2004, p. 16)

Lena Lindgren, who has examined systems of results-based management in the public sector, argues that goals rarely are as smart as the “SMART” criteria suggests. For example: An intervention of which its most important effects can only be observed in long term or an intervention which seeks to obtain preventive effects cannot be measured according to these principles (Lindgren, 2008, p. 56-62). This tends to lead to a situation where only the measurable aspects are measured (Lindgren, 2008, p. 87), and in the end this could be counterproductive for evaluation of learning purposes – to understand what actually happens in an intervention and why (Holma & Kontinen, 2011, p. 182).

However, this problem seems to be less serious in some sectors such as education where jointly agreed global monitoring indicators exist. Hence, the selection of indicators in a specific project could be easier than for projects of other characters (Molander et al. 2011, p. 19-20).

## 1.3 Problem of use

There is also a critique of the purpose the LFA is used. It is argued that the LFA becomes a tool for accountability and control rather than being used as an instrument to promoting learning. I call this critique *the problem of use*.

In Bakewell's and Garbutt's report about use and abuse of the LFA, they point out that when the LFA is used for monitoring and evaluation the focus is often to look for the expected achievements articulated in the logframe than on the work itself. Hence, the LFA becomes a tool for showing whether the development project is delivering the results and impacts as proposed (2005, p. 10f). This is also something Molander et al. point out. In their literature review about results-based management[2] in development cooperation the authors find out that two of the most conflicting purposes when introducing results-based management in development cooperation are (1) to use reports and evaluations for learning purposes versus accountability purposes, and (2) that the need to demonstrate results could lead to a situation of risk-averse behaviour where projects, which entail low risk and easily measurable results are prioritised over important projects, which have less quantifiable results, or which entail a higher risk (Molander et al, 2011, p. 21-22).

By using evaluations for accountability purposes I mean using the information about a project and its progress to hold the implementing party accountable for achieving the objectives that the project was said to achieve. By using evaluations for learning purposes I mean using information about a project and its progress in order to *understand* the intervention of a specific project and the outcomes from it for the purpose of improving current and/or future projects.

Also, Gasper, is concerned about the LFA being used for control rather than for learning. He states following questions:

> ”Why have logframes typically been used only where external funders demanded them? Why do these simple descriptions become made compulsory, including now for evaluation and not only monitoring, *and* treated not simply as aids in thinking but as authoritative statements of approved structure? Why do logframes become fixed/locked? One typical response is that there has not been enough training. A fuller analysis indicates stronger underlying causes.” (Gasper, 2000, p. 22)

Molander et al. point at the unequal power relationship between donors and recipients as one possible explanation for why there is a stronger orientation towards control and accountability than towards learning when results-based management tools are used. Although the purpose of the LFA is to improve both accountability and learning, donors and partner countries have different demands for the two different purposes. However, since the donor provides support and demands something in return from the recipient, e.g. results, the accountability for

[2] Results-based management can be understood as an overarching management perspective or a mind-set to which the LFA belongs (Molander et. al., 2011, p. 6-11).

the aid recipient towards the donor is stronger than towards its domestic citizens (2011, p. 8).

## 1.4 Understanding LFA through Critical Theory and New Public Management

In this section I will discuss how the LFA can be understood as an instrument, which induces and sustains an unequal power relationship between donors and recipients. The point of departure for this section is the critique of the LFA that I presented above. I will use *critical theory* to discuss the LFA and to articulate a background hypothesis. This discussion should be seen as a starting assumption for this study.

Critical theory within organisation studies is to a large extent inspired by concepts from the Frankfurt School (Alvesson & Deetz, 2006, p. 256). The central goal of critical theory is to demonstrate and criticise aspects of domination, power asymmetry and distorted communication by showing how social constructions of reality can favour certain interests, and make alternative constructions appear irrelevant (Alvesson & Deetz, 2000, p. 35).

One main type of critical studies is ideology critique, which reclaims organisations as social-historical constructions. The aim of ideology critique is to investigate how these constructions are formed, sustained and transformed through processes, both internal and external to them (Alvesson & Deetz, 2006, p. 260-261).

Jürgen Habermas[3] presented a critique of the domination of public life by instrumental rationality, derived from science and technology. He argued that instrumental rationality is an ideology in disguise. Instrumental rationality and technical reasoning focus on control and development of means of goal accomplishment, in contrast to practical reasoning, which focuses on a process of understanding and mutual determination of the ends to be sought. Social constructions of expertise together with organisational structures produce the domination of technical reasoning. To the extent that technical reasoning dominates it claims the entire concept of rationality, which makes alternative reasons to appear irrational (Alvesson & Deetz, 2006, p. 262; Dunn & Miller, 2007, p. 353).

Having this in mind the seemingly unproblematic and self-evident position of the LFA in the development sector is in fact a product of a set of beliefs – an ideology. Referring to, or perceiving, the LFA as an unproblematic and self-evident tool for project planning and evaluation is an expression of technical reasoning. The LFA and results-based management could be understood as ideas derived from the *New Public Management* philosophy. Lindgren and Johansson argue that during the last thirty years there has been a transnational reformation

[3] A dominant sociologist and philosopher in the tradition of critical theory associated with the Frankfurt School

movement of the public sector in the Western world with strong influences of ideas and management principles from the business sector. This reformation movement often goes under the name of New Public Management. One of the main features of the reformation is increasing demands for the public sector to show results for their activities (Johansson & Lindgren, 2013, p. 18f). The idea is that enforcement of rules, per se, may be insufficient and therefore agencies should be judged by the results of their actions, which are assessed against the mission of every agency. A decision of action taken by individuals, bureaucracies and communities should be anticipated of the results or consequences associated by that action. If the action has no results or leads to negative consequences the actor that generated those consequences should be held accountable (Dunn & Miller, 2007, p. 348-349).

The LFA is not an objective or a self-evident response to universal needs (applying systems for results measurements to improve the quality of development cooperation). The "needs" of showing results of intervention and holding actors responsible for their actions are in fact interests of someone. The logframe could be understood as constituting a contract between donors and recipients, which primarily serves the interest of the donor because it facilitates to hold the recipient accountable for any misconduct of what is written in the logframe. Following the principles of New Public Management (managing for results and holding actors accountable for their actions) and the logics of the LFA (focus on intended effects by intended means) accountability prevails over learning. Thus the LFA could be understood as a tool that induces and sustains an unequal power relationship between donors and recipients, which is disguised through technical reasoning.

The background hypothesis for this study is:

- The LFA is a tool that induces and sustains an unequal power relationship between donors and recipients.

# 1.5 Purpose and research questions

The purpose of this study is not to use critical theory to determine whether the LFA is an instrument of power, or to examine how and what constitutes its power, but instead to investigate if the LFA is *perceived* as a tool of power in the eyes of NGO-officials, the people who have to deal with the LFA in their daily work, to which extent they share this critique and how their perceptions are reflected in their practice with the LFA.

The research questions are:

1. Which are the meanings and attitudes towards the LFA among the NGO-officials?
2. Are there differences between different NGO-officials in their attitudes towards and understanding of the LFA, and if so, why?

3. To what extent do the NGO-officials experience the LFA as a tool that induces and sustains an unequal power relationship between donors and recipients?
4. How are different attitudes and understandings of the LFA among the NGO-officials reflected in their practice with the LFA?

# 2 Theoretical approach

This chapter is dedicated to explain my ontology and epistemology position. The approach for this study is based on philosophical hermeneutics. In the first section I will present the main features of phenomenology and existential hermeneutics, where meaning and intentionality are two main concepts. The first section could be seen as explaining my ontological position. In the second section I will explain the hermeneutic alley, which focuses on the epistemological take-off point. Due to the nature of philosophical hermeneutics the two sections are ontologically and epistemologically intertwined.

## 2.1 Phenomenology and hermeneutics of existence

Phenomenology could be seen as a reaction and an alternative approach to positivism. Phenomenology is about human experience. A phenomenon is something that is experienced through our senses, something that is experienced directly, rather than rationally understood as a theory or an abstract concept (Denscombe, 2009, p. 109-11). Wagenaar explains:

> ”[W]e never see a tree as an isolated object, a thing-in-itself, but as something that appears in our consciousness encumbered with meaning – as something that gives shade on a hot summer day, that can be felled with an axe to sell the wood, an object of memory […] Consciousness is always consciousness *of* something. Our consciousness always relates to the world. The world is as much part of our consciousness as our consciousness is part of the world […] In this way the distinction between the mind and the external world – so central in the naturalistic epistemology of scientistism – disappears” (2011, p. 42).

In this example, we are not interested in the tree as an isolated object, but as a phenomenon – a thing that correlates with our understanding of trees. A thing ascribed with meaning. The quote also illustrates the hermeneutics of existence, an existential philosophy articulated by Martin Heidegger[4]. His primary interest is not about the actual existence of things, but the meaning of things. Understanding is not a tool, which we use when we find it necessary. Understanding is inseparable with our existence and is the foundation of interpretation, which constantly cooperates with the first. If we want to understand what a tree is (or a hammer, as one classical example of Heidegger), we cannot do so through

[4] A German philosopher of the Continental tradition and in the field of existential phenomenology.

measuring and categorising its qualities. To understand what a hammer is we need to use it. The hammer must be understood *as* a tool and be used *as* a tool, in order to grasp its meaning. The hammer itself does not manifest its existential meaning (Ödman, 2007, p. 25-26). It is the correlation between the (physical) world and the understanding (of the world) that constitutes meaning.

To connect this with my study I am interested in the perceptions of the LFA, the meaning that people ascribe to the LFA, and how these perceptions are reflected in the practice with the LFA. In order to do this I need to explain the terms *intentionality* and practice, or *action*.

In interpretive analysis actions are not seen as neutral activities. Actions are activities that are defined and constituted by an intrinsic intention. These intentions could be described as the inner aspect of an action that always goes together with the outer aspect, which is the result that the action is supposed to bring about. We act because we intend to bring about some result and therefore an action has a meaning. Actions are meaningful because they signify something. Thus, actions are not explained by causality but intentionality (Wagenaar, 2011, p. 15; Wagenaar, 2007, p. 432-38).

The term intentionality, explained here, have parallels to Jean-Paul Sartre's[5] perception about the concurrent regressive and progressive character of interpretation. Sartre argues that we are tied to our prehistory, to our living conditions, at the same time we emancipate from these conditions as we anticipate our future through action. To understand an action it is necessary that the interpretation of the action oscillate between the precondition and the possible state that the action could lead to. If we exclude the precondition we end up in a sterile idealistic explanation of the action. If we, on the other hand, exclude the progressive aspect we would only understand the action in terms of causality (Ödman, 2007, p. 59-60).

Meanings matter for action. Actions are taken in the backdrop of meanings, and actions (or rather the results of actions) also shape meaning. To explain this more concretely in the case of the LFA, and what this study is about to investigate: The meaning attached to the LFA by people matters and ultimately affects the practice of the LFA (and is, in turn, affected by these practices).

Now an interesting and important question arises: how to grasp these meanings? How to make the meaning of action transparent? How to grasp *truth*?

## 2.2 The hermeneutic alley

Inspired by Heidegger, Hans-George Gadamer [6] connects the existential hermeneutics with epistemology. The quest for knowledge is, according to Gadamer, not through methodology (as manipulation and control by the

[5] A French philosopher and one of the key figures in the philosophy of existentialism and phenomenology.
[6] Another German philosopher of the Continental tradition and also one of Heidegger's students.

researcher of the studied object), but through dialectics (Ödman, 2007, p. 27-28, 42). We always understand things from different horizons; we make our interpretations about the world from our understandings of the world. We are locked into a position that makes us see and want to see things. This, however, should be seen as a productive force. Meanings are not "out there", waiting to be discovered by the researcher. Instead, "meaning emerges when an observer begins to question the phenomenon from his particular position" (Wagenaar, 2011, p. 54). Thus, it is possible to say that we do not find knowledge, but we create knowledge. This does not mean that we should impose our prejudices on the phenomenon we study without any reflections about what we are doing. On the contrary, the principle of openness and respect is very central, both for our own sake – we strive to understand the phenomenon – and to mediate intersubjectivity (Ödman, 2007, p. 28, 113-119).

The hermeneutic alley, or circle, is an illustration about how thinking, understanding and interpretation work. It is an on-going process between the parts and the whole, of contextualising and de-contextualising. To be able to understand the parts we need to understand the larger context, that the parts constitute, and vice versa (Ödman, 2007, p. 98-100; Wagenaar, 2011, p. 46-47). It is important to have respect for the text, dictum or action we want to interpret, and to our own contribution; "Interpretive explanations do not deal with truth or falsity, but in plausibility – always under the provision that this particular explanation is not exhaustive and that at any time a better one might come up." (Wagenaar, 2011, p. 47).

As I tried to make clear in the introduction, the critique and discussion about the LFA, presented in the first chapter, could be seen as the horizon from which I approach the LFA. One thing I want to add is to explain the position from where I started this study: Before I arrived in Colombia I neither had any experience of working with or within a development organisation, nor had I been in Latin America. For the analysis of the interviews I have tried to look for patterns and contrasts in the interviewees' stories, which could be understood as a way of contextualising and de-contextualising the dictums of the interviewees.

# 3 Method

My methodological approach could be described as ethnographically inspired. Ethnographical studies are generally interested in people's everyday life, to understand a phenomenon through the experience of people and in the background of the specific context (Denscombe, 2009, p. 91ff). This chapter is dedicated to present the choices of country, organisations and informants (3.1), the structure of the interview and its themes (3.2), and lastly the disposition of the analysis (3.3).

## 3.1 Choices: country, organisations, informants

Since the LFA is considered to be a worldwide standard among development agencies for managing development projects, this study could be carried out in many different geographical regions and in different development sectors. For this study I have wanted to focus on social development projects, which seek to promote topics such as human rights, justice and democracy. The reason why I chose Colombia was because of its received support for human rights, peace and security from international donors. Colombia has a long history of violence and armed conflicts between the state and illegal armed groups, which is due to poverty and social and economic injustice (Sida, 2014). During the last decade Colombia has been the country that has received the most foreign aid in Latin America[7] (World Bank, 2014) and approximately 30% of the total development assistance have been dedicated to the sector of governance and peace and security (Global Humanitarian Assistance, 2014).

My choice of country was also taken due to practical reasons: I had been in contact with Forum Syd Colombia, a Swedish development cooperation agency. Between 2009 and 2013[8] Forum Syd administrated the FOS-fund (the Fund for Colombian Civil Society), financed by Sida and Norad (ORGUT, 2014), which supported more than 40 organisations (Forum Syd, 2014). Its overachieving goal is to strengthen the capacity of the civil society regarding peace, human rights and democracy, and one of the more precise goals is to enable strengthened initiatives from the civil society to increase participation in the democratic process and to increase the accountability from public institutions (Sida, 2013, p. 63). My initial idea was to conduct interviews with staff from some of these organisations, which had their offices in Bogotá. In order to conduct enough interviews during the limited period of time I had in Bogotá I decided to look for additional

[7] Except for the year 2012.
[8] The fund is since 2014 administrated by ORGUT, an independent service provider in international development cooperation.

organisations conducting projects focusing on the themes of human rights, democratisation and/or peace and security.

The selection of informants was based on two premises: (1) practical experience of using the LFA in, at least, one development project, and (2) physical presence in Bogotá. I also wanted some variations in respect to size and character of the organisation for which the informant worked, and also in respect to the position the informant had in the organisation or the specific project. The reason for this was that I wanted to increase the possibility to interview officials with different experiences. The reason is *not* that I want to do a comparative study between different organisations or between officials in different positions.

I got in contact with most of the informants through the organisations for which the informants worked (often via the manager of the specific organisation or project). In some cases the contact with the informant was established through her or his friends or co-workers, whom I met during my stay in Bogotá. In other words, the selection of informants could be explained as applying the "snowball effect" (Esaiasson et al., 2007, p. 216). The interviews concerned the informants' experience of the LFA in both current and previous projects and organisations they worked/had worked for (if that was the case).

I distinguish between two types of organisations, in which the informants worked: (1) *implementing organisations*, which work directly with target groups. They implement their own projects and apply for funding directly from international donor agencies or through intermediate organisations, (2) *intermediate organisations*, which support, financially and/or administratively, a group of implementing organisations that receive funding from or through this intermediate organisation, often in a national or regional program.

I interviewed 13 informants in total: nine informants from seven implementing organisations and four informants from two intermediate organisations. Five of the seven implementing organisations are small in terms of numbers of employees. This means that the informants working in these small implementing organisations have various work tasks, e.g. being responsible for or participating in the processes of planning the project, implementing the project's activities, writing reports and having contact with donors and cooperation agencies. The work tasks for the informants working in the large organisations are not as diverse. The four informants working for intermediate organisations are responsible for monitoring and evaluation of a group of projects implemented by different implementing organisations. The one and only informant, who works for a large implementing organisation, is responsible for project planning, monitoring and evaluation, but not for implementation.

To conduct interviews includes certain ethical considerations. The informants were informed about their right to decide whether they wanted to participate and their right to withdraw whenever they wanted. All interviews were conducted on conditions of anonymity. Therefore the informants' real names have been replaced by fictitious names. Recognising that the LFA is a controversial subject, the names of the organisations have been excluded in this presentation (Denscombe, 2009, p. 193ff; Ryen, 2004, p. 155f).

The following table gives an overview of the informants that were interviewed. In addition to the categories already mentioned the column national/international indicates whether the organisation only operates in Colombia or if it conducts/supports projects in other countries.

Table 1: Overview of informants

| Informant | Position | Type (organisation) | Field (organisation) | Size (organisation) | National/international |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tom | Resp., monitoring and evaluation | Intermediate | Peace, human rights and humanitarian aid | Large | International |
| Daniela | Resp., monitoring and evaluation | Intermediate | Peace, human rights and humanitarian aid | Large | International |
| Gabriela | Project official | Intermediate | Peace, human rights | Large | International |
| Jorge* | Resp., monitoring and evaluation | Intermediate | Peace, human rights | Large | International |
| Eduardo* | Project manager | Implementing | Peace, democracy and social justice | Large | International |
| Rebeca | Project manager | Implementing | | Large | National |
| Laura | Coordinator | Implementing | Peace building | Small | International |
| Albert | Coordinator | Implementing | Peace building | Small | International |
| Melissa | Vice president | Implementing | Children's rights | Small | National |
| Camila | Director | Implementing | Children's rights | Small | National |
| Mara | Coordinator | Implementing | Children's rights | Small | National |
| Halima | Vice president | Implementing | Indigenous' rights | Small | National |
| Ana Maria | Director | Implementing | Women's rights | Small | National |

* These two interviews are not presented in the analysis. The reason for this decision is that I regarded the two interviews as not contributing with any new perspectives or topics to the study.

## 3.2 Interviews

The interviews could be characterised as semi-structured (Ryen, 2004, p. 46). For the interviews I used an interview-guide with predefined questions (appendix 2), but I also gave space for follow-up questions during the interviews.

The interview questions concerned the following themes: professional background of the interviewee, what the LFA is according to the interviewee and the organisation (describing the LFA), the use of the LFA (describing a specific project), what the interviewee perceives as the utility of the LFA in development projects (for planning, implementation, evaluation), the interviewee's experience of other management tools in development projects, why the LFA is a requisition, if the LFA favours the interest of a specific stakeholder, if and how the LFA affects the relationship between a project's stakeholders, if the LFA promotes learning, if the interviewee would prefer any other tool of managing projects.

In total 12 interviews were conducted, one of which was a group interview with two participants from the same organisation (Laura and Albert)[9]. The duration of the interviews was between 30 minutes and one hour. The interviews

[9] The reason why I conducted one group interview was because the two persons asked to be interviewed together. When I analysed the transcribed interview I presupposed that the two interviewees interact and influence one another, thus I do not see their stories as independent, but interdependent.

were conducted in the informant's office or in a conference room at the informant's workplace, except for one interview, which was conducted in a café. All the interviews were conducted in Spanish. The interviews were recorded and later transcribed with the help of a native speaker.

Interviews are not only about oral communication. In high-contextual languages, such as Romance languages, words and messages cannot always be literally interpreted to the same extent as in low-contextual languages, such as the Nordic languages where the message is relatively independent of its context (Ryen, 2004, p. 189). This is something I am aware of and which I have tried to be respectful to during the interviews and analysis, e.g. taking notes of body language and citing longer quotes to present the informants' message in its context.

I also want to stress that this study is based on a small empirical material, which means that one should be careful with generalising the results to a larger population of aid workers. The aim is to bring the perspective of the target audience into view (NGO-officials dealing with the LFA). Thus, the strength of this study is its explorative character and aims to improve the understanding of a field that has been investigated to a limited extent.

## 3.3 Disposition of the analysis

The analysis is divided into two parts. The first part (chapter 4) presents the interviewees' perceptions of the LFA as a tool. The overarching question for this chapter is *what potentials and limitations does the LFA have for the work of the NGO-officials and their organisations*? This part could be seen as corresponding to the problem of design.

The second part (chapter 5) presents the interviewees' perceived meaning of the LFA in the relationship between donors and implementing organisations and consequences of different practices of the LFA in the relationship between donors and implementing organisations. This part could be seen as corresponding to the problem of use. The chapter has two sections: 4.1 Perceptions of donors' intentions, and 4.2 LFA and expertise.

In the two chapters a selection of quotes will be referred to. Longer quotes in their original language are to be found in appendix 3. In the analysis the main features of the quotes are retold in English and are then analysed. Some shorter quotes are translated into English.

# 4 The logics of the LFA – a resource or a constraint?

This chapter present the interviewees' perceptions of the LFA. Three categories are presented, which entail the perceived potentials and limitations of the LFA among the interviewees: *LFA as an organiser*, *the problem of risk prediction* and *the problem of measurability*. As you will see the interviewees do not subscribe to only one of these categories.

The problem of design (see 1.2.), especially about the demands for measurability and predictions, is widely shared by the interviewees. Although, some interviewees perceive these demands less problematic for some types of projects. However, as you will see, the LFA is still found useful.

The LFA is seen as a matrix or a tool, which "permits you to give a sense of order to a project" (Camila, pers. comm., 21 Feb 2014), "permits you to order [an] idea in a organised way" (Daniela, pers. comm., 24 Feb 2014), as a "basic planning tool where you can have clarity of the most important aspects of the project" (Gabriela, pers. comm., 25 Feb 2014) and as a "good tool which helps a lot to get clarity about what we want to do" (Laura pers. comm., 28 Feb 2014). I call this *LFA as an organiser*.

Rebeca compares the LFA with another planning tool called "planeación prospectiva" (Rebeca quote 1, appendix 3). Rebeca finds planeación prospectiva more diffuse and less concrete than the LFA. She says that the LFA "invites you to sit down and think about from where you start and to where you can arrive, not in terms of possibilities, but in terms of realities". The LFA allows you to transform a reality or a situation with an order, which allows you to measure and see what you are actually doing. However, despite this perceived utility of the LFA she finds the LFA as too rigid ("demasiado cuadriculado") for the kind of projects she works with – social projects – when it comes to measure a result and to generate indicators that are truly verifiable ("realmente verificables") (Rebeca quote 2, appendix 3). I call this *the problem of measurability* – the perception of a discrepancy between how the LFA requires results to be measured and what is possible to measure for a result in a project.

The problem of measurability is shared by Albert (Albert quote 1, appendix 3). Albert argues that the LFA is a useful tool for any kind of project, because it helps to systematise the information of what you want to obtain in terms of objectives and results. However, he argues that for their projects it is hard to construct indicators that are verifiable. He says that it is possible for him to put an indicator, which tells how many workshops the project shall conduct, but that is, he continues, an indicator of an activity, not of a result, because sometimes the results are of qualitative character ("a veces uno los plantea de manera cualitativa"). It is very difficult, he continues, to measure things such as perception or things that is about one's consciousness, which is what his project is about. The projects of the organisation Albert works for are of preventative character. He stresses that one has to understand that the theory of deterrence is working, and works beyond what is possible to verify (Albert quote 2, appendix 3).

There seems to be a discrepancy between the logics of the organisation's interventions and the logics of the LFA. The organisation's work is based on the idea that the theory of deterrence is working, even if it is not possible to verify with measurable evidence in the way the LFA demands.

Melissa, shares the view of the LFA as an organiser and identifies the problem of measurability and, as you will see further down, *the problem of risk prediction*. Melissa explains the LFA as a work tool, but sees it more as a requirement from cooperation agencies and funders. She describes the LFA as something one has to handle in order to get access to resources from funders and she does not feel comfortable using it. She stresses that using the LFA becomes very rigid when the context "demands other things from you". It is especially rigid for sociocultural processes, which are what her organisation works with. However, she shares the perception of the LFA as being an organiser: She argues that the LFA is useful in the sense that it facilitates the formulation and the report of the project to be more explicit, direct and punctual and that it "serves to refine us in Latin America [because] we are very broad in the way of speaking" (Melissa quote 1, appendix 3).

Melissa also brings up the problem of measuring results (Melissa quote 2, appendix 3). She argues that the LFA is useful for projects, which has to measure things punctually, such as humanitarian aid. It is useful to measure quantitative results, "exact things", in a short or a long period of time.

Daniela, who says that the LFA has functioned well for the emergency projects she has been involved with, also shares this view. However, she finds the LFA difficult for projects, which seek "more complex results" and "attitudinal, cultural and political changes" (Daniela quote 1, appendix 3).

Melissa argues (Melissa quote 2, appendix 3) that one problem with the LFA is its rigidness: Since you have to formulate and act from a (predefined) logframe, it gets problematic when the context changes the conditions for the project. She argues that the context of the Colombian internal conflict changes a lot. Although, the LFA allows people to consider risks, she argues, the risks you identify today could be different in three or six months.

Tom does also mention the problem of risk prediction (Tom quote 1, appendix 3). Tom argues that one problem with the LFA is that it assumes that you somehow are aware of every risk that your project could face. This assumption has a problem, he argues, because the definition of risk means that you are not aware of every risk. He describes the LFA as a plan "written in stone", which is not the case in reality where "you simply make a plan and if the things do not happen in the way you wanted you adjust the plan".

In this chapter I have presented the perception of the interviewees about the potentials and limitations of the LFA. The interviewees share the critique of the LFA, articulated in the beginning of this thesis, arguing that the LFA subscribes a linear conceptualisation of change, which does not correspond with the interventions in real life. *The problem of measurability* is a reoccurring aspect in the interviews; to set verifiable indicators for the projects' results and objectives are seen as very difficult, if possible at all. However, projects that have more easily identifiable outcomes, such as humanitarian aid, are seen as more suitable for the LFA than for projects of social processes, i.e. for projects, whose objectives imply changes in attitudes (as in the case of Albert, whose work implies accompaniment of local human rights organisations).

Another reoccurring issue is *the problem of risk prediction*. The LFA assumes predictability of risks, which are not easily done. The interviewees argue that the context in which their projects take place changes a lot and the LFA is a very rigid tool, because what is written in the logframe is only the initial plan of the project.

Despite the shared critique of the LFA, it is still found useful to organise and systematise a project and to be more realistic about your possible contributions. I call this *LFA as an organiser:* it permits you to have an overview of your project and it helps you to think realistically about the possible contribution of your project, but it does not necessarily reflect how the process will develop.

# 5 The use of the LFA – promoting dialogue or control?

This chapter presents the perceived purpose and practice of the LFA in the relationship between donors and implementing organisations. The first section presents how donors apply different approaches to the purpose and use of the LFA when evaluating and monitoring a project. The second section describes how projects are affected, and arguably controlled, by the logics and assumptions of the LFA when planning a project.

## 5.1 Perceptions of donors' intentions

An interesting observation from the interviews is that the interviewees perceive different donors to ascribe different meanings to the LFA and use it for different purposes when monitoring and evaluating projects and organisations. Let's start with a quote by Camila (Camila quote 1, appendix 3): Camila argues that there are some difficulties with the rigidness of the LFA, that you cannot change what you have negotiate to do in the first place and she calls for possibilities of adjustments. She thinks it is more about the relationship with the donor, rather than the fault of the instrument. She says that the European Union is very "fixed" and does not allow changes.

In another quote Camila gives an example of what happened one time when a project needed adjustments (Camilla quote 2, appendix 3): For Camila it is very important to fulfil what is written in the project's logframe: "I will always fulfil it, because I need you to keep giving me money". She explains one situation when the project had faced unexpected events, which forced her to ask the cooperation agency for permission to prolong the project in order to fulfil all its activities. The cooperation agency delayed to give the permission for two months, which created tension within the organisation and made Camila put pressure on her colleagues and on the project's beneficiaries to complete the activities and to reach the goal, which they, according to Camila, perceived as stressful.

Camila describes the LFA as a contract between her organisation and the cooperation agency: what is written in the projects logframe is what she is obligated to do and if the process of the project does not follow the logframe she needs to ask the cooperation agency for permission to adjust the project. The meaning of the LFA for Camila is thus that the logframe constitutes a contract between her organisation and the donor. She feels that she has to follow what is written in the logframe otherwise there will be negative consequences for her organisation (there is a risk that future projects will not be funded). This meaning affects the actions of Camila: she puts pressure on her colleagues and the project's beneficiaries.

Also Mara argues that the LFA becomes very inflexible in the relationship with other actors (Mara quote 1, appendix 3). Mara argues that the LFA is the tool to organise the project's proposal, but it becomes a very inflexible tool in dialogue with cooperation agencies. She finds the LFA to be fundamental for cooperation agencies when evaluating an organisation. The reports her organisation sends to the cooperation agencies include other things than just the LFA, for example "lessons learned", but she feels that when the cooperation agencies do their evaluation and monitoring the discussion is about the indicators, and that the cooperation agencies do not look for other things. She explains that the view of the project becomes very reduced and she says that it is like if the cooperation agencies were approving students in school – "done or not done, done or not done…".

What Camila and Mara describe is a perception of the LFA becoming a tool for the donor to control the actions of the organisation: for Camila it is very important to fulfil what is written in the logframe because she thinks that otherwise there is a risk of losing her possibilities to receive future funding. She also argues that permission needs to be given by the donor in order for her to change something in the project. Mara perceives the cooperation agencies to use the LFA as a checklist of what is accomplished and not accomplished according to the indicators of the project's logframe, and that the cooperation agencies choose to not look for other things, which Mara perceives as a very reduced way of evaluating a project. They both feel controlled through the LFA, which seems to be a consequence of the donor's approach, or the interviewee's perception of the use and purpose the LFA has for the donors. I want to argue that Camila and Mara's experience can be understood as the donor applying an *inflexible approach* to the LFA.

In contrast to Camila and Mara, who perceive it important to fulfil results and indicators, Ana Maria has another view (Ana Maria quote 1, appendix 3): Ana Maria says it is not important if the project does not achieve its expected results. She says that it is not possible to guarantee that something will work, that there are external things that can lead to a situation where the objective is not accomplished. She argues, "the donors have a lot of flexibility". She gives an example of one time when there was a political crisis, which meant that three years of work failed and she had to tell the donor that the project had crashed and in this case the donor was flexible and they found alternatives for the project to carry on. For Ana Maria, the donors have a *flexible approach* to the LFA. Both her and the donor seem to share the understanding of the LFA as a plan that requires a flexible approach, dialogue and possibilities of necessary adjustments in respond to situations that affect the process of the project and which were not predicted in the first place.

However, she says that she has understood that there are donors who are more demanding and donors who are more flexible with the use of the LFA (Ana Maria quote 2, appendix 3).

There seems to be different approaches to the LFA among different donors and cooperation agencies. Halima tells that despite that Diakonia requires the LFA they are not the most demanding agency when it comes to the LFA (Hamila quote 1, appendix 3). She says that it is more "dramatic" or "harder" when dealing with the European Union, which sets "thousands of requirements" and “different protocols for everything”. The Swedish cooperation, which is canalized through Diakonia, is more “flexible” although they require the LFA to be used for certain types of projects.

In this section I have shown that the interviewees perceive the donors to have different approaches towards the use and purpose of the LFA in the interlocution between donors and implementing organisations, which implies different meanings to the LFA. I have identified two approaches: (1) flexible approach, using the logframe as a departure point for monitoring and evaluation of projects, allowing dialogue and adjustments of the logframe in respect to how the project evolves (2) inflexible approach, using the LFA as an instrument for controlling the fulfilment of results and activities.

## 5.2 LFA and expertise

Albert, Laura, Mara and Halima have felt that they have needed to contract external expertise to comply with the formulation of the logframes for their projects when applying for funding. Halima says that many organisations need to contract someone from outside to deal with the LFA, but her organisation is very small and does not have the “capacity” to do this. She thinks that “making the logframe [themselves]” is a very time consuming task (Halima, pers. comm., 25 Feb 2014). In the following two quotes from Albert and Mara they explain how the logics of the LFA decide what is doable or not for a project.

Mara explains the planning process of a collaborative project together with two other implementing organisations (Mara quote 2, appendix 3). Mara felt that the LFA was more about complying with the “strictness”, the “technical” aspect of the LFA, about “what had to be said, how to say it” and she says that she felt that the possibility of having a political discussion, a discussion of meaning and about “the processes” got lost. She also says that experts were contracted. These expert knew what the donor, in this case the European Union, wanted and could help the implementing organisations to comply with the technical character of the formulation (Mara quote 3, appendix 3).

Also Albert explains one situation when his organisation had to reformulate the logframe because the donor, in this case Sida, said that the indicators and the results “were out of [their] reach”. Thus, his organisation had to contract external expertise to help them reformulating their logframe and to tell them whether a result and an indicator is out of the organisation’s reach. One of the articulated results that had to be reformulated was that the threat against the local organisations, which Albert’s organisation accompanied, had diminished. The reason for that result to be reformulated was because it was said to be “outside” the work of Albert’s organisation (Albert quote 3, appendix 3).

The examples of Mara and Albert show that the projects have to adjust to the logics of the LFA. There seems to be a discrepancy between what Mara and Albert think is necessary or desirable for a project (openness for discussions and to strive for objectives that are in line of the organisation’s work) and what is perceived as doable or logic according to the LFA (use a certain language, act within certain frames and strive for objectives that are measurable). Their projects have to adapt to the LFA rather than finding pragmatic alternatives of managing their projects that suit the needs and desires for the type of work of their organisations. In these cases the adaptation for Mara and Albert implies contracting experts, who take decisions for them. To use the notions of Jürgen Habermas, articulated in 1.4, the LFA could be understood as an instrument for *technical reasoning*: The LFA prevails over other solutions, *practical reasoning*, which would imply alternative ways of managing a project. Telling what is doable and not, referring to the logics of the LFA, could be understood as a way for the donor to indirectly control the content of a project.

# 6 Conclusions

In this study I have investigated the perceptions and experiences of the LFA among 13 NGO-officials in Colombia. The three main findings are: (1) a discrepancy between how the interviewees perceive the logics of the LFA and how their development projects work in reality. The interviewees find it hard to articulate the content of their projects according to the logics and assumptions of the LFA, especially according to the requirement of having measurable results and verifiable indicators and predicting risks that could affect the projects. Thus, the critique about the problem of design is shared among the interviewees. However, this problem seems to be less serious for projects with quantitative objectives, e.g. humanitarian aid, than for projects with qualitative objectives, such as behavioural changes. Also, there is a widespread conception among the interviewees that the LFA is helpful to organise and systematise their projects regardless of the type of project. From the interviewees' perception of the LFA as a helpful organiser it would be possible to argue that the LFA is perceived useful when it is understood and applied as an ideal way of thinking about a project that is worth striving for, but should not be seen as an end in itself.

(2) The LFA is perceived as a contract between the donor and the implementing organisation which contains what the implementing organisation has promised to deliver in terms of results and activities. The interviewees perceive the donors and cooperation agencies to apply different approaches to the LFA when using the LFA for evaluation purposes. I have identified two different approaches: (a) inflexible approach, which means that evaluating a project through the LFA is for accountability purposes, assuring that the implementing organisation delivers the expected results and activities. (b) Flexible approach, which means using the LFA as a ground for dialogue and allowing adjustments of a project's logframe if unpredicted scenarios occur which could affect the project. Thus, the interviewees have experienced the problem of use. An interesting observation is that one interviewee described that tension within her organisation was created because she perceived it essential to fulfil what was written in the logframe. Unfortunately, this study does not give other examples of how the interviewees' behaviour or actions are affected by the different (perceived) approaches that donors apply.

(3) Some of the interviewees have experienced that they, at the request of the donor, have had to adapt their projects to the assumptions and requirements of the LFA. This have in some cases implied contracting experts of the LFA, who have taken decisions on the behalf of the organisation. LFA could be understood as an instrument of technical reasoning: The LFA gives donors the possibility to indirectly control the actions of the implementing organisations they fund; by demanding the LFA when planning a project the logics of the LFA becomes the judge deciding what is doable and not. This is seen by some of the interviewees as a limitation for their projects.

The LFA is prescribed to not be used as a control instrument and should be applied with flexibility. Moreover, the LFA needs to be "based on reality and applied with sound common sense" (Örtengren, 2004, p. 6, 24). Although, a flexible approach ought to be applied the LFA itself seems to not prevent it from being used as a control instrument nor assuring flexible application. This study shows that NGO-officials perceive the LFA as a control instrument, both in the sense of controlling the content of a project and how to manage a project and to be held accountable by donors for delivering results.

From the conclusions the question about who owns the project arises: Do the LFA and likeminded tools make the international development cooperation to be a *mutual* cooperation or do they sustain an outdated idea of international development cooperation as a gift from the richer to the poorer countries?

From the conclusions it would be interesting to further investigate why donors apply different approaches to the LFA and how different approaches or perceived approaches affect the dynamics within and between implementing organisations and donors.

Although, it is possible to argue that the LFA was created with good intentions this study clearly shows that meanings, perceptions and practices of the LFA are not as sound and united in reality.

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# Appendix 1

Box 1: Typical logical framework format

| Narrative summary | Objectively verifiable indicators | Means of verification | Assumptions |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Goal – the overall aim to which the project is expected to contribute* | Measures (direct or indirect) to show the project's contribution to the goal | Sources of information and methods used to show fulfillment of goal | Important events, conditions or decisions beyond the project's control necessary for maintaining the progress towards the goal |
| *Outcomes (or objectives) – the new situation which the projects is aiming to bring about* | Measures (direct or indirect) to show what progress is being made towards reaching the objectives | Sources of information and methods used to show progress against objectives | Important events, conditions or decisions beyond the project's control, which are necessary if achieving the objectives is going to contribute towards the overall goal |
| *Outputs – the results which should be within the control of the project management* | Measures (direct or indirect) to show if project outputs are being delivered | Sources of information and methods used to show delivery of outputs | Important events, conditions or decisions beyond the project's control, which are necessary if producing the outputs is going to help achieve the objectives |
| *Activities – the things which have to be done by the project to produce the outputs* | Measures (direct or indirect) to show if project outputs are being delivered | Sources of information and methods used to show that activities have been completed | Important events, conditions or decisions beyond the project's control, which are necessary if completing activities will produce the required outputs |
| *Inputs* | Resources – type and level of resources needed for the project<br>Finance – overall budget<br>Time – Planned start and end date | | |

(Adapted from Mikkelsen 1995: 51)

Figure 1. A typical logframe/project matrix (Bakewell & Garbutt, 2005).

# Appendix 2

## Guía de entrevista

Muchas gracias por su tiempo para participar en mi investigación. Realizo un estudio independiente para mi tesis en ciencia política. El objetivo de la investigación es conocer el nivel de satisfacción con el marco lógico según personas involucradas en proyectos por el desarrollo social en un contexto colombiano.

El objetivo de esta entrevista es conocer sus experiencias y percepciones profesionales del marco lógico. Todas las personas y organizaciones que participan en esta investigación serán anónimas.

Para efectos de esta investigación, es necesario grabar la entrevista. Está bien para usted? Adicionalmente, agradecería que durante la entrevista hable despacio y claro. Gracias!

Preguntas

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1. Por favor, cuénteme un poco sobre usted, su organización y su papel en está.

2. Podría explicarme lo que es el marco lógico para usted en la organización en que trabaja?

3. Podría usted describirme un proyecto especifico en lo que usted ha utilizado el marco lógico? Por favor, cuénteme sobre los procesos de planificación, seguimiento y evaluación.

4. Ha trabajado usted en proyectos en dónde el marco lógico no era un requisito? Qué otros tipos de herramientas de planificación, seguimiento y evaluación fueron utilizadas? Qué piensa usted de esta(s) forma(s) de manejar un proyecto en comparación con el marco lógico?

5. Qué opina usted sobre el marco lógico? Percibe usted el marco lógico cómo una herramienta útil o inútil? Cuando y porqué?

    a. Cómo lo era en el ejemplo que explicó?
    b. En cuáles casos el marco lógico podría mejorar y/o limitar su proyecto?

6. Qué piensa usted del marco lógico como una herramienta para evaluar proyectos? Qué es realmente evaluado con el marco lógico? Para quién? Puede el marco lógico evaluar por ejemplo los impactos del proyecto en una manera adecuada? Cuáles aspectos no puede evaluar el marco lógico?

7. Porqué requieren los donantes que el marco lógico sea utilizado para planificar, implementar y evaluar proyectos?

8. Hay (o puede haber) intereses conflictivos entre los donantes, los ONGs y los beneficiarios (en cuanto al contenido o de la manera de realizar un proyecto)? Si es así, cuál o cuáles actores favorece el marco lógico?
9. Utilizaría usted el marco lógico aunque no fuera un requisito de los donantes? Porqué/porqué no? Qué otros tipos de herramientas o métodos utilizaría entonces?

10. Hay teorías que implican que el marco lógico promueve responsabilidad y credibilidad en un proyecto entre los actores (donantes, ONG, beneficiarios).

    a. En cuáles maneras percibe usted que ustedes cómo una organización sea responsable hacia los donantes y los beneficiarios? El uso del marco lógico afecta, en una manera o otra, a su responsabilidad como organización hacia los actores diferentes?

11. Hay teorías que implican que la confianza entre los diferentes actores en la cooperación al desarrollo es importante para tener una colaboración efectiva y mutual.

    a. Piensa usted que el marco lógico, en una manera u otra, afecta a la confianza entre donantes, organizaciones y beneficiarios?

12. Qué cree usted sobre el marco lógico como una herramienta de evaluación para promover aprendizaje para mejorar la realización de proyectos futuros?

13. Qué podría ser una forma mejor para evaluar y monitorizar los tipos de proyectos que tiene su organización?

## Otras cosas

14. Hay algo más que quiera decir o añadir en cuanto a éste tema?

15. Tiene alguna pregunta para mi ó mi investigación?

16. Podría contactarle en caso de necesitar alguna información adicional?

17. Conoce alguna persona que sería relevante a entrevistar para mi estudio?

18. Muchas gracias por su participación!

# Appendix 3

Albert quote 1: Alfred: Me podrías explicar lo que es el marco lógico para ti?
Albert: Haha… Yo creo que es una herramienta útil independientemente del tipo de proyecto que hay, porque al menos uno puede plantearse que tipo de objetivos o resultados quiere obtener, cuales son las metas que quiere alcanzar. Entonces por sistematizar toda esa información yo creo que es válido. […] Creo que también para proyectos como los nuestros creo que es muy complicado a la orden de construir, no tanto de construir los indicadores y demás sino que pudieran ser verificables, que uno está consiguiendo las metas o los resultados que se han planteado porque a veces uno los plantea de manera cualitativa, uno puede sí, yo puedo plantear, puedo hacer tantos talleres pero al final eso es una actividad, no? Y bien has hecho la actividad pero eso no es un resultado, no es un indicador, no es un objetivo de nada... Entonces es muy difícil medir términos como la percepción o lo que tiene que ver con mi proyecto, lo que tiene que ver con mi conciencia. Uno cómo mide la conciencia de que los participantes están concienciados, de que la seguridad es clave para su trabajo? Tenerlo en cuenta es muy difícil de medir. (Albert, pers. comm., 28 Feb 2014)

Albert quote 2: Albert: [C]reo que es más de dar por sentado la metodología o entender que la teoría de la disuasión sigue funcionando más allá de que puedas verificarlo o no si es aunque tengas muy poquitos ejemplos, tenemos ejemplos de gente que no a esta gente no la vamos a agredir porque están acompañados por los monos de ojos claros, entonces pero sí creo que hay que ser más flexible [con el marco lógico] en términos de lo que es cualitativo. (Albert, pers. comm., 28 Feb 2014)

Albert quote 3: Albert: De hecho nosotros reformulamos el marco lógico al final del primer año, así hicimos a partir de, ya habían habido comentarios por parte de ASDI [10] que los indicadores y los resultados eran difícilmente manejables, que no estaban a nuestro alcance y luego se hizo un estudio de línea base entonces ahí nos dio algunas ideas de que el marco lógico anterior no estaba centrado en lo que tenía que estar centrado y ahí fue cuando solicitamos el apoyo externo de alguien, para que facilitara el proceso a la hora de llamarte la atención o decir ese indicador que ustedes están planteando, o ese output está fuera de su alcance. Por poner un ejemplo, uno de los outputs que teníamos era que él de

[10] The Spanish name for Sida

amenaza contra las organizaciones ha disminuido y eso está fuera de nosotros. (Albert, pers. comm., 28 Feb 2014)

Ana Maria quote 1: Alfred: Es importante lograr los resultados esperados para que reciban financiamiento otra vez?
Ana Maria: No es importante porque tú no puedes garantizar que algo funcione porque tú puedes diseñar un objetivo y que en el año no se cumplió porque hubo un golpe de Estado, porque las mujeres con las que trabajamos se desplazaron. Qué me preocupé yo por cumplir con los objetivos no, porque hay muchas cosas externas que pueden llevar a que el objetivo no se cumpla.
Alfred: Pero permite el marco lógico o como lo utilizan ustedes y los donantes, como… permite tener una flexibilidad?
Ana Maria: Si los donantes tienen mucha flexibilidad [...] no es tan rígido entonces tampoco es que me preocupe mucho. Yo he estado en proyectos de cinco años y en el tercer año hubo uno crisis política y se cayó todo el trabajo de los tres años todo, me tocó decirle al donante "se cayó el proyecto", pues hubo flexibilidad y ya se tomaron alternativas, pero qué puedes hacer? (Ana Maria, pers. comm., 22 Feb 2014)

Ana Maria quote 2: Alfred: Hay una diferencia de los donantes de como usan el marco lógico?
Ana Maria: Yo creo que sí, hay donantes más exigentes y otros más flexibles... por ejemplo yo tengo entendido que la Unión Europea es un donante muy difícil para trabajar y la verdad que muy complicado porque no hay flexibilidad, son muy exigentes. (Ana Maria, pers. comm., 22 Feb 2014)

Camila quote 1: Alfred: Hay aspectos o situaciones donde [el marco lógico] sea menos útil o inútil?
Camila: Siento cuando tú me dices que sea menos útil, cuando yo tengo que trabajar un proyecto por él que recibo unos recursos de cooperación y que el donante no está a mi lado y que él tiene que saber, es muy útil. Donde yo siento que puede tener un poco de dificultades es en lo cuadriculado que es y que ya tú lo negociaste no lo puedes cambiar. Entonces debería haber posibilidad de que no tengo si no seis meses que cambios y ajustes puedo hacer. Y no es tanto el instrumento es más en la relación con el donantes. Muchas veces la Unión Europea tiene un tiempo, tiene esto, es muy fijo… y no te permite hacer cambios. (Camila, pers. comm., 21 Feb 2014)

Camila quote 2: Alfred: El uso del marco lógico puede afectar en una manera u otra a la responsabilidad que tienen ustedes, por ejemplo hacia los donantes o los beneficiarios?
Camila: Yo lo que creo es que podrían llevar tensión por lo que te decía, resulta que yo tenía este marco lógico para seis meses y [la

agencia de cooperación[11]] se retrasó en darme el permiso dos meses, ya me quedan cuatro meses lo que si genera es tensión, porque yo empiezo a correr para cumplir esto pero yo siempre voy a cumplir de esto, porque yo necesito que tú me sigas dando plata, dinero entonces que puede pasar, que yo esté atropellando a todo mi equipo para que me cumpla, que atropella a los beneficiarios para que lleguemos a la meta. Esa tensión sí pasa.
Alfred: Es algo que afecta mucho a su trabajo?
Camila: A la gente, a mí no porque yo empiezo con el látigo "¡corran!". Pero el equipo dice "pero porqué me está haciendo correr así?". Y los beneficiarios, yo me acuerdo con uno que hicimos con la Unión Europea que nos atrasamos en el tiempo y los chicos decían "pero ¡que cantidad de talleres!", todo tan seguido. (Camila, pers. comm., 21 Feb 2014)

Daniela quote 1: Daniela: [A] mí [el marco lógico] me ha funcionado mucho en proyectos de emergencia. Es maravilloso porque te organiza muy bien la idea y tienes actividades, resultados y objetivos, es muy sencillo. En los proyectos donde se requiere una mayor flexibilidad y donde el contexto es más complejo y donde buscas resultados más complejos y cambios sobre todo actitudinal, culturales, en política pública, allí es mucho más difícil bajarlo en una cosa tan concreta. (Daniela, pers. comm., 24 Feb 2014)

Halima quote 1: Halima: [A] pesar de que Diakonia pide el marco lógico no es la agencia más exigente frente a los marco lógicos. Es mucho más dramático o más difícil cuando se trata de la Unión Europea. La Unión Europea te pone mil requerimientos, mil requisitos distintos protocolos para todo entonces en eso sí podría decirte que en comparación por ejemplo con la Unión Europea la cooperación sueca que se canaliza a través de Diakonia es mucho más flexible a pesar de que exige para cierto tipo de proyectos y cierto tipo de coparte el marco lógico, entonces hay cosas mucho peores. (Halima, pers. comm., 25 Feb 2014)

Mara quote 1: Alfred: Hay otros aspectos del marco lógico que puedan ser útil o inútil en su trabajo?
Mara: […] Digamos que la propuesta no es el marco lógico, es la herramienta como quien la ordena pero entonces se vuelve demasiado inflexible más digamos en la relación con otro en la interlocución con otro se vuelve… creo que pasa también con las agencias de cooperación y es que lo que yo te decía cuando se sientan a evaluar una organización por ejemplo es fundamentalmente a través del marco lógico. En los informes unos narrativos le piden cuales son las lecciones aprendidas pero nosotros sentimos que cuando hacen las visitas de seguimiento y se sientan con uno están en discusión los indicadores y las fuentes y no se miran otras cosas. Entonces como que termina siendo muy

[11] The name of the cooperation agency has been removed

reducido la mirada, porque es como si estuvieras calificando al alumno en el colegio hizo o no hizo, hizo o no hizo… (Mara, pers. comm., 21 Feb 2014)

Mara quote 2: Mara: Nosotros creemos que ahí se asumió el marco lógico más como en la idea de poder cumplir muy bien con la rigurosidad, de lo técnico del marco lógico como para que se nos fuera aprobado el proyecto o sea que era lo que había que decir, como había que decirlo y digamos que sentimos que se perdió la posibilidad de un espacio realmente de discusión digamos más político, más de sentido, de los procesos y eso. (Mara, pers. comm., 21 Feb 2014)

Mara quote 3: Mara: […] y ahí se contrataron varios veces expertos en marco lógico, pero expertos que podían cumplir con la rigurosidad de la técnica y digamos que son proyectos con la Unión Europea entonces expertos en lo que Unión Europea quisiera, y nosotros decimos que hay que cumplir pero se pierde como lo que para nosotros es la esencia realmente es decir discusiones políticas de proceso, de una cantidad de cosas. (Mara, pers. comm., 21 Feb 2014)

Melissa quote 1: Alfred: Para ti y la organización en la cual trabajas qué es el marco lógico?
Melissa: El marco lógico es una herramienta de trabajo pero es más una exigencia de las agencias de cooperación o de los financiadores. Si el financiador está con la lógica del marco lógico uno la maneja para poder acceder a los recursos pero no es algo que un trabajo como él de procesos uno se sienta cómodo. Sirve mucho para afinar nosotros en Latinoamérica, somos muy amplios en la forma de hablar, entonces sirve mucho para uno acotar, para ser más directo, explicito, puntual tanto en la formulación de lo que quiere como para la rendición del informe. Sirve para no pasarse. Pero cuando el contexto te exige otras cosas es muy rígido. No sale bien. Es demasiado rígido sobre todo para procesos socioculturales como los tenemos que ver nosotros con los derecho de los niños. (Melissa, pers. comm., 17 Feb 2014)

Melissa quote 2: Alfred: Qué opinas sobre el marco lógico? Percibes el marco lógico como una herramienta útil o inútil?
Melissa: Es útil para proyectos que tienen que medir puntualmente, por ejemplo ayuda humanitaria. Si hablamos del caso de los derechos es útil que ese tipo de proyectos que van a medir exactamente un resultado cuantificable en un tiempo breve o largo pero que se sabe que son cosas exactas. […] Creo que en lo social funciona muy bien en la ayuda humanitaria en las cosas de asistencia pero no de desarrollo o investigación de las comunidades no es muy favorable, en el sentido de que el contexto del conflicto cambia y cambia mucho y el marco lógico es muy rígido. Tú tienes un marco y de este marco lógico tengo que actuar en este marco y

estando en conflicto a veces no puedes. Es interesante también que en el marco le permite a las personas como hacer una ponderación de riesgos pero los riesgos aquí que uno pondera hoy cuando hizo la planeación pueden ser distintos dentro de tres y seis meses. (Melissa, pers. comm., 17 Feb 2014)

Rebeca quote 1: Rebeca: [L]a planeación prospectiva para mi es mucho mas laxa. El marcó lógico te invita mucho más a sentarte y a pensar exactamente de donde arrancas y a donde vas a poder llegar no tanto en términos de posibilidades sino de realidades es un poco lo que percibo y adicionalmente yo tenia un profesor que decía "el marco lógico no hace nada mas que ponerle orden a lo que usted tiene en la cabeza" y es cierto el marco lógico lo que le permite a uno es ponerle orden a lo que quiere hacer y un proyecto finalmente. Es eso es como lo que se quiere hacer para transformar una realidad o para transformar una situación y demás pero con un orden que permite medir y ver qué realmente lo que usted está haciendo. (Rebeca, pers. comm., 21 Feb 2014)

Rebeca quote 2: Alfred: Qué opinas sobre el marco lógico? Cuando puede ser útil y inútil?

Rebeca: A mi me parece útil en la medida en que organiza, sistematiza y pone claridad sobre lo que tu quieres hacer y como lo vas a medir. No me parece inútil, me parece a veces un poco si la planeación prospectiva era demasiado laxa esto me parece demasiado cuadriculado en términos de tener que demostrar exactamente que con una actividad puedes llegar a un resultado y que ese resultado lo vas a medir exactamente con este indicador. A veces se vuelve un poco para proyectos como estos, sociales, se vuelve un poco difícil a la hora de medir y a la hora de generar indicadores realmente verificables. (Rebeca, pers. comm., 21 Feb 2014)

Tom quote 1: Tom: [E]l marco lógico tiene un supuesto de fondo y es que de alguna manera uno conocía todos los riesgos a los que estaban expuestos y que además de conocerlos que había hecho el ejercicio de revisar la lógica vertical y horizontal del proyecto para reformular las actividades y los productos que tienen que ver los riesgos. Pero digamos que ese supuesto tiene un problema porque de entrada en esa misma definición de riesgo implica que uno no los conoce todos. Entonces lo que creo que es un error es que el marco lógico es una herramienta de piedra, o sea que está escrito en piedra la planeación. Nada está escrito en piedra. Uno simplemente hace un plan y si las cosas no pasan como uno quería que pasaran pues ajusta el plan. (Tom, pers. comm., 20 Feb 2014)