



The Robertson Trust

**Breaking the cycle: taking
an evidence-based approach to
reducing reoffending**

Christine Scullion, Head of Development



Content

- **Background to The Robertson Trust**
- **Development Approach and Journey**
- **Case Studies – Moving On and Breaking the Cycle**
- **Why the Third Sector?**
- **PSPs and the Change Fund**
- **Lessons Learned – the Hard Way**
- **Using the Evidence Base**
- **Economic Evaluation**
- **Looking Ahead**



The Robertson Trust

- **Established in 1961 by the three Robertson sisters, Elspeth, Agnes & Ethel who donated their shares in the family business, The Edrington Group.**
- **Currently the largest Independent Trust in Scotland**
- **Has to date given away over £110M to Scottish Charities with over £15M awarded in 2012/13**



Priorities

7 Priority Areas:

- **Health,**
- **Care,**
- **Education and Training,**
- **Community Art,**
- **Community Sport,**
- **Alcohol Misuse, and**
- **Criminal Justice**



Development Areas

- **Criminal Justice**
(throughcare, support for families)
- **Community Sport**
(diversionary activities for young people)
- **Alcohol Misuse**
(prevention and education)



Development Approach

- **We look at hard issues where no-one else has gone and identify gaps in service provision where our resources can have the greatest impact**
- **Undertake initial research to identify any existing evidence-base**
- **Take a partnership approach to co-design services with third sector delivery agencies**
- **Seek engagement at design stage with statutory partners to ensure longer term uptake**



Development Approach

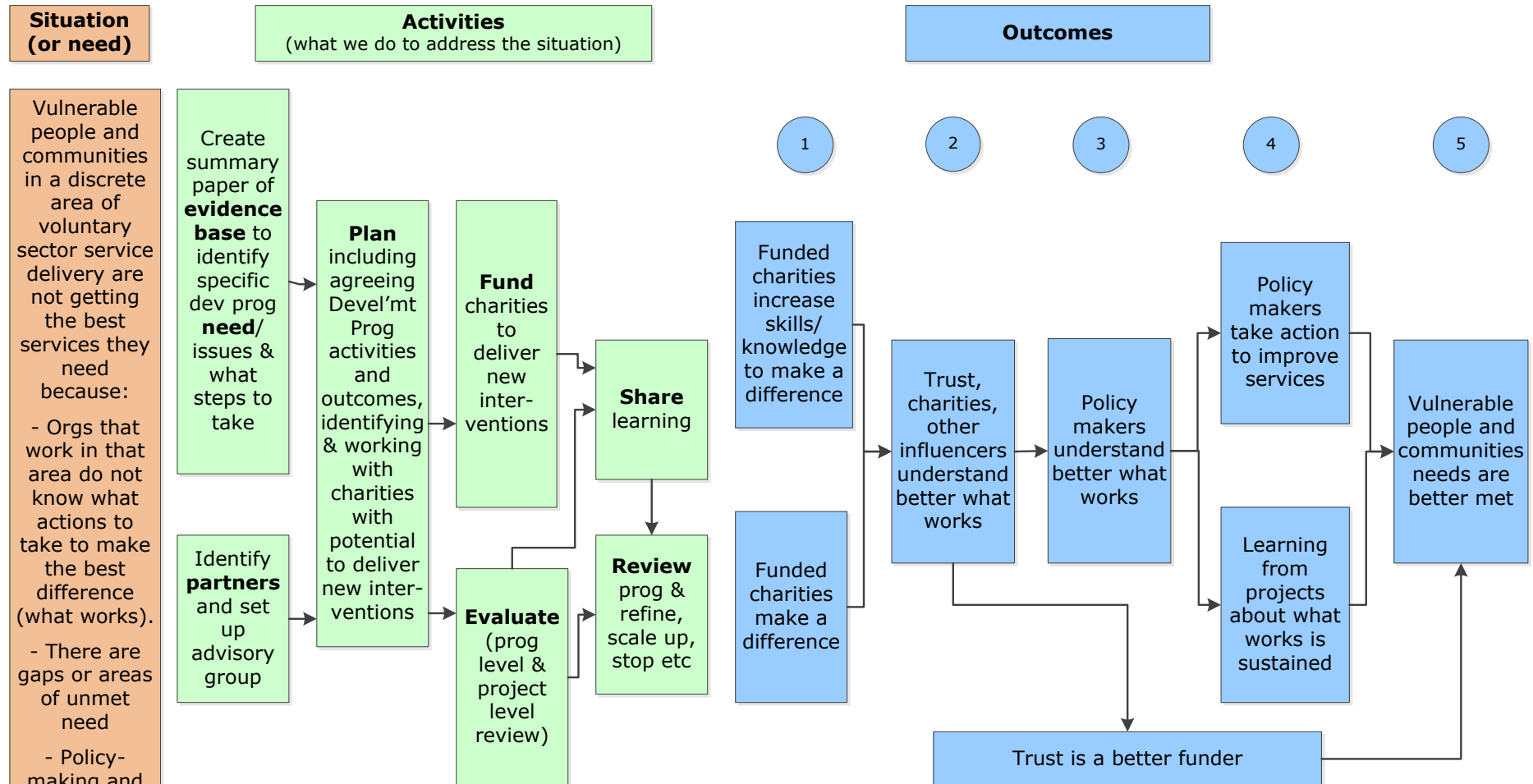
- **Seek appropriate funding partners**
- **Stay alongside the project(s) for as long as required to enable learning to be consolidated**
- **Commission independent evaluation to identify good practice, what has and hasn't worked and use findings to inform local and national policy**



Development Outcomes

- **Funded charities make a difference and improve their own knowledge and skills**
- **The Trust, charities and other stakeholders better understand ‘what works’ within a Development Area**
- **Policy Makers better understand ‘what works’ within this area**
- **Policy Makers take action to improve services and learning from projects about ‘what works’ is sustained**
- **The needs of vulnerable people and communities are better met.**

The Robertson Trust's Development Journey



Assumptions

1. Focus in a development programme means we don't spread ourselves too thin
2. Doors open for the Robertson Trust
3. What we say comes from the projects we fund – this gives us credibility
4. Credibility also comes from a focus on evaluation
5. We help projects to represent themselves when we can
6. We promote learning but we don't have a monopoly on good practice
7. To make a difference to policy and practice we build trust through relationships
8. It takes time to make a difference



Criminal Justice

Areas of Investment:

- **Support for families affected by imprisonment**
- **Throughcare support for offenders serving sentences of 4 years or less, particularly young offenders and women**
- **Social Enterprise**
- **£7M invested over the past 8 years**



Case Study: Moving On Renfrewshire

- **Started as a partnership between Action for Children, Fairbridge and the Prince's Trust as a response to the high number of individual charities working in Polmont YOI.**
- **The throughcare project takes a 'youth work' approach to support young offenders. Works alongside local partners to ensure young people are able to access the support they need in prison and on release.**
- **Only 26% of young offenders return to custody within 2 years, compared to a national average of 50%.**
- **The project was initially expanded to Inverclyde and East Ayrshire through the establishment of a PSP and is now being funded through the Reducing Reoffending Change Fund.**



Value of the Third Sector

- **Responsiveness**
- **Flexibility**
- **Persistence**
- **Relationship**
- **Choice**
- **Innovation**

- **But funding is often short-term and insecure so projects can come and go**



Breaking the Cycle

- **£1M Fund – Serco and the Trust**
- **4 Throughcare Projects:**
 - **Access to Industry**
 - **Barnardo's**
 - **Station House Media**
 - **Centrestage**



Emerging Findings

- **It takes time to embed new services within a prison environment**
- **Services work best if they engage with offenders at the point of entering custody and continue to work with them for a significant period of time on release**
- **Multi-agency planning and in particular the involvement of universal services such as housing, health and benefits are vital as these can be important gaps**



Public Social Partnership (PSP) Model

- A Public Social Partnership (PSP) is a model where public, third sector bodies and service users work together to co-design a service to meet a need
- PSPs typically consist of three stages:
 - Design: co-design a service that maximises social benefit
 - Piloting: the service is delivered for a limited time with adjustments made as required to achieve maximum social benefit
 - Tendering: interventions which successfully meet the agreed outcomes would usually expect to receive mainstream funding from the public sector partners



Reducing Reoffending Change Fund

- **£10M investment from Scottish Government, SPS and The Robertson Trust**
- **Aims to:**
 - **provide offenders with substantial one-to-one support through evidence-based mentoring schemes; &**
 - **promote strong, equal partnership working between third and public sector organisations.**
- **6 PSPs funded to work with prolific young male and women offenders**
- **Developed from an existing evidence base with ongoing evaluation to monitor impact of the programme and PSP approach**



Evaluation – Lessons Learned

- **Be clear about the aims of the evaluation**
- **Identify research questions and ensure the evaluation answers them**
- **Begin by putting in some context including how the service fits into the existing evidence base**
- **Include key information such as the project's activities, intended outcomes and how much it cost**
- **Clearly outline the methods used in the evaluation and acknowledge what they can and cannot demonstrate**
- **Do not to make sweeping conclusions on the basis of the outcomes achieved by small numbers of people**

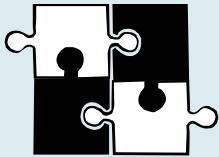
THE 4 STEP APPROACH TO EVALUATION



Review the evidence



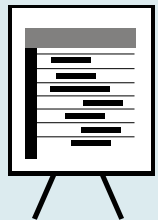
Interventions should be clearly structured and designed using robust evidence so it is important to be familiar with the results from the 'what works' and desistance literature. This knowledge should be used to evaluate the extent to which the intervention is grounded in strong and consistent evidence. The evaluation should also be explicit about how much it cost and how the funds were spent.



Draw a logic model



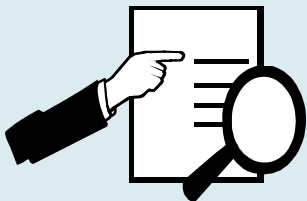
Draw a logic model describing how your intervention works in practice by describing the links between inputs, outputs and outcomes. The logic model forms the basis for evaluating the **whole** intervention so this may provide better clues as to why an intervention achieved its outcomes or why it did not.



Identify Indicators and collect monitoring data



Use this logic model to identify indicators for inputs, outputs and outcomes and collect data using relevant methods



Evaluate logic model



Then analyse the data (and collect more if necessary) to find out the extent to which your intervention was evidence-based and if it worked as the logic model predicted it would. **Put as much emphasis on describing and evaluating inputs as well as outputs and outcomes**

Desired intermediate outcomes (based on criminogenic needs)



WHAT WORKS TO REDUCE REOFFENDING

The Reducing Reoffending Evidence review published by Justice Analytical Services in 2011 found that,

- Community sentences are more effective at reducing reoffending in the long term than short term prison sentences.
- Respectful, skilled, participatory and flexible contact with a supervisor can trigger positive changes in offenders.
- The effectiveness of prison-based interventions is enhanced when aftercare support is provided following release.
- Holistic interventions that target offenders' multiple needs and involve work with offenders' families and the wider community (e.g. employers) are more likely to be effective at reducing reoffending.
- Interventions for women offenders are more likely to be successful if they target financial and family needs.
- Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) programmes have proven effective in reducing reoffending.
- Stable and quality employment protects against reoffending especially if accompanied with other forms of support.
- Drug treatment programmes have, on average a positive impact on reoffending

Two full reviews of what works to reduce reoffending are available here

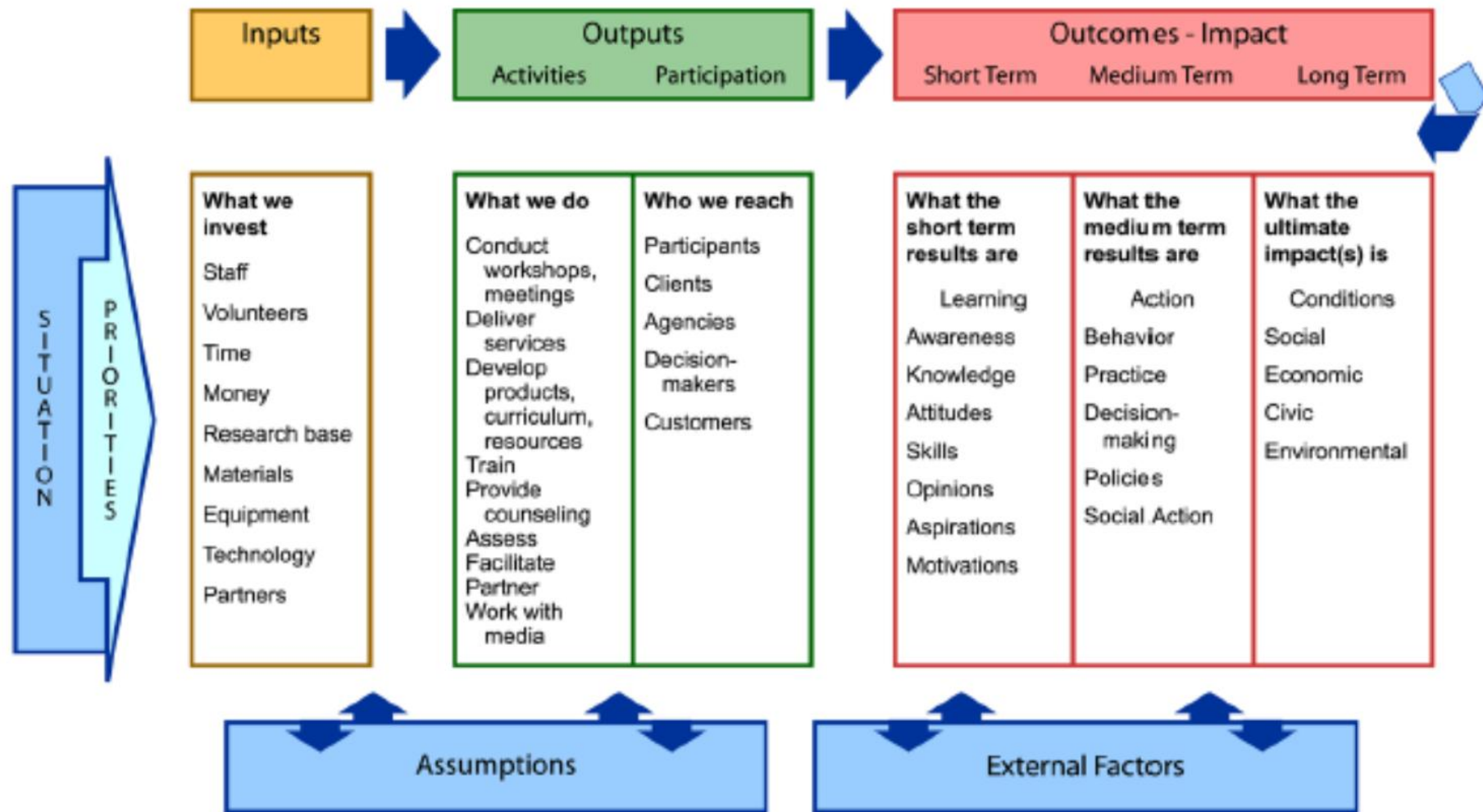
Reducing Reoffending Review

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0038/00385880.pdf>

Strengthening Transnational Approaches to Reducing Reoffending

http://www.cepprobation.org/uploaded_files/Rep%20STARR%20ENG.pdf

A LOGIC MODEL TEMPLATE TO USE

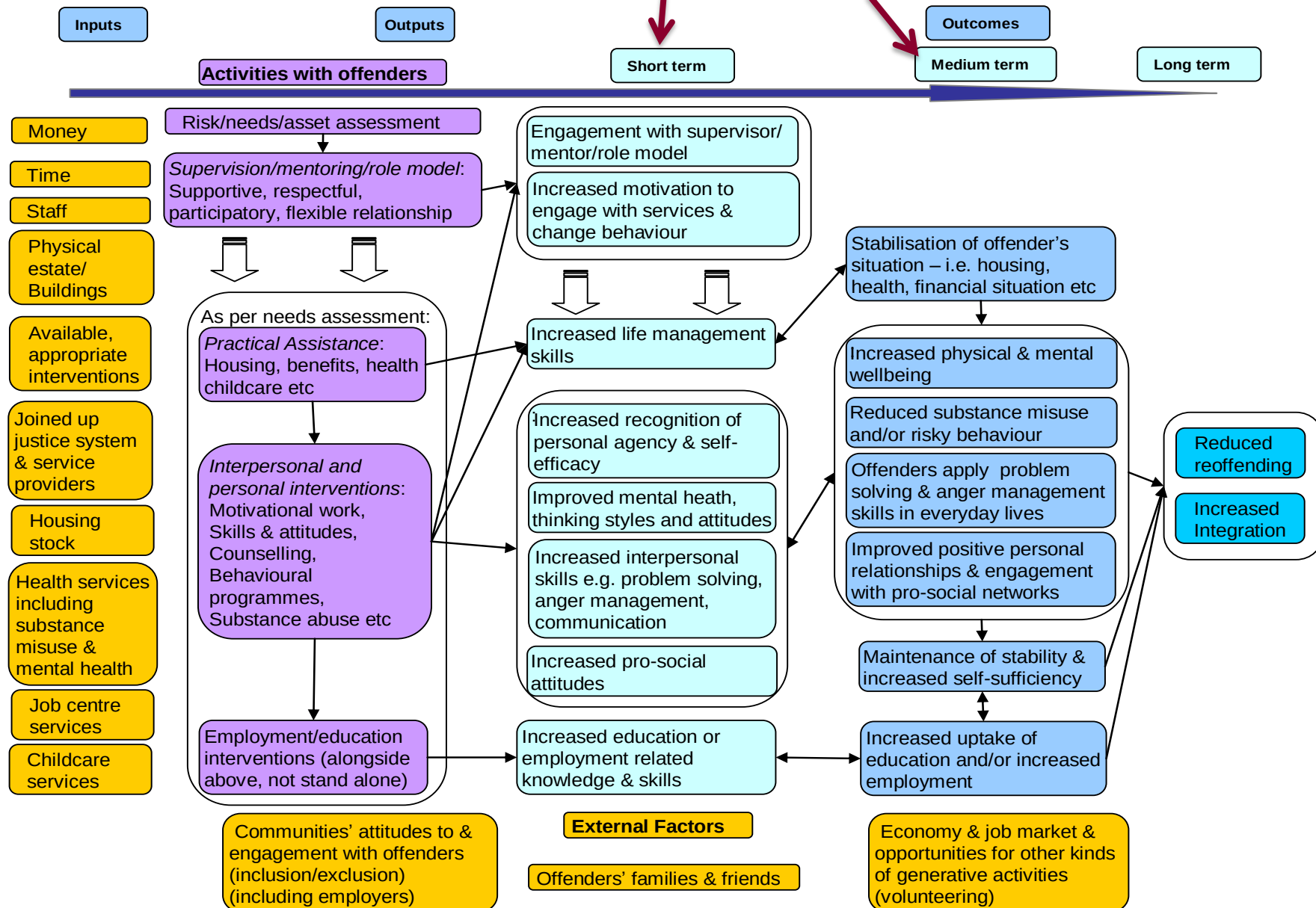


This blank template can be found here

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/evallogicmodel.html>

the Reducing Reoffending Evidence Model

Short and medium term outcomes are also known as 'intermediate' outcomes or criminogenic needs which should be addressed





Economic Evaluation

- Investing resources in preventative services that reduce (re)offending may lead to significant savings to the public in the long term.
- An economic evaluation of Circle calculated that because female offenders cost society an average of £65,000 in the 10 years following their offence, Circle only needs to have a positive impact on the reoffending rates of 3 – 13% of the women they work with to produce a benefit to society.
- However basing future funding decisions on the findings of economic evaluations can be challenging because:
 - It requires services to first have a robust impact evaluation
 - Savings accrue to different agencies than those who commission criminal justice services (e.g. health, employment, social care)



Looking Ahead

- **Exit from funding throughcare services**
- **Work with partners to further develop taking an evidence-based approach**
- **Women's Centres**
- **School-based Interventions**
- **Range of work with partners at Polmont YOI**