

Program Assessment: Planning for Evaluation Now and in the Future



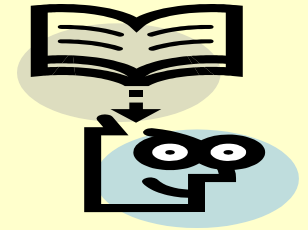
Tabia Henry Akintobi, PhD, MPH
Historically Black Colleges and Universities
National Resource Center for Substance Abuse
and Mental Health Infrastructure Development
Evaluation Team

Illuminate Training
December 2007



What is Evaluation?

- A systematic process
- Involves data collection
- Process for enhancing knowledge and decision-making

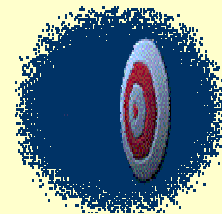


Adapted from Russ-Eft and Preskill (2001)



Evaluation Types-Process

- Identifies how a program is operating and may answer questions like:
 - How many clients were served per month?
 - How much staff time is required per client?
 - How long does it take for participants to complete the program?



Evaluation Types-Outcome

- Identifies the results/effectiveness of a program in achieving performance indicators and may answer questions like:
 - Did knowledge improve?
 - Did reported participation in activities increase?
 - Did initiatives increase?

Role and Importance of Evaluation



- **Guides** planning of proposed programs and activities prior to implementation
- **Monitors** and **documents** implementation of programmatic activities
- **Assesses** whether activities and interventions achieve desired outcomes



Preliminary Evaluation Considerations

- Method and tool selection should follow decisions on the evaluation's purpose, key questions, and performance indicators
 - Shaped by Identification of Problem or Issue
 - Developed through Review of the Literature/Data
 - Developed by Input from Evaluation Stakeholders



Data Collection Methods

- **Data Collection Methods**
 - Quantitative
 - Qualitative



Quantitative Data Collection Methods

- Most frequently used research/evaluation data collection method
- Descriptive, explanatory or exploratory
- Good for measuring attitudes and knowledge

Quantitative Data Collection Methods

Strengths

- Inexpensive and efficient
- Captures information from greater number of people
- More likely to be standardized



Quantitative Data Collection Methods

Weaknesses

- Cannot measure social actions
- May be artificial and potentially superficial
- Difficult to gain a full sense of social processes in natural settings

Frequently Used Quantitative Data Collection Tools

- Self-administered Surveys

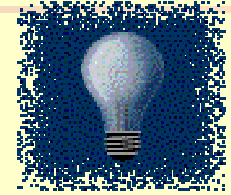


- Pre- and/or Post-Assessment Surveys

- Participant Feedback Surveys

Qualitative Data Collection Methods

- Used to generate ideas
- A way to help understand the results of a quantitative study
- A primary data collection method



Qualitative Data Collection Methods

Strengths

- Provide depth of response and greater understanding than quantitative techniques
- Support flexibility in timing, etc.
- Provide direct links to target population
- Are less reliant on technical support



Qualitative Data Collection Methods

Weaknesses

- May be time consuming and costly
- May increase likelihood of interviewer bias
- May be highly dependent on subjective interpretation of observer





Frequently Used Qualitative Data Collection Tools

In-Depth Interviews

- Complex subject matter and expert respondents
- Highly sensitive subject matter
- Geographically dispersed participants
- Aim to diminish peer pressure or minimize influence on responses

Focus Groups

- Group interaction to stimulate richer responses
- Observation of behaviors, attitudes and language
- Idea generation
- Pre-testing
- Evaluation of message concepts

Program Assessment: Making the Implementation-Measurement Connection

- Make thoughtful decisions about the tools/methods/designs you will use
 - Contact and/or contract with key persons (stakeholders and evaluators) who can help you determine what is the best fit
- Performance indicators are only as good as your ability to measure them

Program Assessment: Making the Implementation-Measurement Connection

■ **Performance Indicator(s)**

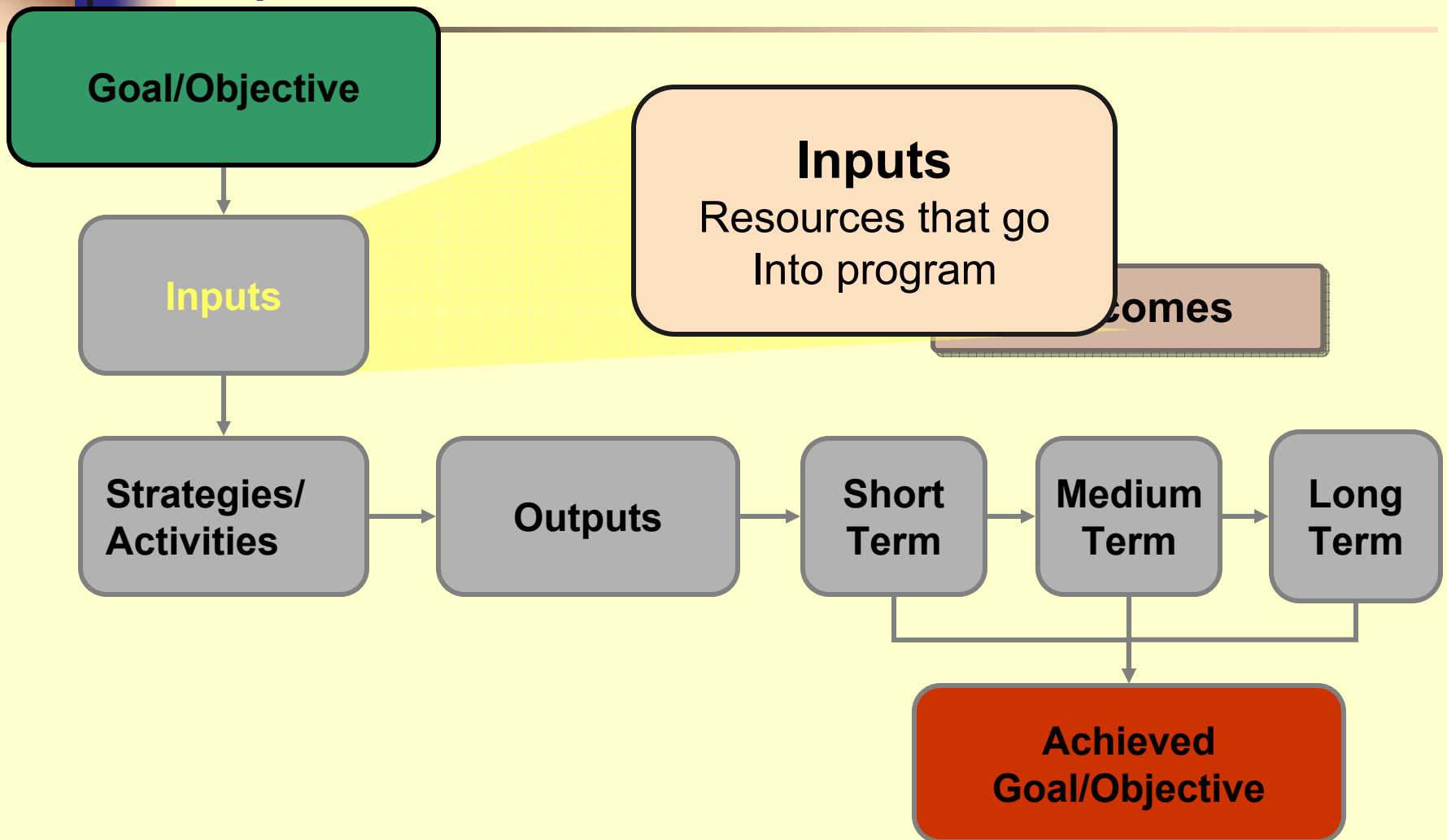
- Identify how you will document each process
- Identify how you will measure each outcome
 - Be specific about your methods and tools (quantitative and/or qualitative? survey and type? focus group?)



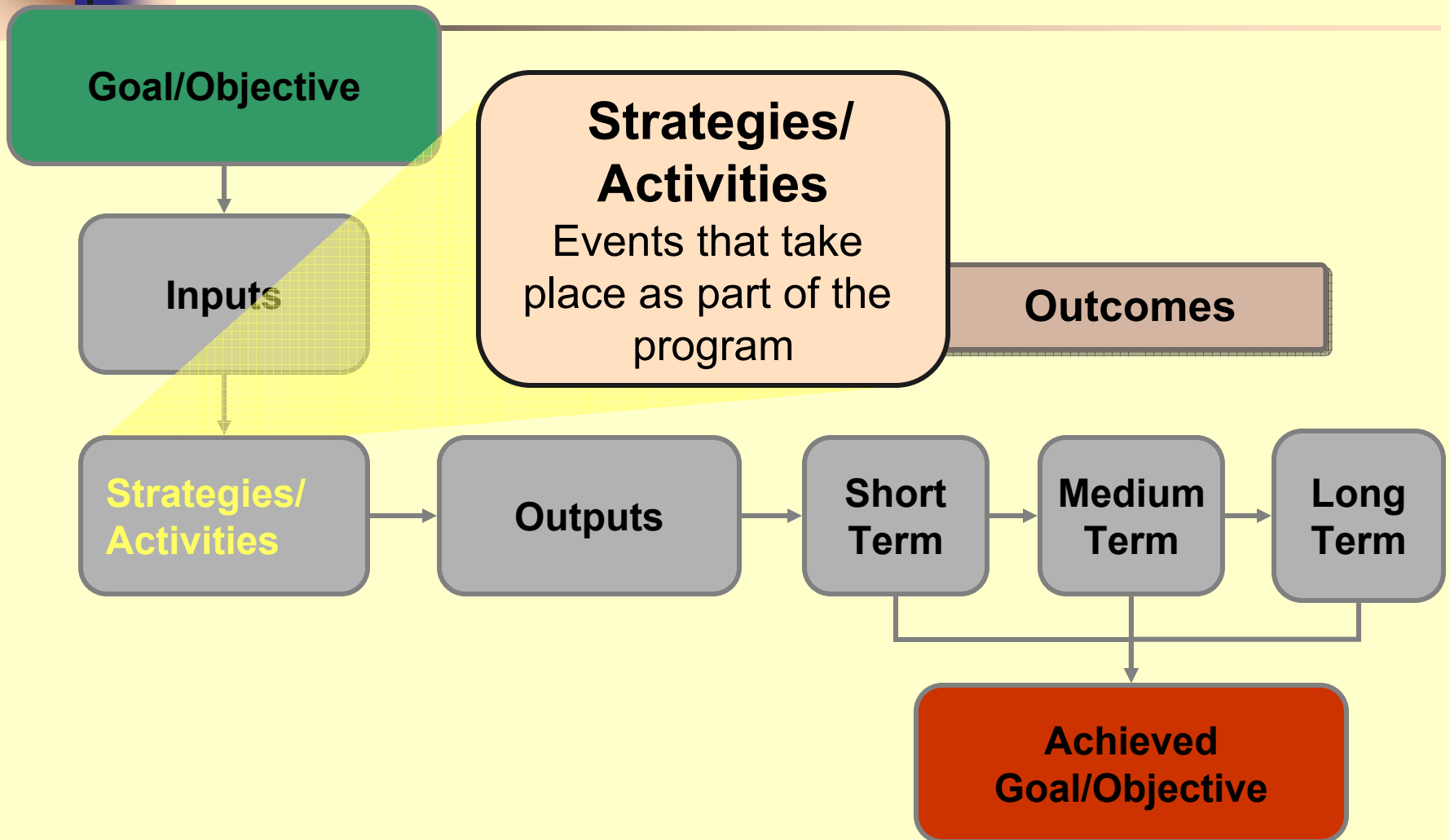
Program Assessment: Making the Implementation-Measurement Connection: SMART Objectives

- ✓ **Specific**
- ✓ **Measurable**
- ✓ **Attainable**
- ✓ **Relevant**
- ✓ **Time-based**

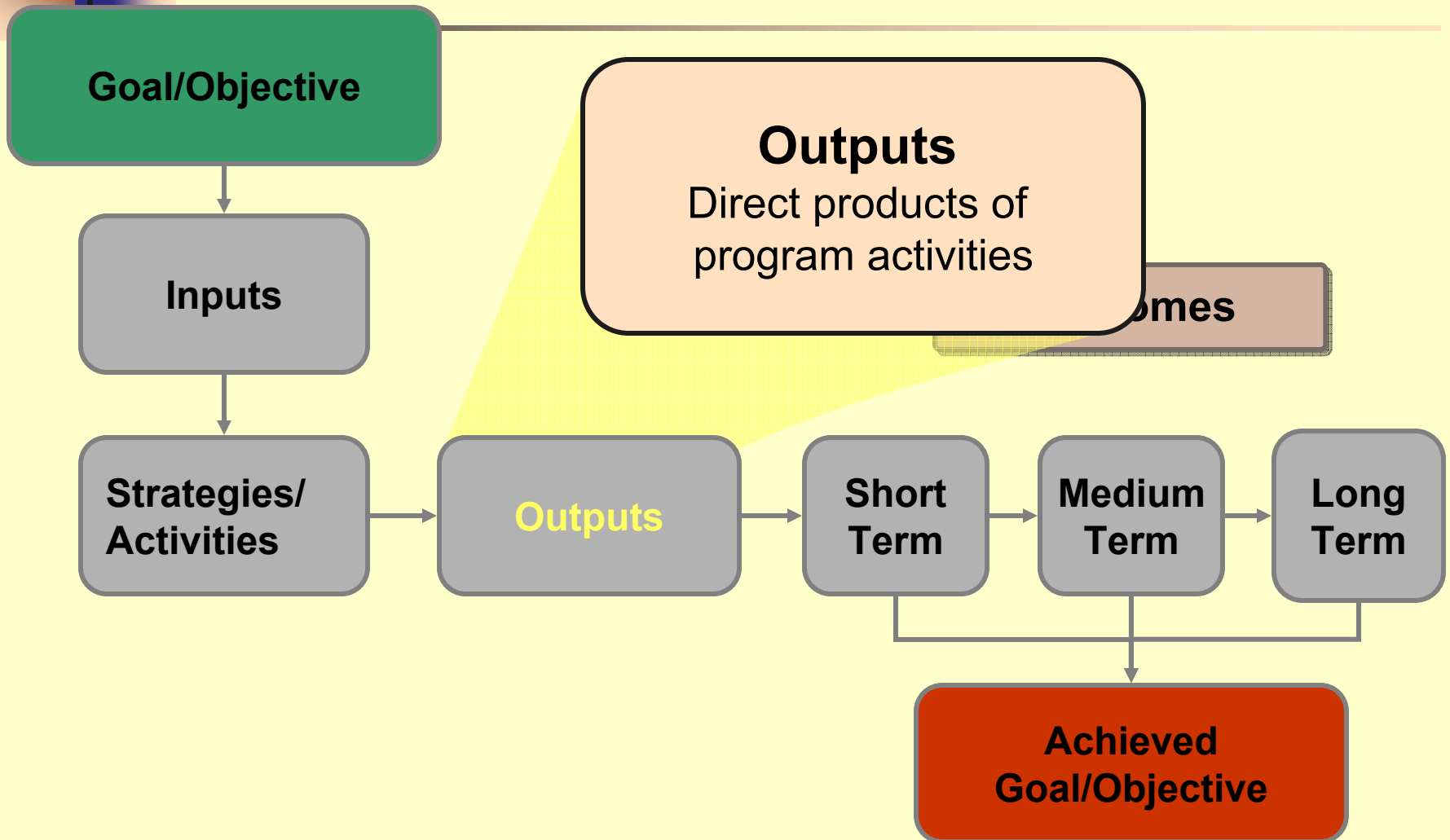
Program Assessment: Making the Implementation-Measurement Connection



Program Assessment: Making the Implementation-Measurement Connection



Program Assessment: Making the Implementation-Measurement Connection

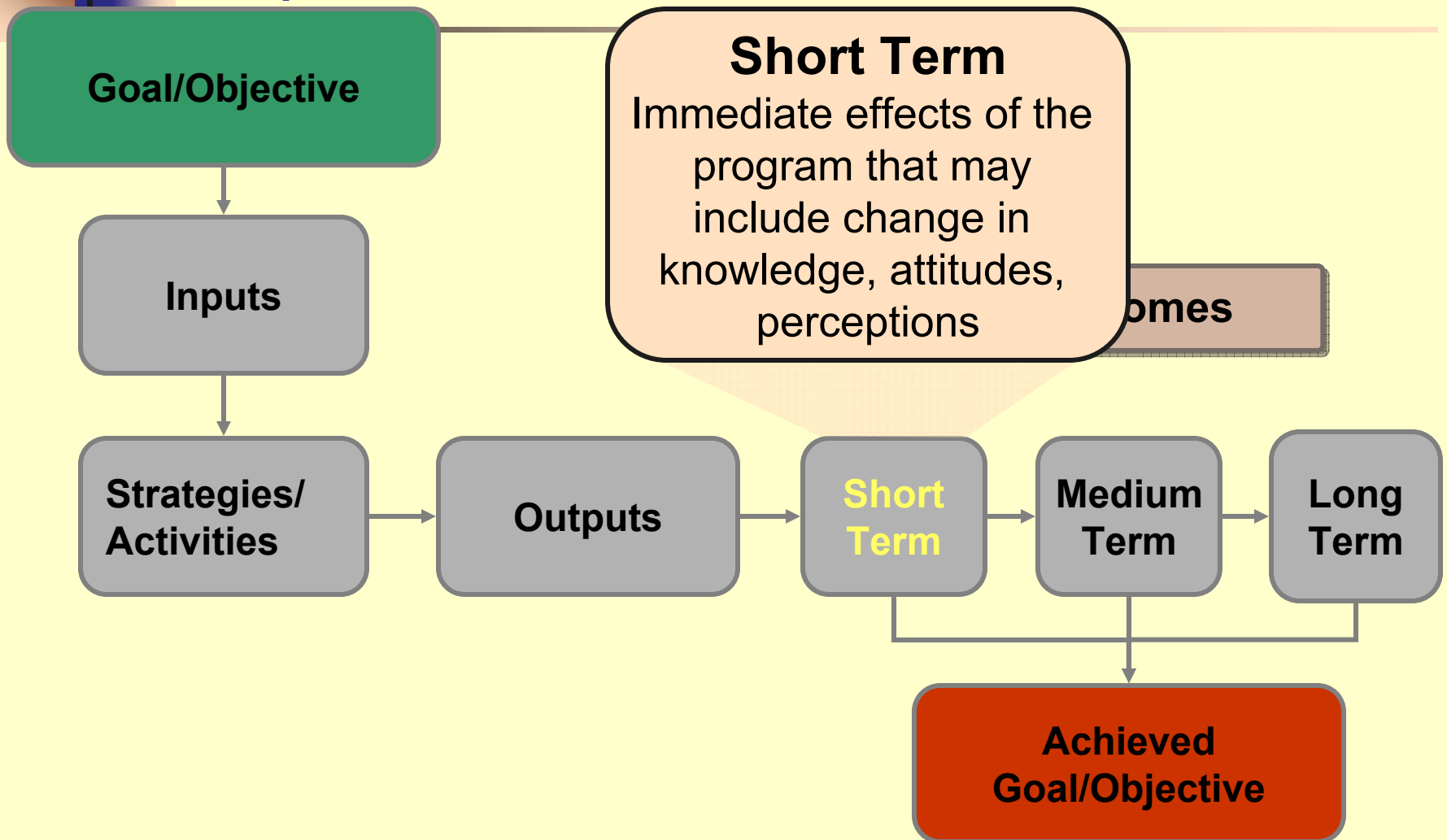




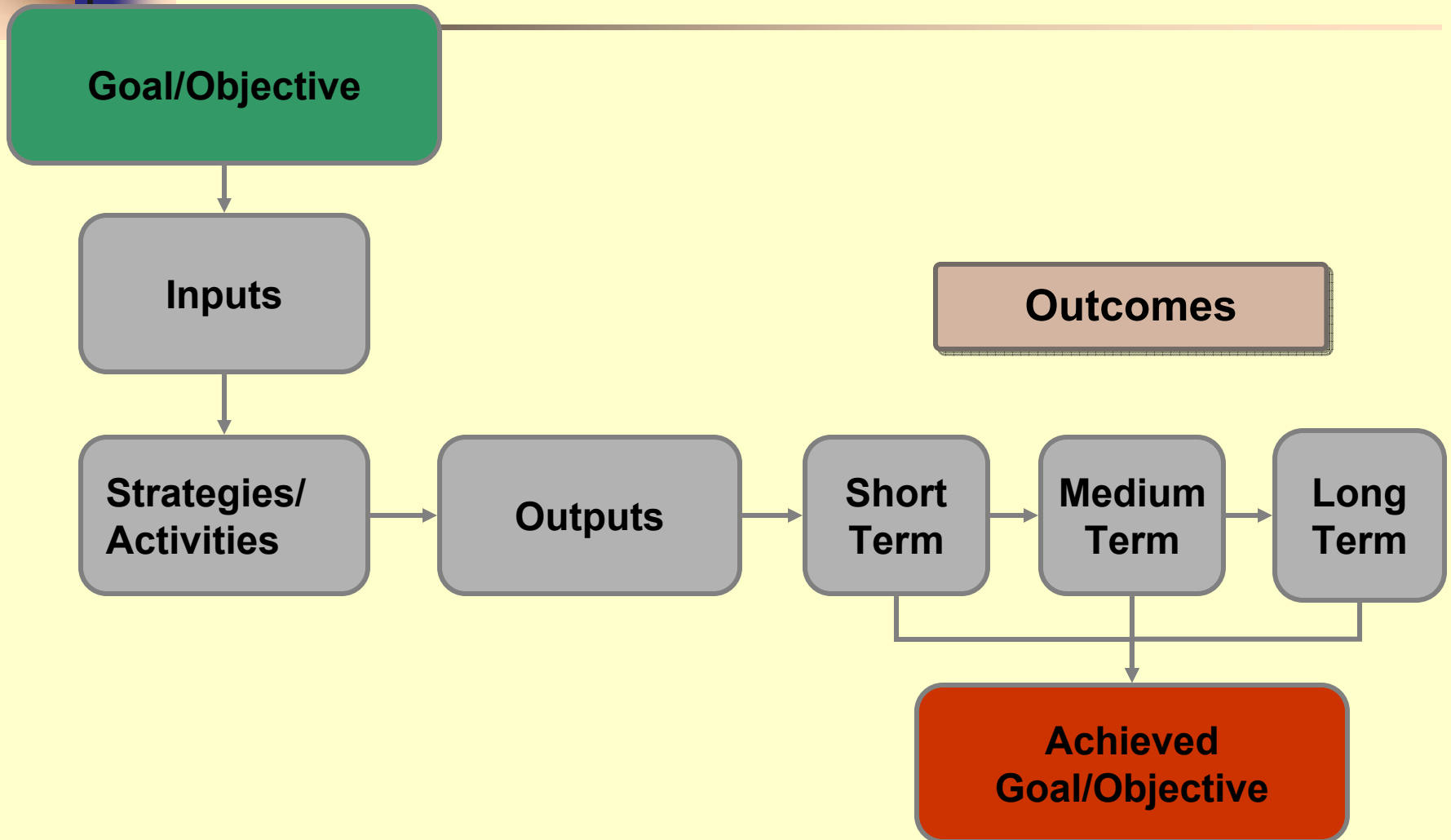
Program Assessment: Mini-Grant Evaluation Final Report Content

- **Quantify progress toward** achieving **each proposed output** for strategies/activities:
 - **Proposed Outputs:** 3 trainings on suicide awareness developed; 50 students participants in peer education training.
 - **Progress Made:** 5 trainings on suicide awareness developed; 46 students participated in peer education training.

Program Assessment: Making the Implementation-Measurement Connection



Program Assessment: Making the Implementation-Measurement Connection



Program Assessment: Mini-Grant Evaluation Final Report Content

- **Quantify progress towards achieving each proposed objective**
 - **Proposed Objective:** To increase by 50% knowledge among mental health program trainees on suicide signs and symptoms by May 2008
 - **Progress Made:** 60% increase in knowledge among mental health program trainees on suicide signs and symptoms by May 2008

Program Assessment: Mini-Grant Evaluation Final Report Content

- **Clearly Document and Describe New Developments**
 - Were there any unexpected changes to your program that occurred after you got funded?
 - How did these changes impact the implementation of the program's timeline, budget, staffing, etc?

Program Assessment: Mini-Grant Evaluation Final Report Content

- **Clearly Document and Describe Lessons Learned**
 - What would you do differently? What worked particularly well?
- **Track Wins and Successes**
 - Strong case studies/stories of achievement, individuals reached, challenges overcome, partnerships forged, etc.



Program Assessment: The Big Picture

- **Justify Everything**
- **Processes and Outcomes are Important**
- **Track both Qualitative and Quantitative Starting Now**
- **Evaluation is** how you document your successes and lessons learned—make it **a priority!!**

Thank You!

For More Information on The Historically Black Colleges
and Universities National Research Center for Substance
Abuse and Mental Health Infrastructure Development
Evaluation Activities Contact:

Tabia Henry Akintobi, PhD, MPH

Phone: 404-752-1144

Email: takintobi@msm.edu